

Kenai Winter Access Collaborative Learning Workshop
Chugach National Forest
University of Alaska, Anchorage
2/26/05

NOTE: The comments below are displayed almost verbatim from the documents received from the public at the above-mentioned workshop. We did leave out words or sentences that were illegible and tried to correct any misspelled words. The numbers identified at the beginning of some statements below refer to the numbered items in the document handed out at the workshop entitled: "Kenai Winter Access Constraints, Assumptions, and Reference Points - - - 22 February 2005". This document is available on the project website: www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/news_releases/kenai_workshop/kenaiworkshop1.html

Notify Nordic Ski Club, Anchorage Ski Club, signs at REI, AMH

Most Anchorage People won't go to Girdwood, but Girdwood is a good community to have a meeting anyway because there's a lot of skiers and snowmachiners.

In fact, I believe the Girdwood skiers and snowmachiners had reached agreement on a year on/year off prescription for Twentymile (which is because a motorized corridor in the final plan, which really doesn't work.)

#12 Is true. What's not true is that 80% of the KP can, feasibly be snowmobiled on, but that's not what the assumption says, "Available for motorized use" includes lands designated for snowmobile and for helicopter and 80% are in fact available.

#6 Misses some of the conflict between motorized and nonmotorized users, including the displacement of wildlife that motorized sue can cause and the quality of solitude, when you have reached a designation after some hours of muscle power it is far more enjoyable to share that time at that destination with others who have expended similar effort and are having a similar experience in that sense.

#16 Parallel trails would be better than nothing but implementation would need to be monitored for some because noise. As a key conflict and if it was still noisy, skiers will avoid the trail.

#22 True and several other areas were proposed closed for seasonal/time-share including 20-mile Seattle Creek, and others. Much more than Lost Lake was dropped from the draft plan.

#8 Regardless of "scope" you should look at entire Kenai Peninsula and Glacier District to get a broader context. In fact, an assumption 7 suggests that commenting on an even broader context model makes sense.

Why not include all the closed areas for this workshop?

I would like to see key point that you have from different community discussed at next meeting.

Meeting at end of March/beginning of April should be held during the workweek in the evening after 6 PM to maximize turnout/participation.

Have meeting from 5 PM to 10 PM Monday through Thursday only.

Have meeting in Anchorage since so many residents recreate on the CNF. A lot of Girdwood folks work in Anchorage so could/would attend Anchorage meeting.

Anchorage evening meetings seem to be a good time for public participation. People can participate in 3+ hour meetings and can commit to multiple evenings if they know of the time in advance.

Post meeting at REI and other outdoor recreation retail shops.

Any electronic notice is helpful for us to post on web and email (otherwise, we have to retype...)

Each year so early season for motorized is changed to late season the next year.

I don't want to keep people out of the workshops but is there a way to keep people at only one workshop? As you can submit one comment in a NEPA process, you can attend one workshop and know that your one time participation is just as valuable if not more valuable than your continued participation in all the workshops.

I think this process should be kept within the Seward Ranger District, include Heli-ski activities, as these too are winter-motorized activities, and are included in winter recreation access.

Please send me the forms so that I can circulate them within my contacts. The sooner you can set meeting dates, the sooner people can plan for them.

#5 and 8 are contradictory

#12 Provide a figure re: open/closed with support data

#13 Seattle Creek should be included

#15 While the point maybe correct the real point is not to share tails because mixed use does not work.

#16 You need to separate the trails using all the features of the land so as to deaden the noise – e.g. other side of ridges, etc.

#18 I do not know if that is much of an issue

#19 Time-sharing /split seasons etc. need to b revised

Have a workshop meeting in Cooper Landing. Several local residents can provide great input to your maps.

The planning assumptions – no assumption on what is best for residents living within the effected area

All assumptions are based on human use. No concern is given to wintering wildlife.

#24 Cooper Landing and Hope do not Federal C&T for much in unit 7 nor does unit 7 have subsistence C&T for important species

#6 If Skiers would not always try to use snowmobile tracks to get into the backcountry safety concerns would almost disappear. If skiers would stay in nonmotorized, areas instead of insisting on going to the motorized areas it would be a big help. Skiers always want nonmotorized areas but insist they can go everywhere! I do not advocate any no skier areas. I think the forest should all be multi-use.

#8 Will it include keeping skiers out of motorized areas?

#9 Do subsistence uses with snowmobiles include proper snow depth?

#12 80% is way too high an estimate but skiers are allowed to use 100%

#14 Access corridors to the backcountry

#15 & 16 are a good way to separate the motorized and nonmotorized users!

#17 Courtesy should come from both sides

#19 Time-share is a good method –alternative years – or just part of years!

#21 Time-share alternatives

#23 Land points – ridges – creeks, better define areas

When we talk about developing additional access to remote areas we need to remember if we build trails, they require maintenance. Seward already has over 250 miles of standard trails and it is difficult to keep these trails to standard. The season is short (3 months, maybe 4) and it coincides with the high peak use.

I hope we are not rushing this process by needing a decision by 2005-06 winter use season.

Can the Forest Service do anything to help Moose Pass achieve “rural” status for subsistence classification?

Put meeting notices in:

Alaska State Snowmobile Association News Paper

Anchorage State Snowmobile Club Newsletter

Anchorage Dailey News Public Notice Forum

All with good instructions for getting to the meeting place.

Avoid weekends – Wednesday & Thursday Evenings best!

Can the next round of meetings be two short meetings, two days in a row? Some times amazing insights happen after it all quiets down.

It may be helpful to explain to participants that these are public lands. To be managed for the entire population of the U.S. People who don't live in Alaska have a say in how these lands are managed. This process is not a vote. It is a trained professional group (Forest Service Employees) with years of experience with the best interest of the land, the critters, and the people in mind (in the best-case scenario).

#1 True

#2 True

#3 True – unless there continues to be no snow/hiking and biking will take over as winter activities

#4 True

#5 True, like nonmotorized recreation activities with the railroad partnership, but also an opportunity to discuss shared use time like those on the Res. Pass Trail.

#6 True, because of the noise and the 'cowboy' behavior, traveling fast, high marking, impact on wildlife. 'Traditional' nonmotorized use areas may have changed as machines have become available.

#7 False, I believe motorized and nonmotorized users have already concentrated themselves into areas.

#8 True

#9 True – and Carter-Crescent area is also identified and managed as a brown bear core area and thus managed for wildlife protections and concerns. What is the impact of motorized recreation on denning bears? Will increase winter motorized use in this area push the Kenai Brown Bear to endangered species listing? Which will ultimately have more impact the the Forest Plan management decision

#10 True

#11 Don't know

#12 Very true – 80% of the Kenai is open to motorized use – this is visible just by looking at the maps. Even the nonmotorized areas are open to subsistence-motorized activities and usually run along the road corridor – which is motorized.

#13 True, especially South Fork Snow River

* Some of the “closed” areas such as Twenty Mile are done so because the Forest Plan recognizes this area as important to preserve and thus is managed as a scenic river.

#14 True and would also like to see similar facilities set up for nonmotorized community i.e. maps/trails/loops/outhouse

#15 Sounds good to me

* Seems the motorized community is ‘angry and scared’ that they may lose something. Where are the threats coming from – is the nonmotorized community asking for more or for balance? /shared use/time shares? (At the moment, everything is open)

#16 This sounds great. Safety wise and nonmotorized users like to be in the trees, where as this is not desirable or safe for motorized users.

#17 True and reminder signs along the trails as I've seen hiker/biker/someone on horse

#18 True, snowshoers also learn to not walk in tracks.

#19 Time-sharing /split does seem to be working on the Res. Pass trail. Motorized use in first part of winter also allows for nonmotorized use in later season, which has longer light and beneficial for skiers. Late season is also when snow conditions may not be that good for snowmachine use and is also the time when ‘wildlife’ awakens and we and the Forest Service do not know the accumulative impact of motorized use on winter wildlife.

#20 True

#21 True – possible more Forest Service recreation cabins elsewhere in the forest can help this conflict issue.

#22 Not familiar with CLMP process pre final decision.

#23 Yes! and very helpful, identified areas also grow on people and everyone learns to work within it.

#24 Could be why there is conflict and anger coming from Moose Passers

#25 False, with the new Heli-ski permit just released - I believe this statement has changed