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Comments: Please accept these comments on the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area plan.

The USFS deserves credit for embarking on a planning process to deal with the ever growing recreational demands, driven largely by large scale industrial tourism of the cruise ship industry.

Unfortunately, the plan calls for certain modifications that threaten the integrity of the MGRA environment. Moreover, the plan ignores the urgent need to curtail use of fossil fuels, and instead will lead to increased burning of fossil fuels via increased transportation of increasing numbers of visiting tourists.

Enlarging the area committed to parking lots near the visitor's center will destroy wetland habitat and risk introduction of oily runoff into the nearby salmon stream. Also, larger parking lots are an invitation to more of the same style of tourist busing that is standard procedure in Juneau: hordes of noisy buses spewing stinky and unhealthy diesel exhaust.

There are more environmentally responsible methods of moving large numbers of people from downtown Juneau to the glacier, and some have been proposed to the USFS but apparently not taken seriously. In essence, these should be based on transit methods powered by renewable energy. Quiet, non-polluting transit systems would create a much better visitor experience. More stinky buses is not the answer.

Regarding the stated goals, I disagree with the supposed obligation of the USFS to give visitors and residents the opportunity to "touch the ice." This simplistic idea will, in just 5 years, result in over 360,000 people visiting the West Glacier Unit per year. Most of that use would be focused on the ice caves (should they continue to exist) and the face of the glacier. That is simply too many people for a quality visitor experience, let alone for environmentally responsible management. The number and frequency of vessel trips each day on Mendenhall Lake will create a theme-park atmosphere that will seriously degrade the experience of both visitors and residents.

Please re-think the plan in the direction of engendering a quality experience and a sustainable natural environment, rather than acquiescing to demands of the visitor industry for simply accommodating more tourists.

Thank you.