



What we're up to

editors note: Throughout this newsletter you will see quotes. These were taken directly from the letters we received.

While it has been a little quiet on our end since the December 14, 2000, comment period closing, we have been hard at work. Approximately 30,000 cards, letters, and e-mail comments were received during the public comment period—September 15, 2000 through December 14, 2000. The planning team is reviewing the comments and sorting them according to the public interest they address. This part of the process should be complete by early March.

Most of the comments focused on two topics—Wilderness designations (particularly those on the Copper River Delta) and potential motorized or non-motorized use on the Kenai Peninsula. When the comments are sorted, we will run reports on each topic, and review and discuss each report to identify improvements that can be made in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and proposed revised Forest Plan.

We have scheduled some Interdisciplinary Team Meetings (IDT Meetings) in several communities. These meetings are open for public attendance. These are IDT work sessions and we welcome your input. We will **NOT** be taking additional comments, since the comment period has ended. Please see the attached calendar for meeting places and times.



The schedule for incorporating the public comments we received into the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the final revised Forest Plan is as follows:

April-The Forest Supervisor will specify the final changes to the preferred alternative. Potential changes that may occur include, but are not limited to:

- changes to Forest Plan map—different management area prescriptions
- changes in shared use of popular winter recreation areas for motorized and non-motorized users
- changes in the activities that are allowed, not allowed, or conditionally allowed in individual management area prescriptions
- changes in the analysis of environmental consequences for alternatives considered in the FEIS
- changes that may be indicated in the completed science assessments
- changes in forest outputs (goods and services that may be produced in order to achieve the desired future conditions specified in the final revision Forest Plan during the life of the Plan)

April-June - After the Forest Supervisor has specified final changes, the IDT will complete necessary edits to the DEIS and Plan and write the record of decision.

Fall 2001 - The FEIS, Revised Forest Plan and Record of Decision will be printed, a CD-ROM version duplicated, and the web version posted on the Internet.

The following are typical of the comments we received.

"I am writing to express my support for setting aside a minimum of 10% of the Chugach National Forest land on the Kenai Peninsula for non-motorized backcountry use."



"I am writing you to show my opposition for wilderness designation for the Copper River Delta. I think since the native corporation has vast holdings and intend to develop the area the whole thing is a mute (sic) point."

"I think you shouldn't let any kind of motorized vehicle in the forest, and have an environmental protection zone. I am speaking as an Alaskan Native who cares about the future development of our state."

"I appreciate and support the recognition of natural quiet as a resource, responsible management of summer ATVs, and the new Developed Recreation/Reduced Noise."

"Thank you for recognizing the value of natural quiet in the draft management plan for the Chugach National Forest."

"We are deeply concerned about the Alaska Copper River Delta and the proposed logging, mining, and road building in this precious area. In addition to coal, oil, and gas development, this is a disaster in the making!"

"I feel that current situation, separate sides for motorized/non-motorized, is generally tolerable for most back country skiers. At no time should the current non-motorized side of the Pass be open for any motorized vehicles."

"I am opposed to wilderness designation on the Copper River Flats."

"I would like to go on record as opposing the plan to close certain areas to snow machine use. I am not an owner of a snow machine nor do I do any of it. I am a cross country skier and snowshoer. I strongly believe that all public land should be made available to all of us. One group should not be made lord over another because of their own selfishness."

"The Chugach National Forest is a national treasure. I ask that the Forest Service include it in the National Preservation System. Keep all motorized activities—ATVs, snowmobiles, etc.—out of this pristine preserve."

"The existing mining/jeep/ATV trails in the Seward District would add some very nice options for high elevation viewing and offer our visitors a great opportunity to enhance their Alaskan experience."

"I support the proposed 501b-2 management prescription for the eastern Copper River Delta."

"I have lived here on on the Peninsula for 46 years. I want to go on record to let all know that I oppose the closure of Lost Lake, Resurrection Trail, and all others areas to snowmobiling or any other means for that matter."

"I am opposed to the logging and development of the Chugach and the surrounding area. I am not opposed to logging as an industry. I am opposed to the continued diminishment of the solitude that our old growth forests provide."

"The plan is so biased that it appears better suited for a national park management plan."



IDT Meetings

In keeping with the open public process, the Chugach IDT will be holding working sessions in several communities to “flesh out” some parts of the plan. These sessions are open to the public.

The Revision Team is an interdisciplinary group of Forest Service employees charged with analyzing information and preparing recommendations for the revision of the Forest Plan for the Chugach National Forest.

The process of these meetings will be different from the recent public comment meetings that were held in communities in and adjacent to the forest. The ID Team **will not** collect or accept additional public comments about the Forest Plan. You will be able to interact with team members and ask questions about the planning process.

We look forward to seeing you.

IDT Meetings for the Proposed Revised Chugach National Forest Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement

March 2001

M	T	W	T	F
12	13 Anchorage (UAA) 8:00 AM-5:00 PM	14	15 Girdwood 6:30-9:00 PM	16
19	20 Seward* 1:00-5:00 PM 7:00-9:00 PM	21 Soldotna* 1:00-5:00 PM 7:00-9:00 PM	22 Hope 7:00-9:00 PM	23 Anchorage 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

*Seward & Soldotna will have two meetings
one held during business hours and one in the evening.

Anchorage Meeting (UAA)-will be held at the Commons Room-106
3700 Gagnon Lane UAA Campus
park in the visitor lot to avoid a ticket.

Girdwood Meeting-will be held at the Alyeska Prince Hotel-Columbia Ballroom, sections B & C

Seward Meeting-will be held at the Orca Building on 3rd and Washington Street in Seward

Soldotna Meeting-will be held in the Assembly Chambers in Soldotna

Hope Meeting-will be held at the elementary school gymnasium in Hope

Anchorage Meeting-will be held in Assembly Chambers at the Loussac Library

If you have any other questions, please call Gary Lehnhausen at (907) 271-2560.

Chugach National Forest
Forest Plan Revision
3301 C Street, Suite 300
Anchorage, AK 99503