

Appendix H - Detailed Recreation Effects Analysis

3.2.1 – Alternative 1 (No Action - No permit issued)

Heli-skiing opportunities

This alternative would eliminate any opportunities for heli-skiing opportunities on the Kenai Peninsula geographic portion of the Chugach National Forest (including the area around the community of Girdwood). These opportunities would still be available on other portions of the Chugach National Forest near Valdez.

User Conflicts

This alternative would eliminate existing levels of users conflicts between backcountry skiers/snowboarders/snowshoers and commercially guided heli-skiers in the Bench Peak area and would eliminate any potential for conflicts in additional areas.

3.2.2 –Alternative 2 (Chugach Powder Guides Proposal - Modified)

Heli-skiing opportunities

This alternative would make the maximum opportunities available to members of the public who wish to participate in heli-skiing activities in regards to varying terrain, elevation, and snow conditions and area. The units that would be permitted cover 338,200 acres of National Forest between the Seward Ranger District and the Glacier Ranger District. A timing restriction on one of the units would reduce the number of acres available for heli-skiing on Friday through Sunday to 320,100 (see Appendix F). New areas would be available for those clients who are returning. The proponent has stated that many of the clients are return customers. A total of 2,400 client days would be permitted with 1,800 client days for core areas and 600 client days for exploratory areas.

User Conflicts

This alternative would have the highest potential for user conflicts because of the total number of client days that would be permitted and because of the large area under permit. Below is a discussion of the type of recreation use each area receives in the winter and the expected level of conflict between heli-skiing users and backcountry non-motorized users.

Glacier – Winner Creek

There are two access points for these areas; both are located in Girdwood on private land. They are the Alyeska Prince Hotel parking lot, located at the end of Arlberg Road, and Crow Creek Mine, which is located off Crow Creek Road. From the hotel lot, the vast majority of the backcountry users utilize nearby Moose Meadows' groomed ski trails and/or CPG's groomed cat track which leads to CPG's State permitted use areas. Permission to access the units from Crow

Creek Mine is obtained from the owner by only a few backcountry users each year. There is no vehicle count for these areas. As low numbers of non-motorized users reach the proposed heli-skiing units, the probability of user conflict is low.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low

Mitigation Measures

1) Maintain CPG skiing call-in hotline, so that users know where and when CPG will be operating.

West Twentymile

There are three access points for this area, Alyeska Prince Hotel parking lot, Crow Creek Mine, and Twentymile. As no vehicle counts are done for the hotel and mine, only Twentymile is shown on a map in Appendix C. Below is a table that shows the winter use count data showing the amount and type of winter use that this area might receive. Some of the users may not go into the West Twentymile unit when traveling from these access points. Some may not reach the unit and others may travel to other locations.

Access Point	Average use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Twentymile	3 vehicles	<1 vehicles	14 vehicles	4 vehicles

The numbers show the total average and total highest use for four access points within the Twentymile area. The four access points are Twentymile Sub Station, Twentymile Arm, Twentymile Inland and Train Station Switchyard (see Appendix C.). The distance motorized and non-motorized users would travel to reach the heli-skiing unit is a minimum of 8.5 miles from the highway. The Revised Forest Plan identified a winter motorized corridor that runs alongside of the river. It is 100 yards wide and 4 miles long, starting at the highway and ending at approximately the confluence of Twentymile and Glacier Rivers. The purpose of this corridor was to provide an area strictly for backcountry non-motorized users. It is estimated that few non-motorized skiers actually make it past the 4 mile mark and on into the West Twentymile unit. Therefore the likelihood of user conflicts is low.

The level of user conflicts could rise in the future if a proposal is submitted from and a permit is issued to the Alaska Wilderness and Mountain Hut Association to operate in the area.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low

Mitigation Measures

1) If The Hut Association proposal is accepted, approved, and authorized, encourage CPG and the Huts Association permit holders to work together to minimize the user conflicts that may arise in the spring season.

North Twentymile and East Twentymile

Access to these two units originates from the four access points within the Twentymile area, which is discussed in 3.22, Alternative 2, West Twentymile. The distance motorized and non-motorized users would travel to reach the heli-skiing unit is approximately 8 to 10 miles from the highway. This is potentially the greatest distance from the Seward highway of any of the units proposed for heli-skiing.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low

Mitigation Measures

None

East Seattle Creek/Mid Seattle Creek

The main access area for these units is Power Line Pullout, which is grouped under Ingram Drainage in Appendix D, and is shown on a map in Appendix C. The units are accessed by a large number of motorized users from the west side of Turnagain Pass. It is believed that a very low percentage of non-motorized users also access these units from the west side of Turnagain Pass.

Access Point	Average Use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Power Line (of Ingram Drainage)	0 vehicles	<1 vehicle	0 vehicles	7 vehicles

This table indicates that only non-motorized users access these units from Power Line Pullout. The distance they would travel to reach the heli-skiing unit is 4 to 7 miles from the highway. Next to West Bench Peak, this is one of the least travel distances from the highway. Several of the responses to the public scoping regarding use of these two units, pointed out that over that past several years, backcountry skiers have decreased their use due to the increasing amount of snowmachine use.

Potential User Conflict Level – East Seattle Creek Moderate
Mid Seattle Creek Low

Mitigation Measures

1) Restrict CPG’s operations to certain days of the week in the East Seattle Creek unit, which is closest to the highway.

West Seattle Creek (Mt. Alpenglow)

The main access point for the Mt Alpenglow area is near the mouth of the Sixmile Creek near the small community of Sunrise. There is no plowed parking there in the winter therefore there is no winter vehicle/people count for this area. Per conversation with several local Hope residents, a small number of local backcountry skiers use this area for winter recreation. The access to the unit is across Sixmile Creek and is very dependent on ice conditions on the river and it is reported that some have traveled across the river via a cable at mile 7 of the Hope Highway. The tree on the east side of the creek that the cable was secured to has blown down this past year so this route may not be available presently.

All elements of user conflict may arise for this area. Due to the fact that low numbers of non-motorized users reach the area where heli-skiing is proposed, the likelihood of user conflict occurring in this area of Seattle Creek is low.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low

Mitigation Measures

1) Restrict CPG's operations to certain days of the week in the area closest to the community of Sunrise on Mount Alpenglow.

Placer-Skookum

There are six access points for this unit which are grouped under Placer River and are shown on a map in Appendix C and listed in Appendix D. The table below shows the winter use count data. Some of the users may not go into the Placer-Skookum unit when traveling from these access points. Some may not reach the unit and others may travel to other locations.

Access Point	Average Use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Placer River	9 vehicles	<1 vehicles	35 vehicles	7 vehicles

This table shows that the access point is more heavily used by motorized recreation users than non-motorized users. The winter use count data indicates that the non-motorized users access the unit from just one of the Placer River access points, the Portage Train WC. The distance they would travel to reach the heli-skiing unit from this point is a minimum of 6 miles from the highway. During the spring months when conditions are favorable, local skate skiers and other non-motorized users utilize the Skookum Glacier area. This was identified during the forest planning process and as a result, the Revised Forest Plan closes this area to motorized use (including helicopters) after March 31. The flight path to the Placer-Skookum, Grandview, and potentially the east Moose Creek units from Big Game and Girdwood helicopter staging areas follows the

non-motorized access route to Skookum Glacier. Placer-Skookum unit is one of two units that have received the heaviest use by CPG. CPG used ski runs in this unit an average of 400 times during a season (avg from 2001-2003). The three-year average for the greatest number of times ski runs were used in a single day is 47. All elements of potential user conflict exist for this unit, but because lower numbers of non-motorized users utilize the whole unit the potential is at the moderate level, until April 1 at which it changes to the low level.

Potential User Conflict Level – Moderate, low after March 31.

Mitigation Measures

1) CPG would continue to keep skiing call-in hotline updated on locations they plan to ski that day or a day in advance.

Grandview

There are two access points for these areas, which are Placer River and Moose Pass, and are shown on a map in Appendix C. Below is a table that shows the winter use count data showing the amount and type of winter use that this area might receive. Some of the users may not go into the Grandview unit when traveling from these access points. Some may not reach the unit and others may travel to other locations.

Access Point	Average Use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Placer River	9 vehicles	<1 vehicles	35 vehicles	7 vehicles
Moose Pass	4 people	0 people	20 people	0 people

This table shows that all of the backcountry non-motorized users originate from the Placer River access point. The distance motorized and non-motorized users would travel to reach the heli-skiing unit is between 10 and 13 miles from Placer River access point and a minimum of 14 miles from the community of Moose Pass. Due to the distance from the highway to the proposed heli-skiing unit, few if any backcountry non-motorized users would reach the unit.

The level of user conflicts could rise when the Nordic Ski Train recreation event takes place in the Grandview area. Typically it occurs on two weekend days during the spring months.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low

Mitigation Measures

1) Restrict CPG’s activities for a period of time before and during the Nordic Ski Train event to help ensure good snow conditions for Ski Train participants.

East Bench Peak/West Bench Peak/North Bench Peak

There are three main access points for these areas. These are the community of Moose Pass, Johnson Pass South Trailhead and Johnson Pass North Trailhead and are shown on a map in Appendix C. Below is a table that shows the winter use count data showing the amount and type of winter use that this area might receive. Some of the users may not go into the East Bench Peak or West Bench Peak units when traveling from these access points. Some may not reach the unit and others may travel to other locations.

Access Point	Average Use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Moose Pass	4 people	0 people	20 people	0 people
Johnson Pass South	2 people	< 1 person	6 people	4 people
Johnson Pass North	6 vehicles	5 vehicles	16 vehicles	15 vehicles

This table shows that most of the backcountry non-motorized users originate from the Johnson Pass North Trailhead. The distance they would travel to reach the heli-skiing unit is between 1 mile and 6 miles from the highway. This is the least travel distance from the highway of any of the units proposed for heli-skiing. There is a higher likelihood of user conflict in the West Bench Peak unit because of the short distance of travel and the presence of backcountry non-motorized users using the area. CPG has used these three units in varying amounts in 2001-2003. In 2001, CPG used Bench Peak North and Bench Peak East (Bench Peak West was not permitted for 2001) only three days but during those days of use, CPG used runs an average of 32 and 26 times respectively. For 2002 and 2003, these areas were used a greater number of days but with less intensity during the days. (See Appendix G for more detailed information).

The Center Creek and Bench Creek drainages also serve as a flight corridor for flights for heli-skiing from the proposed staging area at the mile 62 gravel pit. The combination of noise disturbance from frequent landings and take-offs and both user groups using the same terrain increases the likelihood of conflict arising. The expected level of conflict with backcountry users would be high in West Bench Peak. The East Bench Peak and North Bench Peak units would have a low level of user conflict due to the distance away from the highway and lack of overnight accommodations.

The level of user conflicts could rise in the future if backcountry cabins are installed along Johnson Pass Trail. This development would encourage an increase in length and duration of non-motorized user trips.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Bench Peak - High
 East Bench Peak - Low
 North Bench Peak - Low

Mitigation Measures

- 1) Restrict CPG’s operations to certain days of the week in the area closest to the highway (Bench Peak unit from ridge north of Groundhog creek to Granite Creek campground area.)
- 2) CGP continue to keep skiing call-in hotline updated on locations they plan to ski that day or a day in advance.

East Moose Creek/West Moose Creek

There is one main access point for this area and it is the community of Moose Pass. It is shown on a map in Appendix C. Below is a table that shows the amount and type of winter use this area might receive.

Access Point	Average Use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Moose Pass	4 people	0 people	20 people	0 people

This table shows that motorized recreationists use this access point predominately. Most users, however, do not actually travel into the Moose Creek Units but adjacent to them on their way to Trail Glacier and other glacier to the east of these units. There may be an occasional local resident who uses a snow machine to access the Moose Creek drainage for backcountry skiing but this use currently is estimated to be very low.

These units would have a very low level of user conflict due to the distance away from the highway and lack of non-motorized backcountry skiing use.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Moose Creek – Low
 East Moose Creek – Low

Mitigation Measures - None

Snow River/East Ptarmigan and West Ptarmigan

The main access point for the Snow River area is a highway pullout at mile 13 of the Seward Highway. A secondary access point is near Bear Lake just north of Seward. These are shown on a map in Appendix C. Motorized users access the Ptarmigan units from the Moose Pass community. The numbers for this use is shown above. Very few people use the Ptarmigan Creek Trailhead to access the Ptarmigan area because of the high potential for avalanches in the Ptarmigan Lake area.

Below is a table that shows the winter use count data showing the type of winter use that this area might receive. Like the Bench Peak units some users who use these access points may or may not travel into the proposed heli-skiing unit.

Access Point	Average Use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Snow River	< 1 person	3 people	4 people	6 people
Bear Creek	2 people	3 people	19 people	10 people

This table shows that both motorized and non-motorized users utilize these access points. Winter travelers would need to travel at least 4 miles from the highway from the Snow River access point and approximately 8 miles from the Bear Creek access point to reach the closest part of the Snow River proposed heli-skiing unit. Most winter travel occurs along the south fork of Snow River that lays to the south of the Snow River unit. Currently very little winter travel occurs in the lower reaches of the north fork of Snow River, as the terrain is very rough and the river ice treacherous for crossing. The only element of the user conflict that may arise for this area is noise disturbance if the flight path of the helicopters covers areas where non-motorized users are recreating closer to the highway. Due to the fact that very limited non-motorized users reach the area where heli-skiing is proposed, the likelihood of user conflict occurring in the Snow River unit is low.

Winter access into the Ptarmigan units is generally from the community of Moose Pass. People park at the community hall or the Methodist Church parking lot and travel by snow machine across Upper Trail Lake, northeast along Trail Creek, south east on Trail Glacier and then drop south on Snow Glacier and into Paradise Valley. The snow conditions have to be right (depth and hard pack) for riders to get into this valley. They intersect the East Ptarmigan unit along the eastern edge of it. Very few non-motorized users travel into the Ptarmigan units from Moose Pass or Ptarmigan Creek Trailhead.

The Alaska Mountain and Wilderness Huts Association has given the Forest Service a proposal for a Hut-to-Hut system to be built within these drainages. While the main part of the use of these huts would be in the summer months, the proponents anticipate the spring skiing season to be popular. This is also when the CPG's operations may utilize these drainages. John Wolfe of the Huts Association sent in comments with concerns about noise disturbance to hut users, "competition" for the first "tracks", the notion that skiers using skins to climb are "cheated" when others gain the top with no personal effort, drainages are open for motorized use. The hut-to-hut proposal is still at the early stages of review prior to acceptance and commencement of environmental analysis. This proposal may or may not be built within these drainages.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low.

Mitigation Measures

- 1) Keep helicopter flight path away from the five miles of south fork of Snow River closest to the highway system.
- 2) If the Paradise Valley Hut to Hut proposal is accepted, approved, and authorized, encourage CPG and the Huts Association permit holders to work together to minimize the user conflicts that may arise in the spring season.

Mt. Ascension

There are three access points for this area. These are Lost Lake Trailhead and Primrose Creek Trailhead north of Seward and Snug Harbor road south of Cooper Landing. These are shown on a map in Appendix C. This area is one of the most heavily used areas for motorized recreation on the Seward Ranger District. During the Forest Plan Revision process, many members of the non-motorized recreation community expressed frustration at being “pushed” out of this area due to the heavy snowmachine use. Below are the use figures from these three access points.

Access Point	Average Use per weekend day		Highest use per weekend day	
	Motorized	Non-motorized	Motorized	Non-motorized
Lost Lake Trailhead	24 people	<1 person	56 people	6 people
Primrose Creek Trailhead	13 people	<1 person	30 people	1 person
Snug Harbor Road	28 people	0 people	93 people	0 people

This table shows that all access points are more heavily used by motorized recreation users than non-motorized users. Scoping comments generated from public response to the heli-skiing proposal indicated that some non-motorized users still use this Mt. Ascension area and would be impacted by heli-skiing activities (Pfeiffenberger, 2002). There is a Forest Service public use cabin available for overnight recreation users located about 2 ½ miles from the Lost Lake Trailhead and about 11 ½ miles from the Primrose Creek Trailhead. The vicinity of the cabin to the Mt. Ascension heli-skiing unit could increase the number of overnight non-motorized users who may be impacted by heli-skiing activities. Through conversation with backcountry on-motorized enthusiasts who ski this area, they will also ski the area after the motorized vehicle goes into effect on May 1. This use would not be impacted by heli-skiing as the permitted activities would cease at the end of April.

The Forest Service received a proposal for a yurt to be built in the Cooper Lake area of the Mount Ascension unit. The proponent would like to offer guided backcountry skiing opportunities in the bowl south of Cooper Lake and then have clients stay in the night in the yurt. The proponent, Alec Lamberson, said he has spoken with Dave Hamre of CPG about working together to minimize conflicts if the yurt proposal is accepted, approved and authorized.

Potential User Conflict Level - Low

Mitigation Measures

1) If the Cooper Lake Yurt proposal is accepted, approved, and authorized, encourage CPG and the Alaska Mountain Yurt permit holders to work together to minimize the user conflicts that may arise in the skiing season.

3.2.3 –Alternative 3 (Reduced Recreation Conflicts – Community Impacts)

This alternative is different from Alternative 2 in the following ways:

No heli-skiing use in these units:

- West Seattle Creek
- West Moose Creek
- West Ptarmigan Creek

Timing restriction of no heli-skiing on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in these units:

- West Bench Peak
- North Bench Peak
- East Seattle Creek

Heli-skiing opportunities

This alternative would have the same number of client days available for skiing as the Alternative 2 but some areas would be eliminated or on a timing restriction. The area that would be permitted for Monday through Thursday covers 306,300 acres of National Forest and the acreage available for heli-skiing on Friday through Sunday would be 270,700 acres (see Appendix F). New areas would be available for those clients who are returning. The proponent has stated that many of the clients are return customers. A total of 2,400 client days would be permitted in with 1,800 client days for core areas and 400 client days for exploratory areas.

User Conflicts

East Bench Peak/West Bench Peak/North Bench Peak

West Bench Peak and North Bench Peak have a timing restriction where heli-skiing activities are only allowed Monday through Thursday. This restriction would allow backcountry non-motorized users to recreate in the units closest to the road without some of the elements of user conflict (sense of fairness, safety, litter) with heli-skiing activities. However, the helicopter staging area would still be used at Mile 62 and the Bench Creek and Center Creek drainages would still be used for a flight corridor to reach the remainder of the Bench Peak area and potentially the Grandview and Placer-Skookum units for heli-skiing activities. The noise disturbance may still cause potential for user conflict along the non-motorized access route into West Bench Peak and North Bench Peak.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Bench Peak - Moderate
East Bench Peak - Low
North Bench Peak - Low

Mitigation Measures

1) CGP continue to keep skiing call-in hotline updated on locations they plan to ski that day or a day in advance.

East Moose Creek/West Moose Creek

The user conflicts would be similar to Alternative 2. West Moose Creek is not included for heli-skiing activities but flights into East Moose Creek unit do provide a certain level of noise. The non-motorized use in these two units is very low and therefore these units would have a low level of user conflict.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Moose Creek –Low
East Moose Creek – Low

Mitigation Measures

None

Snow River/East Ptarmigan and West Ptarmigan

The potential for user conflict would remain the same for these three units as Alternative 2 even though West Ptarmigan would not be permitted for heli-skiing activities. There are so few non-motorized users that use this area that the user conflicts are not a key issue for this area.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low.

Mitigation Measures

- 1) Keep helicopter flight path away from the five miles of south fork of Snow River closest to the highway system.
- 2) If the Paradise Valley Hut to Hut proposal is accepted, approved, and authorized, encourage CPG and the Huts Association permit holders to work together to minimize the user conflicts that may arise in the spring season.

Mt. Ascension

There would be no change in area permitted or timing restriction from Alternative 2 therefore the potential for user conflict would remain the same.

Potential User Conflict Level - Low

Mitigation Measures

1) If the Cooper Lake Yurt proposal is accepted, approved, and authorized, encourage CPG and the Alaska Mountain Yurt permit holders to work together to minimize the user conflicts that may arise in the skiing season.

West Seattle Creek (Mt. Alpenglow)

This unit would not be included for heli-skiing activities and there would be no need for helicopter flights to some near this area to reach other units. Therefore this area would have no potential for user conflicts.

Potential User Conflict Level – None

Mitigation Measures

None

3.2.4 –Alternative 4 (Maintain 2003 Permitted Level of Activity)

This alternative replicates what Chugach Powder Guides have been permitted for the 2003 skiing season. It differs from alternative 2 in the following ways:

No heli-skiing use in these units:

- West, Mid and East Seattle Creek
- East Moose Creek and West Moose Creek
- East Ptarmigan Creek and West Ptarmigan Creek
- Snow River
- Mt. Ascension

Timing restriction of no heli-skiing on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in these units:

- West Bench Peak

Heli-skiing opportunities

This alternative would make available some opportunities for heli-skiing equivalent to or greater than what has been permitted in the past several years. Many of the areas requested by Chugach Powder Guides would not be permitted in this alternative and there is a timing restriction on one area. The area that would be permitted for heli-skiing activities on Monday through Thursday would cover 159,100 acres of National Forest and the acreage available on Friday through Sunday would be 141,000 acres (see Appendix F). There would be no new areas available for those clients who are returning but they may be able to

ski different terrain in the same units pending weather and snow conditions. The proponent has stated that many of the clients are return customers. A total of 1,200 client days would be permitted in core units only.

User Conflicts

East Bench Peak/West Bench Peak/North Bench Peak

West Bench Peak would have a timing restriction where heli-skiing activities are only allowed Monday through Thursday. This restriction would allow backcountry non-motorized users to recreate in the units closest to the road without some of the elements of user conflict (sense of fairness, safety, litter) with heli-skiing activities. However, the helicopter staging area would still be used at Mile 62 and Bench Peak and Center Creek drainages would still be used for a flight corridor to reach the remainder of the East Bench Peak and North Bench Peak area and potentially the Grandview and Placer-Skookum units for heli-skiing activities. The noise disturbance may still cause potential for user conflict along the non-motorized access route into West Bench Peak and North Bench Peak.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Bench Peak - Moderate
East Bench Peak - Low
North Bench Peak - Low

Mitigation Measures

1) CGP shall continue to keep skiing call-in hotline updated on locations they plan to ski that day or a day in advance.

East Moose Creek/West Moose Creek

These units would not be permitted for heli-skiing activities and there would be no associated helicopter noise with heli-skiing activities near these units. These units would have no potential for user conflict.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Moose Creek – None
East Moose Creek – None

Mitigation Measures

None

Snow River/East Ptarmigan and West Ptarmigan

These units would not be permitted for heli-skiing activities and there would be no associated helicopter noise with heli-skiing activities near these units. These units would have no potential for user conflict.

Potential User Conflict Level – None.

Mitigation Measures

None

Mt. Ascension

These units would not be permitted for heli-skiing activities and there would be no associated helicopter noise with heli-skiing activities near these units. These units would have no potential for user conflict.

Potential User Conflict Level – None.

Mitigation Measures

None

West Seattle Creek (Mt. Alpenglow)

This unit would not be included for heli-skiing activities and there would be no need for helicopter flights to some near this area to reach other units. Therefore this area would have no potential for user conflicts.

Potential User Conflict Level – None

Mitigation Measures

None

3.2.5 –Alternative 5 (Minimize Recreation Conflicts)

This alternative is different from Alternative 2 in the following ways:

No heli-skiing use in these units:

- West and East Seattle Creek
- West and North Bench Peak
- Mt. Ascension

There are no timing restrictions in any other unit.

Heli-skiing opportunities

This alternative would have a reduced number of client days available for heli-skiing compared to Alternative 2 and some areas would be eliminated. The units that would be permitted cover 231,400 acres of National Forest (see Appendix F). New areas would be available for those clients who are returning. The proponent has stated that many of the clients are return customers. A total of 1,800 client days would be permitted in with 1,500 client days for core areas and 300 client days for exploratory areas.

User Conflicts

East Bench Peak/West Bench Peak/North Bench Peak

West Bench Peak and North Bench Peak would not be permitted for heli-skiing but East Bench Peak would be permitted. This would allow backcountry non-motorized users to recreate in the units closest to the road without some of the elements of user conflict (sense of fairness, safety, litter) with heli-skiing activities. However, the helicopter staging area would still be used at Mile 62 and the Bench Creek and Center Creek drainages would still be used for a flight corridor to reach the remainder of the Bench Peak area and potentially the Grandview and Placer-Skookum units for heli-skiing activities. The noise disturbance may still cause potential for user conflict along the non-motorized access route into West Bench Peak and North Bench Peak.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Bench Peak - Low
East Bench Peak - Low
North Bench Peak - Low

Mitigation Measures

1) CGP would continue to keep skiing call-in hotline updated on locations they plan to ski that day or a day in advance.

East Moose Creek/West Moose Creek

The user conflicts would be the same as alternative 4, none.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Moose Creek – Low
East Moose Creek – Low

Mitigation Measures

None

Snow River/East Ptarmigan and West Ptarmigan

The potential for user conflict would remain the same for these three units as it was for Alternative 2.

Potential User Conflict Level – Low

Mitigation Measures

- 1) Keep helicopter flight path away from the five miles of south fork of Snow River closest to the highway system.
- 2) If the Paradise Valley Hut to Hut proposal is accepted, approved, and authorized, encourage CPG and the Huts Association permit holders to work together to minimize the user conflicts that may arise in the spring season.

Mt. Ascension

There would be no change in area permitted or timing restriction from Alternative 2 therefore the potential for user conflict would remain the same.

Potential User Conflict Level - Low

Mitigation Measures

1) If the Cooper Lake Yurt proposal is accepted, approved, and authorized, encourage CPG and the Alaska Mountain Yurt permit holders to work together to minimize the user conflicts that may arise in the skiing season.

West Seattle Creek (Mt. Alpenglow)

This unit would not be included for heli-skiing activities and there would be no need for helicopter flights to some near this area to reach other units. Therefore this area would have no potential for user conflicts.

Potential User Conflict Level – None

Mitigation Measures

None

3.2.6 –Alternative 9 (Reflects 2000 – 2002 Level of Use)

This alternative is different from Alternative 2 in the following ways:

No heli-skiing use in these units:

- East Twentymile
- West, Mid and East Seattle
- West and North Bench Peak
- West and East Moose Creek
- West and East Ptarmigan
- Snow River
- Mt. Ascension

There are no timing restrictions in any other unit.

Heli-skiing opportunities

This alternative would have less client days available for heli-skiing than in Alternative 2 and some areas are omitted. The units that would be permitted cover 104,700 acres of National Forest (see Appendix F). No new areas would be available for those clients who are returning. A total of 800 client days would be permitted. This alternative is similar to CPG's permitted use prior to 2003.

User Conflicts

Glacier – Winner Creek/West and North Twentymile

The non-motorized use in these units is very low and therefore these units would have a low level of user conflict.

Potential User Conflict Level – Glacier – Winner Creek - Low

West and North Twentymile - Low

Mitigation Measures

1) CGP should continue to keep skiing call-in hotline updated on locations they plan to ski that day or a day in advance.

East Bench Peak

West Bench Peak and North Bench Peak would not be permitted for heli-skiing but East Bench Peak would be permitted. This would allow backcountry non-motorized users to recreate in the units closest to the road without some of the elements of user conflict (sense of fairness, safety, litter) with heli-skiing activities. However, the helicopter staging area would still be used at Mile 62 and the Bench Creek and Center Creek drainages would still be used for a flight corridor to reach the remainder of the Bench Peak area and potentially the Grandview and Placer-Skookum units for heli-skiing activities. The noise disturbance may still cause potential for user conflict along the non-motorized access route into West Bench Peak and North Bench Peak.

Potential User Conflict Level – West Bench Peak – Low
North Bench Peak - Low

East Twentymile/West, Mid and East Seattle Creek/West and East Moose Creek /West and East Ptarmigan/Snow River/Mt. Ascension

These units would not be permitted for heli-skiing activities and there would be no associated helicopter noise with heli-skiing activities near these units. These units would have no potential for user conflict.

Potential User Conflict Level - None

Mitigation Measures

None