

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/12/2025 4:07:23 AM

First name: Leonard

Last name: Calloway

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on Proposed Herbert Glacier Cabin #67953

As an advocate for improved access to Alaska's lands for security, opportunity, and prosperity for all Alaskans, I am deeply committed to ensuring equitable access to our National Forests, particularly for the underprivileged, the poor, and minorities who often face barriers due to remote locations and limited resources. I offer the following comments regarding the proposed Herbert Glacier Cabin #67953 in the Herbert River Valley, emphasizing the need for a location that harmonizes recreational, environmental, and industrial interests.

The proposed cabin site, while scenic, is centrally located within active federal mining claims held by Grande Portage Resources, where the New Amalga Mine is well advanced in exploration and development. This industrial activity, permitted long before the cabin's scoping, includes plans for hauling and milling ore off-site to minimize environmental impacts, such as fish-bearing stream conflicts and scenic disturbances. However, co-locating a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) cabin in this area would undermine these efforts, creating unavoidable conflicts between recreational users and safe, environmentally responsible mining practices. The presence of equipment, trucks, and even quieter electric machinery would degrade the scenic and auditory experience for cabin users, particularly those seeking solitude in a wilderness setting. This is especially concerning for underserved communities who rely on accessible, high-quality recreational opportunities to connect with Alaska's natural heritage.

Juneau residents and U.S. visitors value USFS cabins for their exceptional camping experiences, and the USFS has a strong record of selecting sites that enhance recreation. However, the proposed location risks a poor visitor experience due to noise and visual impacts from mining activities, which have a legal right to operate in the Herbert River Valley. Investing federal funds in a cabin site ripe for conflict is unwise when alternative locations could better serve the mixed-use purpose of our National Forests. The remote nature of this area further exacerbates challenges for underprivileged groups, who may lack the means to access such sites, only to encounter a degraded experience.

I urge the USFS to consult directly with Grande Portage Resources to identify a more suitable cabin location that balances recreational needs with mining interests. A viable alternative would be to site the cabin on the northern side of the Herbert River Valley, beyond the audio and visual range of mining activities. This placement would enhance safety by reducing interactions with mining vehicles, eliminating road activity near the cabin, and providing a more serene experience for users seeking solitude-particularly for those from marginalized communities who deserve equitable access to Alaska's recreational opportunities.

Mining, especially for critical minerals, is a national priority for defense and resource security, as underscored by recent executive orders like "Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential." The USFS can balance these priorities with recreational goals by selecting a cabin location that avoids conflict and promotes compatibility. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the USFS reconsider the proposed Herbert Glacier Cabin site and explore alternative locations in the Herbert River Valley that ensure a superior, inclusive recreational experience for all Alaskans, particularly those historically underserved.

Peace!

Leonard Roger Calloway Jr.