

John & Christa Finney

April 27, 2023

Bonniers Ferry Ranger District
Idaho Panhandle National Forests
Attn: Doug Nishek
6286 Main Street
Bonniers Ferry, Idaho 83805
Submitted via project webpage comment link only

Re: Kaniksu Over-Snow Vehicle Use Designation Project

Mr. Nishek:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Kaniksu Over-Snow Vehicle Use Designation Project Environmental Assessment. I provided previous comment by letter dated and submitted September 15, 2022. This comment supplements my prior comment (and my decades' long involvement in over-snow vehicle travel management).

The updated Proposed Action provided with the March 22, 2023 notice letter significantly incorporated the further refinement and comment provided by the North Idaho Working Group (NIWG) on the prior proposal. The Proposed Action as currently configured follows the consensus recommendations from the NIWG and should be the action selected in the final decision.

I am reiterating here that the IPNF Forest Plan revision process over many years resulted in the 2015 Forest Plan being adopted. The Forest Plan resulted in the 2015 closure of certain Management Areas to over-snow vehicle use and in balance designated the upper Pack River (aka South Selkirk Crest) as Management Area 1e Primitive Land. This provided for re-opening this area through the current process. This designation provides that winter motorized use is appropriate, while prohibiting summer motorized use. It is important that the Proposed Action follows that Forest Plan designation and guidance, and that multiple-use is upheld. The Proposed Action should not be changed in that regard.

In addition, the final over-snow vehicle use map needs to clearly provide for year around over-snow vehicle use upon all MVUM routes open to wheeled vehicles. Consistent mapping and access across the seasons are important.

I look forward to the decision and implementation, and continued work to support over-snow vehicle access and use on the National Forests.

Sincerely,

/s/ John Finney