

From: Mitchell Ross Helling [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 11, 2017 8:55 PM
To: FS-travel-comments-rocky-mountain-shoshone
Subject: Shoshone National Forest Travel Management Proposed Action Comments
Attachments: WY 2011.png

Hello,

I am writing to submit my input on the Proposed Action for the changes to the forest management plan. [REDACTED], avid snowmobiler, and scientist, I urge you to review the data of Snotel information & historical use of snowmobiles on the tail ends of the seasons. The proposed May 15th closure date for snowmobiling is not acceptable.

Many years the snowpack is just beginning to decline at that time; especially in the North. Modifying the plan to reflect snowpack trends and historical use is the sensible action. If you feel a date is needed; June 15th makes more sense. Late season rides are a unique aspect of the Wyoming experience and downright fun! In the Medicine Bow district, there is a minimum snow depth requirement to protect the resources; I can stand behind that. Resource damage is not acceptable, so write law that ensures *that*. Arbitrary dates that prematurely end the snowmobiling season are not something I support. The reality is that yes, some seasons snowmobiling needs to end in May to protect resources (let minimum depth law dictate this), but other seasons the snowpack exists well into July! Enjoying those seasons of plenty is better than being frustrated that bureaucratic over-reach prevents the public from using public land for no legitimate reason due to lack of thoughtful articulation of intent.

I affixed a map showing one year's snow depth on June 15th, 2011. With hiking, biking, and four wheeling impossible due to the snow depth (upwards of 100" in the high country), snowmobiling well into June was the activity that made sense. With a May 15th closure many users would have a hard time finding a way to recreate.

In short, I do not support May 15th closure dates and urge you to re-evaluate what the goal of such a law is. Then, consider something like minimum snow depth requirements instead to enable the Wyoming public to enjoy public land in a way that matches each year's unique snowpack while ensuring resource protection.

Thank you for your attention,
Mitchell Helling

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]