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First name: Greg

Last name: Romero

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a former employee of the US Forest Service, I first want to thank the Forest Service for all of the excellent work that it does.

I wanted to write to you today in support of protecting the Chugach National Forest in Alaska.

I believe any plan for this forest must 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.

I would also like to see strong protections restored 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 also address ongoing illegal recreational use of chainsaws in the WSA, which has resulted in damaging tree removal along dozens of wilderness beaches, including in sensitive areas.

I also 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.

Thank you for taking public comments, and thank you again for all you are doing.

Sincerely,

Greg Romero