



FOREST SERVICE

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News Release

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Chugach National Forest Releases Scoping Report For Proposed Forest Plan Revision

Anchorage, AK (August 31, 2016) – Chugach National Forest has released its scoping report on the Proposed Revised Land Management Plan (forest plan) public comments. The report summarizes the issues and concerns expressed by Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, the State of Alaska, individuals, local businesses, and organizations. As part of the planning process and public engagement, comments were requested by the Forest Service in response to the release of proposed content for the forest plan.

A 60-day comment period that began December 18, 2015 and ran through February 19, 2016 generated 1,462 responses. Of the responses, 920 (63 percent) were unique, while the remainder were submitted as variations of 20 master form letters. Alaska and California residents provided the most comments. Individuals, local and national organizations, local governments, state and federal agencies, and Alaska Native corporations responded. There was at least one response from individuals residing in 47 of the lower 48 states and the District of Columbia.

The next step is to analyze the environmental effects of the proposed forest plan and alternatives including socio-economic impacts. It is anticipated that there will be several alternative plans with varying proposals for ecosystem management, recreation, and recommended wilderness. Additional public engagement opportunities will be scheduled in the future and the draft environmental impact statement is expected in spring 2017.

Revisions to the current forest plan will help the Forest Service manage and protect natural and cultural resources in anticipation of a changing climate as well as identify expected changes in uses and benefits that would be derived from the national forest during the next 15 to 20 years. The complete scoping report can be found at www.fs.usda.gov/chugach_under_Forest_Planning