

Dear Planning Participant,

January 30, 2004

The Forest Service is seeking your involvement regarding guided activities on Godwin Glacier. The Chugach National Forest will be analyzing the following proposal: The first involves authorizing a one-year temporary use permit for the 2004 summer season for Godwin Glacier Dogsled Tours to conduct guided dogsled tours and over night camping on Godwin Glacier. Comments regarding this proposal will help us determine issues pertaining to issuing a temporary permit for the 2004 season.

The second proposal is authorizing a company to conduct guided activities in the same location on the Godwin Glacier but for a five-year period anticipated for years 2005 through 2009. Comments regarding this proposal will help us determine issues pertinent to activities that might be conducted for the five-year period starting with the 2005 season.

Please carefully read the proposals below. Please submit comments specific to each proposal. We have provided a form for your comments, or you may use your own format to write, call, email, or fax your comments to us. Email comments should be directed to: **kkromrey@fs.fed.us**. Remember, in order to be most useful to the planning team, your comments should be received by **March 8, 2004**.

This is your Forest and your views are important to us. We look forward to receiving your comments and thank you for your participation in the analyzing the proposals for guided use on Godwin Glacier.

/s/ Debora Cooper
Debora Cooper
District Ranger

2004 Season proposal

Godwin Glacier Dog Sled Tours has operated on Godwin Glacier for the past five seasons on five one-year temporary special use authorizations approved by the Forest Service. This proposal would involve all the components permitted for the 2003 season. This proposal is for a temporary one-year permit for the 2004 season. It includes the following components:

- Season of operation is anticipated for June 1 through September 15 pending snow conditions on glacier.
- Guides take guests on dog sled rides, ski-jouring, or crosscountry skiing tours utilizing a system of marked and groomed trails which extend two or three miles from the established base camp. A snowmachine would be used to groom the trails. Some clients would stay overnight in portable weatherports. All activities would take place on the glacier.
- A temporary camp would be located on Godwin Glacier during the summer months and removed each fall. It would be the base of operations for guided activities and provide living accommodations for guides, camp personnel, and dogs. The size of the camp would remain the same as the 2003 season.
- Access to glacier would be provided by helicopter.
- Approximately three acres would be used for the camp and kennel area.
- Approximately 100-150 dogs would be stationed on glacier throughout the summer.
- The camp and trails would be designed and located to blend in with the ice field surroundings to minimize visual impact.
- All waste, including that generated by the dogs, would be stored in sealed, leak-proof containers and flown off the glacier on a regular basis.
- The number of helicopter landings on the glacier to drop off/pick up clients would be limited to 1,200 per season with 3,200 client days permitted. This is the same number that was permitted for the 2003 season.

2005 through 2009 Five Year permit Proposal

The Chugach National Forest is considering authorizing a five-year permit for guided activities on Godwin Glacier. The five year permit would have the same components as the 2003 permit with the following differences:

- 1500 helicopter landings with clients on Godwin Glacier per season (June through mid September)
- Maximum of 4,000 clients per season

If a permit is made available, a competitive process will occur to determine which company would be authorized to provide these services

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need for permitting the proposed activity would be to provide the public with recreation opportunities on the Chugach National Forest that would otherwise not be available to many people in the public in a non-guided environment. Permitting guided activities on Godwin Glacier would also help accomplish the Chugach National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan desired condition as follows:

“Opportunities will exist for helicopter-assisted recreation to access remote recreation areas from Girdwood, Seward, and other locations.” (Chapter 3, page15 of the Chugach National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan)

Mitigation Measures for all Godwin Glacier Permitted Activities on National Forest

Mitigation measures have been developed through previous public comment and environmental analysis of Godwin Glacier Dog Sled Tours’ previous operations and the analysis for the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest. These are incorporated as part of the authorization to operate on the glacier. These measures would be incorporated in the permit for the proposal above and are as follows:

Helicopter Use

- No helicopter supported guided activities will be approved in the Nellie Juan/College Fjords Wilderness Study Area.
- The Fourth of July Creek drainage up to the glacier will be followed, when possible, to maximize the distance between the helicopter and animals on the slopes. (This preferred flight path is generally outside the Chugach National Forest boundary. Since the Forest Service does not have jurisdiction to regulate helicopter flight paths, altitudes, or noise over residential areas, flight path recommendations will be specified in the annual operating plan.)
- Helicopter activity associated with Godwin Glacier Dog Sled Tours shall not commence before 8:00 a.m. from the Seward Airstrip unless agreed to in advance by the Forest Service and the permit holder.
- Flying over residential areas will be avoided.
- A ½ mile distance will be maintained from any observed recreation users and popular hiking trails (Mt. Alice trail).
- Helicopter flight path will stay as close as possible to the south side of Fourth of July Creek drainage to avoid flying over or near Spring Creek Correctional Center.

Wildlife Habitat Protection

- Pilots are given recommended flight paths that avoid mountain goats and their habitat as much as possible. These flight paths will generally avoid ridge tops. The same flight path to and from the glacier will be maintained, if possible, to allow animals to become habituated to the standardized movement and noise.
- Maintain a minimum of 1500-foot minimum vertical and horizontal distance from all observed goats and from other wildlife including eagles or near nests. Hovering, circling, or harassing wildlife in any way is not permitted and is a violation of State and Federal regulations.

- Permit holder will provide written goat sighting information (numbers, locations, dates) to the U.S. Forest Service.
- Permit holder will provide logistical support for the collection of goat data, by the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Forest Service.
- Flight patterns to and from the Seward Airport will follow pre-established landing patterns utilizing routine downwind, base and final approaches to the airport. This is required for bald eagle habitat protection near runway.

Camp Operations

- The permit holder will be bonded to ensure complete removal of all camp facilities at the end of the season.
- Dogs must be under physical or voice control at all times while on glacier.
- All dogs must pass a health check by a state certified veterinarian prior to transport to the glacier and undergo routine on-site health checks.
- All dogs on the glacier must have a current, veterinarian certified vaccination record.
- A report summarizing the findings must be provided to the Forest Service and any recommendations as a result of these health checks acted upon immediately.
- All dog feces must be picked up daily from the kennel area and dogsled routes. All camp waste, human waste and dog feces must be containerized in leak proof containers and removed from the glacier at least twice a week.
- All human and dog food must be containerized during transport and storage.
- All garbage and dog waste, including used bedding, must be removed from the glacier at least twice weekly.
- All trash (including cigarette butts) and camp waste (including cooking water), and human waste would be removed from the site regularly throughout the season.
- Motorized equipment such as a generator and snowmachine may be utilized. All precautions will be taken to prevent any hazardous waste contamination of the glacier and surrounding area. All hazardous waste materials will be transported off of the glacier and disposed of according to laws and regulations.
- Camp stoves and fuels will transported and stored appropriately to prevent any hazardous waste contamination of the glacier and surrounding area.

Here are my scoping comments for the **2004 Season Guided Use on Godwin Glacier Proposal**
(*Due by March 8, 2004*)

Send mail this form or a format of your choice to:
District, Chugach National Forest, Attn: **GUIDED USE ON**
AL, PO Box 390, Seward, AK 99664; **Telephone:** 907 – 224 –
ail: kkromrey@fs.fed.us

Here are my scoping comments for the **2005 through 2009 5 year Proposed Permit for Guided Use on Godwin Glacier Proposal** (*Due by March 8, 2004*)

Please complete the other side, and mail this form or a format of your choice to:

District Ranger, Seward Ranger District, Chugach National Forest, Attn: **GUIDED USE ON GODWIN GLACIER PROPOSAL**, PO Box 390, Seward, AK 99664; **Telephone:** 907 – 224 – 4105, **Fax:** 907 – 224 – 3268, **Email:** kkromrey@fs.fed.us
