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Comments: Hello,

I would first like to point out it is important to recognize who and where these letters of support are coming from. Upon analysis of the mass response of letters supporting a ban of motorized users, it has been noticed that a MASSIVE proportion of them are from out of state. The Sierra Club as well as other environmental activist groups have taken it upon themselves to make an Alaskan issue their own. People who have never stepped foot in Alaska, never ridden a snow machine, and certainly never seen, enjoyed, or made memories in the Chugach are fighting for the ban of Alaskan people to use this area as they see fit.

One of the beauties of living in Alaska is how isolated and free we are to live how we want to live. So many Sierra Club supporters and people admitting letters pushing for ban of motorized users live in places like California, where you might as well live in a prison when it comes to access of nature, parks or any other public place that should be accessible to the public but now isn't. By banning motorized use in the Chugach we are beginning our path to end up just like this, a place where people are beginning to leave by the masses in search of freedom.

I am born and raised in Alaska, and have been riding in the Chugach since childhood. I have made countless memories in Nellie Juan, Mills Creek, Center Creek, 20 Mile, Skookum, Whittier, Grandview, and so many other areas of the Chugach. Not only do we snow machine here, we fish here. We hunt here. We go biking, hiking, and use the area to our liking, given that is our right as American citizens.

If you actually look at snow machines today as opposed to thirty years ago, they are not only fuel efficient and more quiet, but the possibility of getting up a trail and staying on the trail is way more reasonable than in years past. Many times trails get icy and with older sleds you had to dive off the trail to make it up. Now, sleds make it possible to follow the trail all the way up to the riding area and then when it opens up ride in the free zone.

It is absolutely inappropriate to recommend additional acreage for the forest plan and alternatives C and D are only taking away rights and land that we have NO reason to lose access too. The people promoting the ban of motorized use are painting sledders as young, disrespectful kids who leave trash and have loud sleds and noise pollution, destroying land in the process. This could be no farther from the truth. My father rides sleds to check trap lines, to go ice fishing, to access the cabin. I ride sleds to meet up with my friends in the mountains, to snowboard, to teach my fiancé a greater appreciation of winter and snow, to enjoy the outdoors that were rightfully given to me to use.

We are slowly watching our rights and land access be stripped away in this great nation. I would never leave Alaska because of the passion I have for the outdoors, and I knew this fight would someday end up at our door. Now that it is here, I am disheartened to see how many out of state voices are pushing for the ban of motorized use when in reality, they have never seen, learned about, or understand Alaska life or culture.

Please listen to the people of Alaska. We are who use sleds to teach our youth the values of nature. To access the fishing, hunting, and cabins, that we have appreciated and used our whole lives. Sleds are a part of our culture, as is the Chugach mountain range. Alternatives C and D are a violation of the Alaskan peoples rights to use public land as they see fit.

Thank you,

Chris Leeper

