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0021917-001

I am writing to you to express my deep concern for the Proposed Forest Plan. I have been snowmobiling the parks of this state for twenty eight years and Lost Lake was where I learned about courtesy, responsibility, and common sense as a park user. . My family and I use Lost Lake and many other parks every year. This is our chosen form of recreation, and also one of the only things we can do as a family during the winter months. Please think about the hundreds of people that will never see five thousand seven-hundred feet in elevation, or get to experience the great sport of snowmobiling if these parks close.

0021920-001

The proposal to close the Twenty Mile River valley to snowmachines is wrong.  
Closing the area in one year and letting skiers have the area in another year is wrong.

0021929-001

My family uses Horses & Snow Machines near Lost Lake & the Resurrection Areas.  
I oppose any closure of this area.

0021940-001

Please accept this invitation to hear the concerns of our snowmobile club at your scheduled meeting, 'Chugach National Forest Plan' in Seward. Our club members and leadership will be in attendance on Monday, November 13, 2000 at the AVTEC Student Service Center Auditorium from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. It is our desire to hear your staff's presentation, then share our opinions and concerns.

Many in our group attended a similar meeting in Moose Pass last month and felt that though our representation was strong in numbers, there was very low facilitation to the process Our chief concern is to provide recommendations and resolutions to some of the shortfalls to the preferred alternative and other alternatives. This was not an option in Moose Pass. However, working with you, we feel we can edit the plan such that a good preferred alternative is presented.

We need your direct involvement. We feel we have a problem working with our local district ranger. Our perception is that your staff is pro-ski and not open to providing fair treatment snowmobilers. You can imagine our frustration here, and we know that this is not a goal of your organization.

0022451-004

What do you support in the proposed forest plan ?

I think that snowmachine should be the first of every winter at 20 mile. I think what is proposed is fine. I don't have objections.

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0022478-001

The first area would be the Seattle Creek Valley. In wintertime, as there is no trail access into Seattle Creek, the only activity I've ever observed in the Seattle Creek drainage (in 26 years of riding Turnagain Pass and the Kenai Peninsula) is some snowmachining in the upper drainage area (above timberline) and once in a great while some heli-skiing.

The ridge line separating Seattle Creek from Turnagain Pass is a popular snowmachining area and until 8 to 10 years ago was inaccessible to most all snowmachines until March or April when a hard crust would form and a few snowmachines and accomplished riders could make it to the top. (then as now, there is only one narrow route that allows access to the top of the ridge). In the last few years with the advent of paddle tracks, higher output engines, etc. getting to the top has occurred earlier in the winter and now the 'Seattle Creek Bowl' has become a riding area for those that make it to the top. Short of being dropped by a helicopter, access into the upper Seattle Creek drainage in winter would be very difficult.

The point here is that there is no 'non-motorized use' of Seattle Creek in the winter, traditional or otherwise, because of its inaccessibility. I would suggest that even in summertime activity in that valley is minimal. To put all of Seattle Creek off limits to motorized use (especially in winter) would be arbitrary and uninformed.

The second area of concern would be the Resurrection Pass Trail and any additional constraints on snowmachine use. I have been riding on that trail since 1986 and have observed the dual usage of snowmachiners and cross country skiers working quite well.

The groups I have ridden with have the courtesy to slow down and pull over (or stop) to facilitate passing skiers on the trail. There will always be a few 'throttle heads' who won't slow down, but by and large I think self regulation and common sense has worked for the majority. Cutting off snowmachine use of this trail after Feb. 15 I think is quite prejudicial against snowmachines. Feb. 15 is about halfway through winter! (most of our winters). If we can get along with skiers the first half of winter, whose opinion is it that we can't the second half? Those of us riding the Resurrection Pass Trail (most of the folks I ride with are from Seward and Kenai) would be glad to assist Forest Service personnel with some enforcement to be able to lengthen our riding time on the trail.

I understand the skiers aversion to the noise factor of snowmachines. I agree about the noise factor with SOME of the machines that are running around every winter. I think the snowmachine manufacturers have been aware of the noise factors for a number of years and have done a good job in reducing decibel levels and in conjunction with oil producers have greatly reduced the emissions, especially exhaust smoke.

The primary noise problem arises when some snowmachine owners choose to put aftermarket 'pipes' on their machines to improve performance. The standard factory exhaust systems are removed and these various 'pipe' systems are installed. Invariably these pipe systems are considerably louder than the factory equipment and so give ALL snowmachines a bad rep for noise (not unlike some automobiles). This might be an area to look at when it comes to noise factors and regulated motorized use seasons.

The 'Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition' would like to see ALL the Carter Lake/Crescent Lake area (and others) closed to snowmachines. In the November 2000 Audubon newsletter, this coalition has a featured section that calls for the restoration of 'natural quiet' so 'natural sounds' can be enjoyed. The vast majority of Chugach National Forest offers 'natural quiet' because only a relatively small portion of the entire Forest is even accessible to snowmachines. Carter Lake/Crescent Lake being one of the accessible areas.

Natural quiet is enjoyed by everyone, not just environmental coalitions and is not justification for closing more of the areas that are accessible to snowmachines.

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0022706-002

0022798-001    I spend exploring the areas around Kenai Peninsula on snow machine. I have never had any problem with highers, skiers or any users of the trails. I have even been contacted by several runners asking when I was going to go up Lost Lake trail because the snow was too deep and they wanted someone to break trail. My point is I do not want to see any trail closed to any users if anything we need more trails for every one.

0022822-001    I am very concerned about the loss of snowmobiling areas. I care a lot about the environment. I want to be able to show my 3 kids the beautiful views around cost lake 20 mile river, Snow River, ext. Also March and April are the best times of year to ride.

0023087-001    We are writing in our comments on your proposed revised plan to close or limit snowmobile access to these areas: 20 mile River Seattle creek, Skookum & Wolverine glacier & Devils pass trail & Lost Lake by Seward, We do not agree with these closures and restrictions. We do however support a ban on high marking and loud exhaust pipes in any state park access area & support you in this area.

0023149-001    SECTION 1. That the Kenai Peninsula Borough assembly strongly supports the Forest Service's not recommending closing, or restricting to seasonal use, the use by snowmobiles and skiers of any existing trails or trailheads in the Chugach National Forest-Seward District.

0023188-002    The Management plan proposed is get another attempt to block access to as many places in the Glacier District as possible.

To close Seattle Creek is an example of the Auto Motor crowd running our National Forest. As any Backcountry enthusiast knows, the entire east side of the Turnagain pass area is available for Non Motorized Recreation.

To close this Backcountry bowl for 'quiet rights' use is nothing short of ludicrous

As it, as any one knows is inaccessible to 99.9 percent of any snow shore or skier to begin with simply because of snow depth & the ascent angle.

A second point regarding Seattle Creek is if someone is seeking quiet they probably would not park at the west Turnagain Pass Turnout & ski the 5 mile snowmobile trail to the Base of the Mountain.

How don't Motorized west, Non Motorized East?

Twenty Mile is a wonderful place to learn to ride, close to Anchorage and it certainly is big enough for all to enjoy.

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0023196-001

I am opposed to the provisions in the new draft Chugach National Forest Plan restricting snowmobiling in the Placer and Twenty Mile River areas near Portage Glacier.

I respectfully request that the Forest Service not further restrict snowmobiling in the Placer and Twenty Mile River areas.

0028135-001

0028136-001

0026526-004

On the Kenai Peninsula, where I have guided for years with Alaska Wildland Adventures, I urge you to recommend Wilderness in order to protect brown bears and their habitat and to reduce motorized use. Specifically, Resurrection Creek and River areas, Snow River and Twentymile should be recommended as Wilderness on the Kenai.

0026585-006

The Lost Lake area has been favoring snow machines (as far as I know) and I do not think they should be expected to pull out of there completely. If there is not an established calendar open and closure, it should be implemented.

0026585-008

The parking area on the Bean Creek Rd. near the access road to Birch Ridge should be clearly marked and made larger for snow machines.

0026788-001

I hope the areas at the head of Turnagain Arm do not get closed to motorized access even though their use is often limited by weather. My wife & I have enjoyed snowmachining in that area with many friends in past years & would like to see it remain open.

It is particularly more enjoyable than Turnagain Pass due to the steep terrain & avalanche danger. We have introduced many of our friends to snowmachining in those valleys.

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- 0026807-001    . This plan revision impacts me greatly, as my company, Alaska Snow Safaris, operates guided snowmobile tours into the Twenty Mile, Placer and Skookum Valleys.  
There are several aspects of the proposed U.S.F.S. 'Preferred Alternative' Management Plan that are very disturbing to myself and the other investors in our company. The very nature of our tours is geared towards providing beginner level clientele with a safe and enjoyable snowmobile tour experience. A key element to this is to be able to have access to fairly flat terrain. Having access to flat terrain to operate our tours upon is critical in that it allows us to take people to areas that are absolutely 100% free of any kind of avalanche danger. Flat terrain also allows us to take beginner level riders out on our tours that do not possess the skill level or expertise to negotiate more difficult or sloped terrain. Given our terrain limitations, you can see how the current accessible and suitable riding areas for snowmobile tours within a 75-mile radius of our base of operations in Girdwood is extremely limited. The proposed closures of the Skookum and 20-Mile Valleys in the 'Preferred Alternative' Management Plan draft would close us off to 2/3 of the limited 'beginner level' terrain available to us. Alaska Snow Safaris annually carries several hundred people into the surrounding U.S. National Forest in Alaska. These people are U.S. taxpayers and federal users that receive great enjoyment from being able to recreate in their National Forest, I would hope that our historic client use data of the areas you are considering closing would be taken into consideration prior to rendering any decision. Mr. Gibbons, from the inception of our snowmobile tour operation in 1998, Alaska Snow Safaris has enjoyed an excellent working relationship with the U.S.F.S. Glacier Ranger District in Girdwood. We strive to operate in a safe, courteous and professional manner at all times, we pay our Forest Service client user fees, and we play by the rules. The potential closure of the Twenty Mile and Skookum valleys will cause us to lose approximately 40% of our business. After carefully considering this scenario, I am extremely concerned and distressed to inform you that my business would most likely not be able to survive should the U.S.F.S. proposed 'Preferred Alternative' Plan move forward in it's present form and close the Twenty Mile and Skookum Valleys to snowmobile use.
- 0027712-002    From the Comment Book at the Front Desk, Seward, AK
- Mark Clemens, PO Box 1647, Seward, AK 99664 - Concerned about new mgmt plan - pro snowmachines.
- 0027712-004    From the Comment Book at the Front Desk, Seward, AK
- Jon Andrews Jr., Box 1034, Seward, AK 99664 - New Management plan?  
What was wrong with the old one - Pro snowmachine
- 0029361-001    .
- 0035338-003    I support motorized use on Crescent Lake areas, Resurrection Pass areas, the studies are not based or local usage done by an unbiased firm.