

From: Debra Patla [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 22, 2016 3:31 PM
To: Metzger, Rick -FS
Cc: Alexander, Joseph G -FS
Subject: travel management proposal

Subject: Shoshone National Forest Travel Management, request for public input, Wind River Ranger District

Please consider this proposal for Snowmobile Closures.

Locations: South, East, and West Dunoir IRAs (IRA numbers 02057, 02056, 02059)

Why this is needed:

The revised Forest Plan makes these areas potentially available for winter motorized use. Although you chose not to recommend additions to the Wilderness system, I hope you recognize that there was substantial public support for retaining the wild quality of these areas. Expansion of snowmobile use has detrimental effects on resident wildlife (e.g., disturbance and displacement, poaching). Snowmobiles can harm vegetation when snow levels are low or operators are careless. Off-road snowmobile traffic sharply increases the human footprint, contributing noise and air pollution to areas prized for their wild qualities. Scenic values are degraded. It subtracts from USFS efforts to reduce carbon emissions, and reduces credibility that USFS is in fact concerned about human-caused climate change.

As snowmobiles travel farther and faster, safety risks are increased; not only to the recreationists who get lost or buried in avalanches, but to the search and rescue parties who risk their lives to search for victims.

Finally, increased snowmobile use means that there will likely be increased snowmobile traffic into the Dunoir SMU and perhaps on to private lands and wildlife closure areas, with small likelihood that the Shoshone NF will be able to effectively prevent such trespass given shrinking agency budgets. I am particularly worried that the recent Forest Plan revision 'opening' South and East Dunoir will lead to sharply increased snowmobile use, causing increased environmental degradation and compromise of these highly valued wild areas. Access from Long Creek road facilitates incursion, and snowmobilers are also adept at finding new ways to access previously unused terrain.

In conclusion, I urge you to include this proposal to close all three of the 'Dunoir additions' to winter motorized use plans.

Thank you.

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