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Comments: Greetings.

This Chugach Forest Plan needs to protect the wilderness character of the WSA, not the Forest Service's weak proposal to protect just its "existing character." Furthermore, the Plan must protect the wilderness character of the lands in the WSA by classifying all of them with the Forest Service's Primitive Standard, which is the most protective standard in the agency's recreational classification system.

It is vital to restore strong protection to the lands within the WSA that the federal government purchased following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. These lands were acquired for the restoration of wilderness values and must be managed "in perpetuity for conservation and wilderness purposes," as promised when they were purchased.

The Chugach NF must address ongoing illegal recreational use of chainsaws in the WSA, which has resulted in unnecessary and destructive tree removal along dozens of wilderness beaches, including in sensitive areas.

The best proposed option is Alternative D, which recommends the maximum amount of land for wilderness of any of the Alternatives (97 percent of the WSA, or 1.884 million acres). I support a modified Alternative D wilderness recommendation that also includes Lake Nellie Juan and the lands within the WSA boundary that were purchased for restoration of wilderness resources following the oil spill.

Please don't water down the original intent and purpose of this spectacular area's wilderness study designation. It would be a well deserved and cherished Wilderness Area for many generations to come, and your legacy (along with that of its original proponents) would be cemented forever in American's hearts and minds.