

From: [Roger's Sport Center](#)
To: [FS-travel-comments-rocky-mountain-shoshone](#)
Subject: Travel Management
Date: Friday, June 03, 2016 1:50:55 PM

To the Shoshone National Forest,

As an engaged user of the SNF, I would like to submit a comment on proposal SHO-02w.

I feel that the resource is adequately protected at this time by Federal Regulation [36 CFR 261.15\(h\)](#) "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 violation they could be cited for if someone is causing resource damage by using a snowmobile off trail when there is inadequate snow cover.

If this is enforced, we should have no issues with low snow conditions. We are riding very expensive machines today, and none of us wants to damage them by driving on dirt and rocks. Furthermore, if we close the SNF to off trail over the snow use on a certain date, and we have good snow coverage, the people who would be snowmobiling would not stop recreating on the forest. This would merely cause more congestion in areas that are open to some form of use. The goal should be to disperse use in a responsible manner, where it can be done with little to no impact to the resource. Also you have eliminated off trail over the snow use in most low elevation areas, with the changes to the forest plan last year. You closed almost 900,000 acres on the North Zone of SNF. This should contain the use to a small area, that should be very easy to patrol if the need arises. The remaining areas that are open are all in areas that receive lots of snowfall, and retain that snow very late in the spring. After those changes, I feel that we have given up enough, and we should be able to take advantage of the limited riding opportunities available to us.

Also when there is adequate snow coverage for the recreational rider to go off trail, there are no wildlife conflicts whatsoever. However, if unable to ride a snowmobile, these same people may be riding wheeled vehicles, where there is wildlife. Or they may be on a horse horn hunting, etc. Which could have impacts on wildlife. My point is, we should take advantage of a situation where we can have motorized use on the forest with no detrimental effects to wildlife, or the environment, and it disperses users of the forest thus reducing congestion. You should also look at historic use, and try to maintain this, if it is not impacting the resource.

If we continue to reduce acres, and days available to any potential users, congestion, and potential damage to the resource is going to increase, as the demand is growing not shrinking. This being said, we should be looking at creative ways to disperse the use, not contain it. You also should not add regulations, when there is a regulation in place that already covers the issue. There is absolutely no justification to adding opening and closing dates to off trail over the snow travel. The only reason given, is to be consistent with other forests. To me this is not a valid reason. I have spoken to your law enforcement officers, and they do not see an issue with keeping it as is. They also agreed on the need to disperse use.

I would also request information regarding why SNF has proposed this change. Do you have current

documented issues caused by or directly related to over the snow travel during the time you have proposed to close?

In closing, I feel that SNF should be trying to maintain the multiple use activities that have been occurring on the forest, with no negative impacts, and to maximize the opportunities available to our growing population base, as long as those activities do not impact the resource. For the long term, SNF needs to plan for a growing base of users, and to be proactive, not reactive, as has been the case in the past. Address issues before they become serious, and leave well enough alone when it is working well, as is the case with winter use.

Thank you,
Dustin

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