



Rick Metzger
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Caring for the land and serving people

From: Kim Wilbert [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2016 7:56 PM
To: Metzger, Rick -FS
Cc: Robertson, Robert N -FS
Subject: Winter Travel Proposal

Dear Rick,

After sending my two proposals earlier today, I want to make my concerns regarding winter motorized travel in crucial winter range into another proposal on the Wind River District.

The Sierra Club Wyoming Chapter respectfully submits the proposal that the winter travel management plan must eliminate cross country winter motorized travel from designated crucial winter range. It just doesn't make sense to allow off-trail over the snow motorized recreation in *any* crucial winter range areas.

We have heard the notion expressed that if the snow is deep enough for snow machines, wintering game animals will have left the area. We have seen moose in three plus feet of snow, plenty for snowmobiles. Our bottom line is that these areas have been carefully designated by professional wildlife managers as **crucial winter range, accepted by Forest Service managers as such in the Forest Plan, and should not support a conflicting use like unrestricted recreational over the snow travel.**

Just because one aspect of a hill is too snowy on a given day for heavy wildlife use, does not mean animals utilizing the other side of the same hill will not be disturbed by motorized activity on the snowy side. This fact, as well as the non-existent definition of 'winter use' (winter use = any time you can use an over snow machine, allowing different use rules at different times of the same day!) creates too much room for interpretation to allow over snow motorized use in designated crucial winter range. Wyoming's wildlife is one of our most treasured and valuable

resources, and we must have a forest travel plan that unconditionally protects that resource during the winter season.

If we need to get into second-guessing the boundaries of crucial winter range accepted into the Final Forest Plan, then we need to carefully re-study each acre so designated. We suggest the travel plan should respect the crucial winter range boundaries designated in the Final Plan, and eliminate off trail motorized use in crucial winter range.

Thank you,

Kim Wilbert
Chapter Chair
Sierra Club Wyoming Chapter

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