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First name: Louise

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Louise Schum and I live in Girdwood Alaska. I choose to live here because of the access to these amazing mountains around us. I try and spend as much time as I can in the Chugach regardless of the season. I fish, mountain bike, hike, ski, backpack, snowmachine, and sea kayak. I am a fan of both motorized and human powered recreation. In the winter, there are an endless number of mountains in the Girdwood area to ski. I ski right here in Girdwood, up in the Crow Pass area. I ski in many of the valleys between Girdwood and Portage and of course I ski in Turnagain.

However, with snowmachining, there is not seemingly endless amount of areas that allow access. I use snowmachining as transportation to get to otherwise very difficult and far zones in order to ski. I often snowmachine out of Whittier because that is the closest motorized zone to my house. Also, with every winter become warmer and warmer, Whittier is a really nice place to go because you gain a lot of elevation right out of the parking lot. I also do a lot of sledding in Turnagain, and though I love it and feel very lucky to have that area, it can often be crowded which can make for very unsafe situations. I think if any of the current motorized zones are designated Wilderness and taken away from the motorized users, the ones that remain open will become more crowded and dangerous. I also often snowmachine out of Lost Lake, Turn Lake and Snow River. The later two are some of my favorite zones to sled-ski in because once your out of the parking lot, you often don't see another group all day long. It's really quite a special feeling to be miles out in the seemingly endless mountains with just a few of your closest friends.

Most of the places I go on my snowmachine I would not be able to go on foot. Snowmachining allows me to see, ski and experience so many amazing places that would otherwise be close to impossible to get to without a motor. I think it's very important that public lands remain public and accessible to everyone, regardless of economic status and physical fitness. I do not want to see any of the motorized areas taken away from the users.