



# News Release



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## **Chugach Children's Forest and Wounded Warriors of Alaska Explore Wilderness of Prince William Sound**

Anchorage, Alaska, (June 3, 2016) - Sunday June 5, 2016 Chugach Children's Forest youth and Wounded Warriors of Alaska and their families will spend the day exploring the wilderness in Prince William Sound—and help launch a summer of Chugach Children's Forest opportunities. Through a generous donation from Major Marine Tours of seats on the Kenai Star Blackstone Bay Cruise, Chugach National Forest rangers and Chugach Children's Forest alumni will share their experiences in wilderness and the importance of stewardship of our public lands.

The Chugach Children's Forest includes a range of programs with local youth and families, from kids' fishing days, family events, and school field trips to youth expeditions, volunteer work, and internships. Each summer dozens of Chugach Children's Forest Teens from urban and rural communities across Southcentral Alaska come together on the Chugach National Forest to assist with stewardship projects, develop their outdoor skills, learn how to help better connect younger generations to Alaska's wild places, and explore careers with the US Forest Service and other related outdoor fields.

Past expeditions and stewardship projects in Prince William Sound included travel to Eshamy Bay, searching for European black slugs, an invasive species. Other projects have included cleaning up trash from recreation use and accumulated marine debris, improving trails and cabin sites, protecting heritage sites, and assisting with research and monitoring to document environmental change. These expeditions provide an opportunity for youth to explore the wildness and gain experience and learn skills that can provide an opportunity for future career development—several previous students (called Chugach Children's Forest alumni) have secured internships, jobs, and college programs related to recreation, resource management, and conservation.

The Chugach Children's Forest, a unique partnership between Chugach National Forest and Alaska Geographic, introduces diverse, young Alaskans to their wild backyard. Despite the abundance of wild places in Alaska, many Alaskan youth don't have the opportunity to venture outside their local communities to explore Alaska's vast expanse of public lands. The Chugach Children's Forest EMPOWERS and ENABLES Alaskan youth to explore wild places.

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