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Stanislaus National Forest Supervisor's Office

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Subject: Stanislaus OSV Designation

The California 4 Wheel Drive Association (C4WDA) was founded in 1959 and we are a non-profit organization that has actively promoted the advancement of vehicle oriented outdoor recreation.

C4WDA is a volunteer-based organization of enthusiasts who promote responsible family recreation and exercise environmental conservation for protecting access to public lands.

C4WDA represents over 8,000 members and 160-member clubs. We are the largest organization of this type in California.

The Proposed Action (Alt 5) makes piecemeal work out of what's designated as the Hwy108 area on the maps. Users and USFS personnel will be guessing where boundaries are when in these areas. This entire area needs to be opened from the east side of 108 by Strawberry, all the way to Dardanelle and Kennedy Meadow south of 108, to the northern Emigrant Wilderness Boundary. Some of this terrain is steep, and may not get ridden, but designating the entire area as open leaves users, and law enforcement both very clear on boundaries without having to rely on guesswork.

-The Herring Creek Loop area only designates the road as open. Not the slopes in the middle and not the area outside the loop. We're not just trail riders! Please designate the area inside and outside of the Herring Creek Loop as open to OSV cross-country use. Willow Meadow, Hammil Canyon and the surrounding area needs to be open.

-The proposal (Alt 5) designates ZERO high alpine, big mountain terrain for snowmobile use within the Stanislaus. Sonora Pass isn't always reachable from the Hwy 108 Snopark. The Eagle meadows area needs to remain open to the very obvious ridge that defines the Wilderness boundary from Waterhouse lake, to Cooper Peak to Castle Rock to the Three Chimneys. This ridge as a boundary is easy to understand. And we need Eagle Peak and Bull Run Rock open.

-The old logging road grades from Dardanelle up to Eagle Meadow along the sides of Eagle Creek are not designated as open in the proposed alternative. These slopes already see use currently, and the Donnell fire has opened up sight lines and travel corridors. We need both sides of Eagle Creek from 108 be designated at open to cross country OSV use.

The Proposed action (Alternative 5) designates the area just west of Sonora Pass as closed on April 15 to match the Bridgeport Winter Recreation area. After the pass opens and the hundreds of skiers show up to ski the pass, this small meadow and hillsides are the only places to ride most years on the Stanislaus late in the season.

Plenty of snowmobilers drive up the pass once it's open to ride this zone. NO CLOSING DATE ON THE PASS.

-The Proposed action (Alternative 5) only designates the Long Valley lowlands as open to OSV use. We're not just Meadow Riders. The slopes around Long Valley should be designated open to OSV use! The ridge up to the three chimneys and the ridge overlooking Relief Reservoir are a logical boundary. Designate the Valley OPEN.

-The entire Pacific Valley to Highland Lakes road area should be designated open to cross-country OSV use, as it was in the proposed action in 2015. There are very well-defined ridges encompassing most of this area that define the wilderness boundary. We need Lookout Mountain and the surrounding area open. The bowls from Bull Run to Henry Peak to the Wilderness boundary by Peep Sight Peak should be open. This area offers the only true 'big mountain riding' and skiing off of the Hwy 4 corridor.

-The proposal (Alternative 5) removes the north ends of Jelmini and Beartrap Basins from being open to snowmobiles. Let them know this is not realistic. The slopes leading from this area are extremely steep and will be self-policing long before the wilderness boundary. The entire North Hwy 4 area should be managed as presented in Alternative 4. The Cabbage Patch/Mattley Ridge area should be designated as demonstrated in

Alternative 4.

-The Proposed Action leaves the Bear Valley ski area as closed to OSV use. There's a long history of locals and visitors having this area open for snowmobile skiing and snowmobiling after the ski area closes!

-The area west of Whittakers Dardanells provides an endless network of roads and meadows that sit above 7k elevation and provide great low consequence riding in high avalanche conditions. Access to this area is provided from the small bridge under Spicer Meadows Reservoir and from FS52/5N14 out of Dorrington. The area is labeled as South Hwy 4 on the maps. Please designate this open as it appears in alternative 4. This would help take some of the stress off of the Alpine snopark in big winter years.

C4WDA appreciates this opportunity to be involved in the public planning process on behalf of its members who enjoy OSV Recreation in the Stanislaus National Forest.

Please contact me if you have questions or wish to discuss any aspect of these comments.

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