

OUTDOOR ALLIANCE



March 11, 2013

Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor
Chugach National Forest
161 East 1st Avenue Door #8
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

chugachplanrevision@fs.fed.us

RE: Chugach National Forest Plan Revision, Phase I Assessment

Dear Supervisor Marceron:

Outdoor Alliance, a coalition of six national, member-based organizations includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Hiking Society, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, and Winter Wildlands Alliance, and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who hike, paddle, climb, mountain bike, ski, and snowshoe on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes. These lands include those affected by the Forest Plan revision currently underway. Collectively, Outdoor Alliance has members in all fifty states and a network of almost 1,400 local clubs and advocacy groups across the nation. Our members travel from across the country to experience the spectacular landscapes that characterize the Chugach National Forest, particularly those that are valued for human-powered outdoor recreation.

Earlier in the Phase I Assessment, the Chugach National Forest made an interactive mapping tool available for the public to provide geospatial information on how the Forest is being used today. While we applaud the Forest for taking the initiative to be proactive and use contemporary internet-based tools as required in § 219.4 of the 2012 Planning Rule, our members and staff who attempted to use the interface found it challenging to navigate. As an alternative, we directly solicited input from our members with locally-based knowledge and compiled the information using Google Earth.

Please consider the attached Google Earth file and the associated information as "relevant existing information" as defined under § 219.6(a)(1). Specifically, it is our intent that the information will be included in the Phase I Assessment of "recreation settings, opportunities and access, and scenic character" as defined under § 219.6(b)(9).

Areas identified on our map that are noteworthy for the recreational experiences they provide include but are not limited to:

- Whitewater runs on Kern Creek, Twentymile, Portage, Sixmile, Canyon Creek, Kenai, Nellie Juan, Power Creek, Glacier, and Tasnuna;

- Turnagain Pass Non-motorized zone utilized by backcountry skiers;
- Extensive opportunities for sea kayaking throughout Prince William Sound and coastal areas of the Chugach National Forest which include large recreation areas such as Perry Island, Hinchinbrook Island, Hawkins Island, Bligh Island, Glacier Island and over 30 small islands connected by the Chugach that are used for sea kayaking;
- Rock and ice climbing destinations at Girdwood and around Portage Lake along with climbs at Whittier, Snow River and Victor Creek, Canon Creek Pillar, and Whistle Stop Wall and Tunnel Section.

Our individual organizations and members will provide additional comments on how these areas are used today, potential changes over the next 20 years, and how management can protect and enhance these opportunities through the Forest Plan. Thank you for this opportunity to provide information for the Phase I Assessment.

Best regards,

Brady Robinson
Executive Director
Access Fund

Mark Singleton
Executive Director
American Whitewater

Wade Blackwood
Executive Director
American Canoe Association

Michael Van Abel
Executive Director
International Mountain Bicycling Association

Gregory Miller
President
American Hiking Society

Mark Menlove
Executive Director
Winter Wildlands Alliance

Adam Cramer
Policy Architect
Outdoor Alliance

cc:

Wayne Fuller, Alaska Regional Coordinator, Access Fund
Greg Rolf, Stewardship Coordinator, American Canoe Association
Thomas O'Keefe, Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director, American Whitewater
Cailin O'Brien-Feeney, Policy Coordinator, Winter Wildlands Alliance