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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern:

I was born and raised in Anchorage, and my family raised me to respect and love the outdoors, whether it was backpacking, cross-country skiing, skating, fishing camping etc. I remember days when I was very young learning to ride on a JAG 340 to family and friends cabins in the Talkeetna and Lake Louise areas, which most likely started before I could walk or remember.

Starting in High School, I learned about the rules of shared-use and non-motorized use areas, as I started exploring areas like Turnagain Pass, Hatchers Pass and Powerline Pass on my first sled with tall handlebars, paddle track and efi. These places were easy to access, close to the road and little did I know at the time, just the tip of the iceberg. I fell in love with the staggering beauty of my state, and instantly missed it every time I left Alaska and missed it.

I wanted to (and still want to) see and explore as much as I possibly can, and gain knowledge and invaluable experiences along the way. In the last 13 years or so, in the Chugach alone I have been fortunate enough to have explored Thompson Pass, Turnagain Pass (both sides) Placer, Skookum, Spencer Glacier, Whittier, Nellie Juan, Lost Lake, Resurrection Pass, Palmer Creek, among a few others.

Today I mainly use the sled for exploration, scouting new spots for snowboarding and for doubling up as a lift once I do find a deep safe snowboarding zone. Not only is snowmachining highly efficient and exciting, but also the best method explore and experience the staggering natural beauty of the state, aside from flightseeing. I wish to someday share this with as many of my close friends and family from outside Alaska.

I believe in making friends on the trail, regardless of method of exploration, and always be willing to lend a hand, no matter what my plans were. Someone will need you, and you may need them some day, and I believe in good karma.

A few years ago, a co-worker and one of my good riding buddies Simon Ross and I were exploring up the overland route to Lost Lake from Snug Harbor Road trailhead at Kenai Lake/ Cooper Landing area, up the Rainbow Lake trail, up Vmax, and on a cloudy flat light day just cautiously following tracks south into the mountains towards Lost Lake. We came across some other sledders heading back asking for a sat phone, and had been told of a woman with a broken femur.

A couple miles later we found a group of a dozen or so parked sleds and a snow drift with about a 12-foot drop into a ditch, which she had ridden off, bailed and broken her leg. I had my Garmin Rhino GPS/Radio, another guy had a Spot that had been activated, but no one had a sat phone, couldn't reach anyone on radios, and no one had first aid response gear, no cell coverage, which was about 8 miles away at the Rainbow Lake trail.

The clouds were getting thicker, wind was picking up, it was starting to snow, and it was getting colder. I had tracked my route back and Simon and I decided to high tail it back toward the road to get help because there wasn't much else we could do at that moment. We got out of the trees after a rough trail, and came across the PJs that had been dispatched in their UH60 Blackhawk from JBER, but could not head into the mountains due to the dense cloud cover. They dropped 3 squad members on the pond right at the edge of cell coverage near the trail, where about 6 sledders had gathered. We were asked to volunteer to take them back in overland. It was getting dark and I had less than a quarter tank.

I was the only one there that had the location and route plotted. Simon, myself and a third gentleman each took on all the remaining extra fuel the group had, and we each took a special forces Pararescue jumper with zero snowmachine experience, about 60 lbs of rescue, medical and camping gear each, and headed back up into the mountains. We made it back to her right after it got dark, everyone was still there. We took direction and quickly administered first aid, painkillers, splint, gurney, and prepped an LZ with our sleds and lights. It was about 9 pm, They had brought a sat phone so everyone could call their loved ones, but it was dead. Arctic Cat cigarette lighter plug and adapter to the rescue. The chopper was able to find us and get her medivacced about a half hour later, and the chopper was on the ground all of 30sec it seemed like.

I led a group of about a dozen of the most concerned helpful and unselfish snomachiners back north through the

mountains on one of the most memorable night rides of my life. It turns out she made a full recovery and I am grateful I could assist with the rescue. Almost every snowmachiner I met that day was a stranger, and as ill-equipped as we all were that day, did whatever we could to help. many delayed their returns home to their loved ones by over 6 hours to help someone in need. I thought about it a lot on the drive back to town at about 2am that night, I was humbled by the mountains that day and it made me proud to be part of the snowmachining community.

If the area was closed to motorized use, the rescue might still have happened, eventually, when the clouds cleared later that night, but there would have been no lit LZ nor any help on the ground. But what if there was no one passing by with a Spot or GPS? But what if the clouds didn't clear? The site was miles from any civilization in any direction, and would have taken days in the winter in those conditions under human or animal power. And the trails wouldn't have existed because there would be no snowmachine traffic.

This is another reason why Alternative B is the only one that makes sense to me. Other reasons have already been provided in comments made by my fellow members of the snowmachining community here in Alaska. Preserving motorized access is vital for assisting in search and rescue in the winter. Alternatives of C and D are unethical and unacceptable. Im not going to go into why, as I have read many of the public comments already covering them, including the technological and economical. I'm encouraging you to reconsider and try again with these plans. I also encourage more open dialogue and public input like this and working towards making more areas in the Chugach open to shared use.

Sincerely,
Carl Strid