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Comments: Comments on Stanislaus OSV Designation

The last time I went back country skiing in the Stanislaus NF was in 1997. Snowmobilers were such a problem, I swore I'd never go back. And I have not been back. Fumes, frozen tracks, noise and actual harassment resulted in us leaving prematurely and very unhappy.

Apparently, the current management plan for Stanislaus NF adopted in 1991 established several roadless and near natural areas that were supposed to be off-limits to motorized vehicles. Unfortunately, in an apparent nod to motorized interest groups, the Forest Service did not issue legal orders to enforce those closures. As a result, snowmobilers have been using these non-motorized areas with impunity. That explains why we had such a bad experience.

The preferred plan, which I believe is Alternative 5, only protects Round Valley near Highway 4 and the Crabtree and Gooseberry areas of Dodge Ridge. This is totally unfair to skiers, snow-shoers and hikers. Please do not reward snowmobilers for ignoring the Forest Plan for the last 27 years.

Please adopt Alternative 3, the only alternative to fully comply with established regulations by minimizing conflict between snowmobiles and skiers. In addition to those areas preserved in Alternative 5, the following areas should be set aside for non-motorized recreation; Mattley Ridge, Cabbage Patch to Black Spring, Osborne Hill and Lake Alpine, Big Meadow, and Herring Creek Road.

Thank you.

Jeff Ball

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