

Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Commercially Guided Helicopter Skiing on the Kenai Peninsula

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Forest Service – Alaska Region

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Abstract

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provides the analysis of the Proposed Action and five alternatives considered for the proposed five-year special-use permit issuance for Chugach Power Guides (CPG). CPG has operated a guided helicopter skiing service on the Chugach National Forest on the Kenai Peninsula, near Girdwood, Alaska since 1997.

This Draft EIS has been prepared pursuant to Section 102 (2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA). In accordance with NEPA, this EIS documents the detailed analysis of environmental impacts of implementing the Proposed Action and five alternatives considered. This analysis focuses on the direct, indirect, cumulative impacts to the physical, biological, and social aspects on the human environment. The alternatives to the Proposed Action include No Action, as required by NEPA, and action alternatives 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9. This EIS also discusses the purpose and need for the Proposed Action, describes the affected environment, and identifies potential mitigation measures to lessen any impacts.

The Forest Service is the lead agency undertaking this NEPA process and is responsible for the decisions made in consideration of it. Several other government agencies have provided input to assist in the preparation of this document.

Reviewers have 60 days to comment on this document. The Forest Service will analyze and respond to the comments and will use this information to prepare a Final EIS. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the NEPA process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewers' position and contentions (Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 553, [1978]). Objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the Final EIS (City of Angoon v. Hodel [9th Circuit, 1986] and Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 [E. D. Wis. 1980]).

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