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Comments: MGRA Project

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This must be brief because I was not aware of this project until I saw comments by 2 writers in today's Juneau Empire. The project is clearly targeting a projected growth in tourism, which means, mostly, folks arriving on cruise ships. The USFS should acknowledge that many Juneau residents see this growth as unsustainable, and are working to curtail and even reduce it. It appears to me that the USFS fully supports this growth.

The current congestion arising from bus tours to the glacier and other locations already hampers vehicle travel to and through town, and I for one do not want to see more or larger ships and more buses. How does the increase (and total number) of tour buses to the glacier compare to increases (and total numbers) of transports projected to be needed by the many other tourism industries in Juneau, such as for whale watching, salmon fishing, helicopter tours, salmon bakes, land tours, and adventure tours? Is the projected increase and grand total acceptable to CBJ planners and to CBJ residents? Are these buses gas or diesel powered? Are these carbon emissions acceptable as we try to slow global warming? If so, how? In my view such increases in carbon emissions are unacceptable and counter to our health.

I strongly object to any proposal to put motorized tours on Mendenhall lake, whether they are gas, diesel, or electric. I think this is totally at odds with what this National Forest location should represent. If the USFS wants to promote large increases in human powered uses of the lake (kayak, canoe, etc) that is one thing. People coming to Alaska with hopes for a modicum of adventure appreciate these human powered opportunities. Further, adding industrial motorized lake tours is abhorrent in my view as this is a small lake and from shore everyone out there is visible... the location won't offer a semblance of the majestic Alaskan wilderness any more!

I encourage the USFS to work on a plan that offers a higher quality experience: reducing buses and making them strictly electric powered; putting more emphasis on learning about nature and Alaska; fully preserving, and perhaps adding to human powered hiking and sightseeing opportunities; and overall, reducing the concept and feeling of industrial tourism to the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation area.

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