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First name: Joseph

Last name: Gill

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a snowmobile user of the Hgwy 4 region, I have great concern over the PRE-FERRED ALTERNATIVE of the Hgwy 4 corridor! Ive been sledding the 4 corridor many years now. As a transplant from Nevada, my first experience riding 4 was disappointment. I was disheartening to see so much amazing ground to ride only to be informed it was ALL OFF LIMITS? I was shown the hillsides along the highway people were allowed to ride on. I was shown Mesquito and Stan meadows where people are allowed to ride around in circles and i was taken om the 22+ MILE RIDE back to Highland Lake where I was again shown a VERY SMALL available place to ride. I was NOT inspired to ever ride this area again. The fact is for me though, it and 108 are the only 2 places to ride within 100 miles one way. So, I began to ride the Hgwy 4 corridor and make the best of it. I quickly learned of the cross user dynamic on the first mile of the trail by skiers to Alpine lake. I've NEVER had one single negative experience or conflict. In fact, in the 6 years that followed of me riding here, Ive had many friendly encounters. Waves, Smiles, Kids in awe of the cool machines, jealousy by the dads that they couldnt go as well....I even began to give kids free rides up and down the road on days we arrived back to the Sno_park early. We really do have a wonderful community of users on Hgwy 4. So, the IMMEDIATE question is WHY is the USFS PROPOSING so MANY SWEEPING RESTRICTIONS?

It was in my second season of riding here I learned that PACIFIC VALLEY was actually OPEN to snowmobiles! This became my NEW FAVORITE riding area! No more LOOOOONG ride to tiny little Highlands. Fun technical riding, GREAT SNOW, and I soon learned of the Lookout Peak area. Ive been riding these areas consistently for 5 years and KNOW EVERY INCH of it!

The USFS is now saying it was listed as "NEAR NATURAL" and SUPPOSED to be RESTRICTED since 1991? What we can say with CONFIDENCE and EVEN LACK OF EVIDENCE OTHERWISE...is that there have been NO ISSUES SINCE 1991 that would JUSTIFY enforcing these restrictions now almost 3 DECADES later? The current proposal confines ALL RIDING into the drainage bottoms and restricts ALL of the mountain, technical style riding we go there to enjoy to begin with. Why Mesquito Meadow was removed on the Pre-Ferred Alternative as well is beyond comprehension. Its just taking away a place to ride for no real reason in a place that is ALREADY as RESTRICTED as it can be? Mosquito Meadow and ALL EXISTING pockets along Hgwy 4 that have been enjoyed by snowmobilers for the last 30 years need to be left alone and can be listed under a NEAR NATURAL WINTER MOTORIZED ACCESS areas. The ENTIRE PACIFIC VALLEY/LOOKOUT PEAK zone bordering Wilderness boundaries should be listed as NEAR NATURAL WINTER MOTORIZED ACCESS.

Unless there becomes some sort of EVIDENCE, STUDY or IMPACT ANALYSIS done at Highland Lake proving there is a NEED for a 24" MINIMUM requirement, this proposal needs to be stricken. The snow pack fluctuates WILDLY ESPECIALLY in the early and late season. You can have 4' on 1 hillside and dirt on the southern exposure. Snowmobile owners do not put their expensive machines at risk of hitting rocks, stumps, etc. For that fact alone snow level is a self-policing dynamic. Repairs are EXTREMELY COSTLY. But we do enjoy accessing the highcountry, especially late in the season when the valley temps climb into the 90's-100's in late spring. The access to this area is all by forest road. Even if there was minimal snow, the road cannot be damaged by a snowmobile and the sled will recieve more damage than any feature of the environment. How to police and enforce such a policy can also open up a pandoras box for the Rangers tasked with patrolling? How can you enforce a rule that will NEVER be consistent, which "snow depth" never is? This threatens to only possibly CREATE conflict between officials and users?

ATTACHMENTS: Photographs