



To The Shoshone National Forest Travel Management Planning Staff,

The Cody Country Snowmobile Association (CCSA) was formed in 1968 to benefit snowmobilers, their families, and friends. We would like to thank the Shoshone National Forest (SNF) for the opportunity to participate in this planning process. The High Lakes/Beartooth mountain range is a very special place to snowmobile, and CCSA was very grateful to be able to help develop the Beartooth trail system.

We would like to submit our comments on the proposed dates for the snowmobile season (proposal SHO-02w). We feel that there is no need for dates to start and finish our season. There has been no supportive data brought forward to substantiate the proposed need for seasonal dates. There has been no reported or substantiated resource damage in this area. This would suggest that the current management practices are in fact working. This is the result of good on the ground management, combined with a good relationship between SNF and local user groups. As a working partner CCSA has done a good job of informing our members, and friends, of the current allowable uses and practices on the SNF. We believe this combination is the best way SNF can manage this area and to fulfil the needs of the public.

In addition, by allowing over the snow vehicle use for as long as the snow is available, it also helps to distribute users over more of the forest, thus lessening potential impacts to all resources. We feel that if SNF sees no other way to manage this area effectively, and deems that there needs to be seasonal dates set, that they look at historic use, and adjust those dates to conform to that demonstrated public need. We have seen historic use occurring from October 15<sup>th</sup> through June 15<sup>th</sup>. We also feel that if dates are used, there needs to be flexibility, to account for years when there is adequate snowfall to allow for later/earlier use. It is also our belief that there is a current regulation in place that addresses potential resource damage. 36 CFR 261.15(h) states, "it is prohibited to operate any vehicle off Forest Development, State, or County Roads in a manner which damages or unreasonably disturbs the land, wildlife, or vegetative resources." This is the regulation the SNF could use to cite someone for causing resource damage if using a snowmobile off trail when there is inadequate snow cover.

We are very excited to submit our comments on the proposed new trail from the Painter Store, travelling up to trail A (proposal NZ-4w). This will be a great addition to the current trail system. It will be a benefit to the Crandall area community as well. We feel that the historic use, low levels of potential wildlife disturbance, and no potential resource impacts all suggest that this is a good direction for the SNF to go. Some of the other benefits are less congestion at the junction parking area, less use on the lower portion of trail A, and better safety, with the new trail being marked.

We would also like to note that a study was done by the University of Wyoming on the economic impact that snowmobiling has on our economy in Wyoming. At the time of the study

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snowmobiling's contribution to the state was OVER \$175 MILLION DOLLARS of income. Another interesting point is that of this \$175 million, 49% was from tourism. The Beartooth/Cooke City area is one of the highest rated destinations for snowmobiling in the US. This economic impact is very important to surrounding communities.

Once again CCSA would like to thank the Shoshone National Forest for giving us the opportunity during this comment period, and for being a good cooperative partner.

Respectfully Submitted,

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