USDA United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Alaska Region | P.O. Box 21628 Juneau, AK 99802-1628

File Code: 1570
Date: June 25, 2015

Mr. Art Copoulos
8681 East Klatt Road
Anchorage, AK 99801

Dear Mr. Copoulos,

This is in response to the proposal you provided during our objection resolution meeting on June 12. I would like to thank you for taking the time to meet with the Chugach Forest Supervisor and me, and for the time and effort you put into drafting this proposal in an effort to resolve your objection outside of the formal review process.

The Chugach Forest Supervisor and I have carefully reviewed the proposal you submitted. We do not agree that the Resurrection Creek project does not already provide for safe public access or recreation use of the restoration area. The restoration area is open to non-motorized public access via multiple access points (in the stream, along the stream, and via mining roads), and the area can be viewed outside of the restoration corridor as well. Therefore, we continue to maintain that separate, non-motorized recreation access is outside the scope of the Resurrection Creek project, which was to: 1) analyze activities related to restoration of a 2.2 mile segment of the creek; and 2) analyze Hope Mining Company's proposed plan of operations and supplements to existing plans of operations.

In an effort to respond to the concerns you expressed, the Chugach National Forest is prepared to add the following mitigation measures to the final Record of Decision for the project:

1) The Forest Service will post signs adjacent to mining-related gates along Resurrection Creek Road (minimum of 2 gates) where there is immediate access to National Forest System lands. These signs will clarify that non-motorized public access is available behind the gate, and give appropriate notice that active mining operations may be occurring (consistent with public safety tied to mining operations (operating plan)); and
2) The Forest Service will confirm that the Hope Mining Company Plan of Operations contains language that the mining operator must provide non-motorized public access consistent with their specific operations, and that they must identify hazards per 36 CFR 228.9.

Outside the scope of the Resurrection Project EIS and ROD, the Chugach National Forest will consider an unsolicited proposal from you for an additional trail. As discussed during the meeting:

1) This proposal will not be connected to the Resurrection Creek project;
2) The proposal will need to recognize the mining claims in the area;

3) Any initial proposal submitted will need to include at a minimum
   a. A mapped and field verified potential trail corridor (the Forest will provide Forest Service trail design standards);
   b. Demonstrated support of Hope residents and other interested parties;
   c. Demonstrated coordination with the mining operator if any portion of the trail is proposed on mining claims; and
   d. Indication that the design, environmental analysis, construction and maintenance would be delivered through a partnership that is not contingent upon Forest Service funding.

The Forest Service will review any initial proposal submitted and determine its consistency with the Chugach Forest Plan, mining operations, and our overall trail program to decide whether or not to move forward with additional discussion and analysis. As we shared in the meeting on June 12, we currently have multiple trails in the Hope and Resurrection Creek area and have no proposed new trails planned in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to review this response. If the mitigation measures the Chugach National Forest is offering to add to the Record of Decision and the Forest's commitment to consider and review an initial proposal for an additional trail (as discussed above) are sufficient to resolve your objection, I will need to hear back from you prior to July 1; please contact me by email at rnourse@fs.fed.us. If I do not hear back from you with agreement to withdraw your objection, I will proceed with my formal review and written response.

Sincerely,

for BECKY NOURSE
Deputy Regional Forester

cc:
Katie Benning
Terri Marceron
Tom Malecek