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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in support of the Cordova Ranger District Guided Helicopter Skiing Project #59615. I am a longtime client and fan of Points North Heli-adventures who has been coming up to Cordova once or twice a year for 7 years. Over these last 7 years I have come to love the mountains and the town of Cordova.

There are many reasons why I think that this particular permit should go through.

1. Points North operates during Cordova's shoulder season at a time when the number of visitors to the town is at a minimum. This influx of people brings business to the town when the revenue at local restaurants, bars and shops is low. The town of Cordova has an amazing culture, great food, and an absolutely beautiful landscape. Some of my favorite times in Cordova have been spent at the museum, Eyak, the cultural center, the Reluctant, Harborside Pizza, Baja taco, and the Powderhouse (to name a few).

2. Points North operates with the utmost respect of the town. They never fly their helicopters over town and do not operate on any of the state land that is near town. This results in a seamless experience for all where heli-skiers can access some of the most beautiful and remote mountains in the United States and at the same time leave early springtime exploring of things accessible from town to foot traffic.

3. On days when we cannot ski via helicopters we have spent time exploring the myriad of trails that Cordova has developed around town. I am forever blown away by the system of trails that the forest service has built to access the incredible surrounding mountains. There are very few places in the United States that has created such a system for their community and guests.

4. Over the last 20 years, wind has been an increasingly difficult factor for heli-skiing where a large part of the state land becomes un-skiable as the north winds push into the Chugach. The forest service land in question is the exception in these particular mountains. It consists of some of the most magical terrain that, is in addition to being some of the best on the planet, also very wind protected. If wind continues to be a factor in the years to come, it will be difficult for Points North to continue operating for another 20 years (which is what the company and all of us guests would love to happen).

5. The environmental impact of heli-skiing in land that is already zoned for winter motorized traffic is very small. Helicopters have minimal touchdown points and people on skis leave a very small imprint on the surrounding land. In addition, this land is very inaccessible during this time of year for anything other than helicopters. This provides people with the ability to experience these mountains that would otherwise be free of people.

6. It is my understanding that the other two operators are based out of Valdez with no intention of operating out of the town of Cordova. This creates a situation where both ends of the mountain can be accessed, but with minimal disturbance to the town of Cordova. Points North has a great relationship with the Valdez operations and I'm confident that this permit extension will only improve the skier experience and the positive economic impact on the town of Cordova.

7. I personally am so excited to continue to come to Cordova for the rest of my ski career. This past year I brought my 79 year old mother and 69 year old father in law. They experienced the best skiing of their life in the national forest lands (utilizing the temporary permit that Points North currently has).

Thank you for your consideration and thank you for all the work it has taken to create this permit!!