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First name: Nick

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern,

My name is Nick Mulcare. I currently reside in Fairbanks, Alaska. I am a local business owner and outdoor enthusiast. I am taking the time to write in and voice my opinion because as an avid snowmobiler, it would be devastating to see any more acreage taken away from the motorized group in the Chugach. I have spent much time in the Chugach and the views are always breath taking. I have a love for these mountains and always will. I have been recreating for 26 years in this state I love but each year motorized usage is being attacked. Not only do I snowmobile but I also ski, snowboard, snow shoe. I use my snowmobile to access areas that would not be possible any other way. Some even by helicopter.

The snowmobile industry has changed drastically in the last 10 years in the right direction. The new machines are quieter, fuel efficient, lighter on the snow (meaning greater flotation and less trenching) with new advancements come new opportunity. These machines let us push farther into the backcountry than ever before. For example, in the region I consistently recreate (the Alaska Range) I have been able to travel 60-70 miles one way to explore amazing terrain that I can say in confidence, has never been visited by humans. When I'm this far away from any major road system or community, the one thing I notice is no one else is around me. Snowmobiles push so far from the road system that it is impossible to ski or access with any other recreation activities. So this is my point; Whittier, Placer River, Skookum, Johnson Pass, Groundhog Creek, Carter Lake, Lost Lake, Snow River, Trail Lake, Grandview, Grant Lake, are all areas which could be accessed either with a motorized corridor that stretches so far off the road system before opening up into complete access. Center Creek in Johnson's Pass is any area I have always wanted to explore along with Skookum drainage and would love to see these areas re-opened.

With this being said, I am strongly opposed to losing any more acres in the Chugach National Forest. For our way of life, our lifestyle, our economy, alternative C & D as detailed in the EIS are not acceptable and at the least we should be able to continue enjoying the present acreage we have. Alternative B would be the best option for everyone to live in harmony. If we let groups take away all motorized use, it will continue to happen more and more. Spreading north and ultimately shutting down areas that will never be enjoyed in winter because the only form of access is snowmobiles or helicopters (which are also motors). I have seen more damage to Forest from continuous hiking than from snowmobiles. With adequate snow cover or designated access trails, the damage is low to practically none. With warmer winters being felt around the state, snow levels are rising in elevation. So when snow is amazing higher up, zones are closed because the snow is too thin down low. A potential fix to this issue would be wider, gravel trails to access areas like Lost Lake from Primrose or the Firehouse trail.

We as a group thank you for the opportunity to voice our opinions. It is nice to have open opinions from all groups recreating in the Chugach. No side is better than the other and motorized groups are not pushing to shut skiers out of our designated areas. I believe we can enjoy these Forest together in a multi-use fashion. Please consider my voice as I would like to see my future generation enjoy these Forest as much as I've had the opportunity. For questions or further comments please reach out to:

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