

From: Debra Patla [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 11, 2017 6:45 PM
To: FS-travel-comments-rocky-mountain-shoshone
Subject: Shoshone National Forest Winter Travel Management Plan
Attachments: Sepulvedaetal_2015_Shifting_GYA_Temp_Portfolio.pdf

Dear Supervisor,

I strongly support limiting the season of use by snowmobiles in lower elevation areas, with an April 1 closure. While snow depths vary among years, trying to calculate a new date each year would be a nightmare for your staff and for communicating effectively with the public.

With climate change, winters are getting shorter, and particularly in the Shoshone NF portion of the

Greater Yellowstone Area on the eastern and drier side of the mountains. Please see the attached paper, which observes on page 9:

"In the GYA, which provides refuge to some of the world's most iconic wildlife, we documented

consistent patterns of warming since 1948 with the most pronounced seasonal changes occurring during the Winter

(JFM) and the most pronounced monthly changes occurring in March."

It is likely that outside of a few very snowy years, this trend of warmer winters and earlier snowmelt will

continue, and even April 1 will become too late for a sensible closure date in some or many areas of the SNF.

Also please note that lower elevations are crucially important for ungulates (deer, elk, and moose) in

spring, as the animals seek forage and begin their migrations. Reducing disturbance is crucial in the face of the many stressors related to more people living in and visiting the GYA.

Please stand firm with sensible seasonal closures for snowmobile activity.

Debra Patla
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