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First name: Tyler
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Title:
Comments: [External Email]Comments re: Cordova Ranger District Guided Helicopter Skiing project

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Cordova District Ranger Steven Namitz

Attn: "Cordova Guided Heli-Ski Project"

P.O. Box 280, 612 Second Street

Cordova, AK 99574

Subject: Cordova Guided Heli-Ski Project

April 6, 2021

To whom it may concern:

This letter is in support of Points North Heli Adventures (PNH) application and participation in the licensed and permitted operating areas in the Chugach National Forest.

Background

My name is Tyler Davidson (age 47 from Seattle, WA) and I was first introduced to the amazing natural beauty of Alaska by the mountain adventure professionals at Points North Heli Adventures in April 2017. I'm a lifelong skier and outdoor enthusiast from Seattle, Washington, and despite my West coast proximity to Alaska I had never visited Alaska personally. In my lifetime, I've traveled throughout the US and internationally in pursuit of my outdoor adventures for skiing and other sporting pursuits (e.g. skiing, snowmobiling, fly fishing, kite surfing, cycling, triathlons, etc.).

I'm also an entrepreneur with involvement in a number of businesses; including a technology industry entrepreneur/executive event company that produces a boutique skiing/snowboard mountain event experience for nearly 500 guests over the most recent three year period (2018-2020). We bring hundreds of professionals together each year to extraordinary mountain locations to share the natural beauty and unparalleled experiences that can only be shared in when people are in the great outdoors with other mountain enthusiasts. I'm also on the board of directors for the Directors International Ski Classic, a group that promotes and financially supports the US Ski and Snowboarding Teams.

Over the past 25 years, I've taken 20+ multi-day resort skiing and heli skiing trips to Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Oregon; and, international trips to the Canadian provinces of British Columbia,

Alberta, and other International destinations. The cost of these trips can be in excess of $10,000 per trip, when factoring the cost of flights, accommodations, food and beverage, guide fees/services, equipment costs, and state/local taxes associated with trips.

I initially became aware of PNH from the grassroots promotion of the company's owners, guides, Warren Miller Production ski movie clips, and social media posts by guests, guides, and ski industry personnel.

Personal Experience with Points North Heli Adventures in the Chugach

My first trip to Cordova, Alaska was in 2017 with PNH. I booked with PNH, because their reputation for safety and professionalism is unparalleled in the industry and the heli skiing community in general. Prior to booking my trip to Cordova, the team worked with me and the other guests on my trip to appropriately plan for the adventure travel experience ahead.

In addition to providing guidance on flights, booking, and accommodation - the PNH team responsibly recommended the inclusion of travel insurance coverage to protect myself in the unforeseen event of trip cancellation, personal injury, etc. These details are important, because their recommendation creates a sense of confidence that is both good for the participant and good for the operator, should things not go according to plan.

Upon arrival to Cordova, the PNH team welcomed and introduced our group to the area. Our first stop coming out of Mudhole airport was at local shops and restaurants in town. Our group stayed at the Orca Bay cannery property with other participants being guided by PNH, and despite the full food and beverage service operation at the Orca Bay the PNH team made it a point for us to eat/drink at local bars and restaurants in town over the duration of our visit.

As a guest of PNH, the first thing that I recall from our trip was the safety briefing our group(s) received related to the company's use of aircraft, snow safety, and general safety and precautions to be taken on our trip. As a seasoned mountain sports enthusiast, I welcome and respect this "safety first" element and orientation for guests, as it sets the tone for the duration of the week. PNH Management, guides, pilots, and support staff are hands-on and professional in every interaction with guests. They provide the type of experience that every outdoor adventure operation should strive for in the industry.

Like many guests that come to Alaska for heli skiing, we experienced a number of "down days", where our group was unable to ski do to weather or snow conditions that didn't permit safe operations. One element that I appreciated most at PNH was the guides introduction to other aspects of Alaska's natural beauty and local cultures and traditions. Our group made day trips to Eyak ski area, regional glaciers, and other wilderness areas. The memories and shared stories from these outings are equally as impactful as the time skiing in the Chugach.

During our stay, we were also taken by PNH guides to the Ilanka Cultural Center, where we learned a bit about the history and native people from the area. I was impressed the deep culture and made multiple purchases of books and cultural items to share the richness of Cordova and Alaska native heritages with friends and family back home. My daughter was most impressed by the teddy bear made of fur pelts that as both beautiful and uniquely Alaskan.

Fortunately for our group, we were rewarded with the opportunity explore the Chugach National Forest the way we intended - skiing and snowboarding in some of the most beautiful mountain and glacial terrain in the world, being led by professionals that are respected by a far reach international clientele. We skied two (2) full days on our trip, and I felt that my trip was an experience of a lifetime. The combination of PNH base staff, pilots, and guides working in concert to deliver one of the most unique experiences of my lifetime had a profound impact on me personally.

My time with PNH exposed me to the Chugach National Forest, surrounding glaciers, wilderness areas, and cultural experiences in a way that no other adventure travel experience has done before. The entire PNH team's admiration and respect for the surrounding beauty and ecosystems was apparent throughout my stay. We had countless conversations about changing weather systems, the impact of climate change on glaciers, and a running catalog of countless wildlife encounters with otters, eagles, ptarmigans, moose, and other animals. I feel closer to understanding the connection of Alaska's natural beauty and the wildlife therein, in large part due to the respectful exposure afforded me and other guests by PNH guides.

Sharing my love of Alaska with others

Each time I visit Alaska, my love for the state grows deeper, and my commitment to exploring (and promoting) the natural beauty found in Alaska spreads wider.

I recognize that it is a privilege to experience the Chugach National Forest, which would otherwise be inaccessible to me and many others without the assistance of helicopter aircraft and professional guide personnel. One cannot truly appreciate the natural beauty from pictures, videos, and stories alone. Since my experience with PNH in the Chugach, I've become an unofficial Alaska and Chugach ambassador. I've made multiple trips to Alaska since that initial trip in 2017 - including multiple visits to Anchorage and Juneau. I've heli skied with Points North Heli Adventures, Tordrillo Mountain Lodge, and Prime Heliskiing and NorthStar Helicopters.

My initial experience with PNH and subsequent visits have compelled me to promote the experience with all of the groups I'm connected with personally and professionally. My event company has provided regular cross-promotion for PNH at our events and to our customer base. We showed media clips and allowed PNH guides to promote the beauty of Alaska to hundreds of our event participants; including hundreds of technology company entrepreneurs and executives that have subsequently made trips with PNH and other adventure travel operators in Alaska.

My ongoing desire to explore Alaska's natural beauty and rich culture is a direct result of the work of professionals at PNH. I'm currently scheduled to return to Cordova this month (April 2021) to further explore the Chugach National Forest. I've not been this excited for a trip, since my first visit four years.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions about my experiences or need further information in support of PNH's application. I'm eager to do whatever I can to support their efforts for safe and responsible exploration in the region.

Regards,

Tyler

Tyler Davidson

Technology entrepreneur/executive and co-founder Send It Series LLC

Seattle, Washington