

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/30/2018 7:28:06 PM

First name: Kevin W.

Last name: McAlister

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, I'm writing this to ask you to please protect the 1.9 million-acre Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area (WSA) in Alaska. The Plan 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 also ask if you can restore strong protections 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 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. Trees are needed to produce oxygen and trap carbon dioxide after all. They also provide homes for wildlife.

I wish to also inform you that Alternative D recommends the maximum amount of land for Wilderness of any of the Alternatives (97 percent of the WSA, or 1.884 million acres). I 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. So please protect the Wilderness Study Area in Alaska and let Wildlife keep their home. Thank you for your time.