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Date: October 24, 2002

To: USDA Forest Service
Attn: NFS – EMC Staff (Barbara Timberlake)
Stop Code 1104
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D. C. 20250-1140

CC: Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99801-1628

RE: Notice of Appeal

Dear Reviewing Officer:

This letter is a Notice of Appeal filed pursuant to 36 CFR part 217, page 46 in the Record of Decision. The decision I am appealing is the Preferred Alternative as described in the FEIS and the resulting Revised Forest Plan, specifically, areas available for motorized and non-motorized winter activities, with modifications as further described in the ROD, as stated on Page 3 of the ROD. The document in which this decision is contained is the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan of the Chugach National Forest Record of Decision, R10 MB-480b. The date of this decision was May 31, 2002 and the Deciding Officer is Regional Forester Dennis E. Bschor.

The specific portion of this document to which I object is:

“Winter: New closures of the Turnagain Pass area, seasonal closures of the Resurrection Pass area, all closures in the Russian River area, closures along the Seward Highway including new or additional closures at Manitoba mountain, Summit Lake, Tern lake to Cooper Landing, Tern Lake towards Trail Lake, Crescent and Carter Lakes, Trail River Campground, Snow River and North of Bear Lake. (Appendix A – Description of the Revised Forest Plan, page A-3 of the appendix).

These winter motorized closures are unwarranted and unwanted by the local Forest communities and the vast majority of other Alaskans. These closures pose a great financial hardship to the community and the potential destruction life style of individuals and families in living these areas.

I seek a change from this arbitrary and radical decision as an affected resident user of the National Forest.

Our home, that we built in 1980 at Milepost 35.5 Seward Highway borders on the Chugach Forest in an area prescribed for closure. I have been a Moose Pass/ Cooper

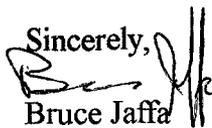
Landing resident since 1975. In that time I have met and learned from many "old timers" how they have historically used the Forest and particularly the areas adjacent to the Sterling and Seward Highways. My understanding of this history supports my views described herein.

My wife Carole and I settled in the East Kenai Peninsula adjacent to and surrounded by the Chugach National Forest because it was a good place to live, work and raise children. Our family could enjoy year round recreational access to the forest, both motorized and non-motorized. Firewood, gravel, water, fishing, hunting and trapping were all available. The areas designated for closure are traditionally used by my family and neighbors and all other user groups and have been for many years.

1. I have snow machined between Cooper Landing and Moose Pass along the old Sterling Highway and the Carter-Crescent Lakes trail for years. My sons and I have regularly snow machined from Tern Lake to Summit Lake. Many friends' neighbors and quests on these trails have joined us. In short we have literally years of winter travel experience in this area. I see no reason to suggest that this area is not properly being utilized as currently managed. There are no detrimental impacts on the Forest. Over the last 25 years we have seen very few non-motorized users in these areas but when we do they are always taking advantage of the trails we have broken using snowmachines.
2. This Revised Plan though discussed for years is vastly different than any of the suggested alternatives. In finalizing the Revised Plan the USDA FS has not consulted or briefed the local community. Following an Oct 17th, 2000 meeting in Moose Pass there was no additional meeting in Moose Pass in March 2001. In EIS chapter 3 page 510 it says "impacts of planning decisions on people in rural areas are likely to be much more profound." Our community is certainly profoundly impacted by this decision yet the very process that is supposed to be used, namely, a follow-up meeting as described in the final EIS chapter 6 page 2, top paragraph, was not followed and thus we were discriminated against in terms of equal right to input. Apparently disregarded is that Moose Pass is a independent community 30 miles from Seward and poorly served by outside media. Most Moose Pass residents would not be able to attend meetings in Seward, Girdwood or Anchorage because of family obligations after their workday. The meetings should have been easily attended, accessible and well advertised in the community.
3. Moose Pass has evolved as a community of people who not only enjoy recreation in the Forest but also in many instances, make their living from outdoor recreation and the tourists who come here to enjoy the outdoors. Year round employment has always been a major concern here The Kenai Peninsula's designation as a Small Business Administration "Hub Zone" where businesses providing jobs are to be given assistance in maintaining their viability is a result of underemployment. Moose Pass has restaurants, lodges, bed and breakfasts, and tourist related shops that need those winter tourism dollars to survive. The loss of a strong winter recreation economy will cause harm to the local economy adding pressures in all sectors including property values. Any loss in population could impact the viability of our local school. The Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly, Borough Mayor, Seward Assembly were all oppose to the earlier motorized winter closures. The closures included in the Revised Plan are far more restrictive. Without the required and specific economic study the USDA FS cannot fully

quantify the impact of these closures. No survey of local businesses was made when doing an economic analysis.

4. The apparent goal to accommodate non-motorized winter users at the expense of all others is transparent in this capricious decision. There are no areas off limits to non-motorized users. My experience in the local area is that the trails are developed by motorized users, then utilized by all groups. Many of the areas prescribed for non-motorized will be inaccessible without prior mechanized preparation. Some of the areas will even then be unsuitable. It is incongruous to me to believe that these closures will actually lead to the stated goals. What will actually happen is the erosion of rights of all user groups to equally enjoy the bounty of the National Forest and the majority areas being reserved for an tiny, insignificant but vocal group of extreme winter athletes. This is patently unfair and un-American.

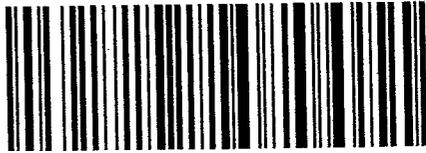
Sincerely,

Bruce Jaffa

Cc: Congressman Don Young

JAFFA CONSTRUCTION, INC.

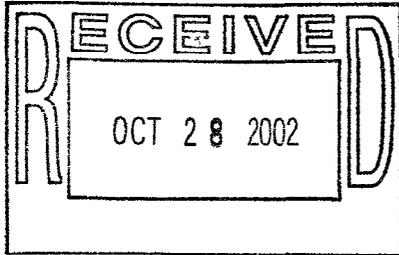
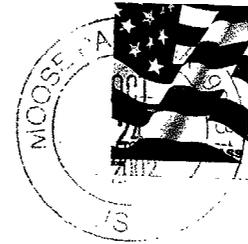
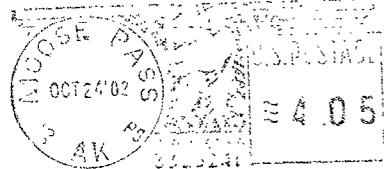
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