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Organization: Troyer, Steve

Title:

Comments: My comments attached.

Dear USFS:

My name is Steve Troyer. I am a frequent backcountry skier in the Stanislaus National forest. I also occasionally use a snowmobile as a transportation route to access high country terrain I have been to Highland Lakes several times using this approach in the last few years. My friend and I love to do this as it is a very remote destination and usually there are very few skiers around when we go. We ski the peaks like Hiram and Folger around Highland lakes and the surrounding wilderness.

One thing that is annoying about this today is that snowmobiles typically don't stay in the areas that they are legally allowed to access. We often run into their tracks in wilderness areas and on steep slopes where they can cause avalanche danger. I have often seen snowmobile tracks in the wilderness around Woodchuck Basin and Highland Lakes.

I have also wanted to go skiing in the Pacific Valley area below Bull Run Peak. I have never gone there but it seems like a lot of fun. I was there with my dog just recently (Sept 2, 2018,) and it's clear that you could drive a snowmobile to get to the base of the valley below BRP and then climb on skins or snowshoes to access excellent terrain.

As a skier and someone who wants the most amount of terrain accessible and enjoyable by the most people. I believe that DEIS Alternative 5 is the best one. It provides snowmobiles access to all the areas that I enjoy and I am sure many more on Sonora Pass., but it clearly limits their access to the wilderness boundaries. This means more people can come and access the wilderness terrain on skis or snowshoes and snowmobiles can access areas outside of the wilderness.

The other nice thing about DEIS #5 is that it limits access North of Hwy 4 around Bear Valley. This area is the most accessible to backcountry skiers today and allowing snowmobiles to have unfettered access will cause conflict and snowmobiles, because they can cover more ground more quickly, will always win the day.

This maximizes more enjoyment for more people. When snowmobiles have unfettered access to all terrain, then it means just a very few people can enjoy the terrain since it only takes a few snowmobiles to use up the available powder quickly. Their motorized advantage helps skiers get to access such terrain but the same advantage turns into a disadvantage when so many snowmobiles tear up the terrain.

Thanks