

Good morning! My name is Angie Thrower, lifelong resident here in Juneau and Staff Captain at Allen Marine Tours.

Firstly I'd like to acknowledge that I am a little bit nervous. During my 13 year career in tourism I've presented to what is now probably thousands of complete strangers, but when you're addressing members of your community (people you see in the grocery store every day) it hits closer to home.

Without a doubt tourism has an impact. The question is, how can we as a community preserve the integrity of our environment, be good neighbors, and provide viable opportunities for members of our community?

I grew up here in Juneau and never imagined I would be able to stay. Opportunities for growth, fulfillment, career and a home did not seem possible with the opportunities Juneau had to offer. I started working in tourism as a summer job when I was home from college and it looked like any prospects for success involved moving to a larger city, getting an internship and joining the proverbial rat race. I am so very glad that turned out to be incorrect. In the last 13 years, my career in tourism allowed me to go to college, buy a house, and live here, where I grew up, in the most beautiful place in the world.

But that's not just me. I've watched so many others, from near and far, find their success right here in Juneau, in tourism. It's not only Captains and fabricators and mechanics. Its brilliant minds in marketing, sales, accounting and even graphic design. It's aspiring culinary artists, scientists and teachers that find their start right here. There really is something for everyone in tourism.

We also work with countless vendors from the community who turn around and spend their wages here as well. When you work with local businesses and you see those businesses pay it forward through the community, the ripple effect of tourism becomes almost immeasurable.

For so many people here in our community the impact of tourism is families, educations, homes, dance lessons, braces and so much more. Without a doubt tourism has an impact. Some impact is negative, much of it is positive, and I appreciate this fact-finding mission to evaluate the net impact to the community.

As we move ever closer to the 2020 tour season I would encourage the continuance of this open discussion. I hope that as the 2020 tour season commences, the community continues to provide feedback to industry members and operators; personally I find that feedback invaluable.

Likely there is no perfect solution; no one-size-fits-all measure that satisfies every need. Maybe the solution is a series of smaller steps done in good faith to address needs as they arise. Maybe the solution is formalizing some of the best practices already in place. My inclination is that if we can develop solutions as a community, advocating for each other's quality of life as we go, our solutions will be long-term and reflect the cumulative values we hold together as Alaskans.

Thank you to the Task Force for facilitating this deep-dive on tourism in our community. Whatever action the Task Force finds to be productive, a meaningful, transparent, and responsive interface between residents and tour industry members seems like a critical place to start.

Thank you for the forward focus and working to keep the impact of tourism a positive one.