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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft plan. In short, I support Alternative D because it offers the strongest protections for the Wilderness Study Area and upholds existing protections for important backcountry ski zones. I am a backcountry skier, paddler, climber and subsistence user, as well as a trail design and construction contractor who makes my living providing access on public lands. As such, my whole life is linked up with the health of wilderness. It's one of the major reasons I live in Alaska.

The Chugach has been responsive to the public's desire for strong protections for the WSA in the Prince William Sound. I'd also like such support for Wilderness at Lake Nellie Juan and the lands within the WSA boundary that were purchased for restoration of wilderness resources following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS). Not including the EVOS lands in the final plan would contradict the commitment that the Forest Service made to the public when it purchased these lands.

In addition to the following additional improvements to the revised Forest Plan, I also request that you include a winter-specific Recreation Opportunity Spectrum in the final plan.

- Do not backtrack on over thirty years of clear policy to protect the wilderness character of the WSA by promising only to protect its "existing character." Protecting the area's wilderness character is vital to maintaining healthy ecosystems and today's quiet, undeveloped conditions in western Prince William Sound.

- Restore the WSA to the Forest Monitoring Program described in Appendix A. Monitoring in the WSA is necessary for informing the Forest Service about effective management, continued recovery of wilderness resources damaged during the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS), and growth in snowmachine and other motorized uses.

- Continue to fine-tune WSA standards and guidelines so they protect the specific qualities of wilderness character, including its undeveloped and non-motorized natural settings. And adopt the Alternative D ROS map, which appropriately applies the Primitive standard to all WSA lands

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- Given the differences in use, access, and setting on the forest during winter, the Forest Service must develop a winter-specific ROS map.

- Given that state politicians are pursuing Rulemaking to carve out an exemption to the National Roadless Rule for Alaska, the Chugach should incorporate specific protections for lands comprised of Inventoried Roadless Areas.

Thank you for your hard work and consideration,