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Title:

Comments: Thank you for taking the time to review my comment and allowing everyone to submit as well in regard to the Stanislaus National Forest DEIS Over Snow Vehicle Alternatives.

I have lived around Lake Tahoe for 12 years now, the reason I moved here from Minnesota is snowmobiling. I grew up snowmobiling with family and friends, it is a life passion. I would like ALTERNATIVE 4 to be chosen. Snowmobile community already has limited to few areas in the Sierra Nevada Mountains due to the amount of acreage closed for wildernesses, national parks, and National Forest areas designated to NONE Over Snow Vehicles Every decade I see National Forest Areas closing to motorized and OVS use, the areas keep getting smaller and the population keeps increasing.

The slogan for the National Forest Service is "TO PROTECT THE LAND AND SERVING PEOPLE". I agree we need to protect the lands and serve the people by allowing EVERYONE no matter what type of transportation is used to have access and enjoy the Every National Forest. There are many reasons why I feel ALTERNATIVE 4 is the ONLY option.

SAFETY

Limiting riding areas only makes it more dangerous for the snowmobile community when it comes to safety. Mt Rose is already small enough, on a busy day it can be dangerous with the amount of users in avalanche terrain. OSV areas need to be spread out over distance to avoid potential accidents. Closing the all the alpine will increase risk safety for all too due to concentrating snowmobile on specified route. At multi use trailheads there should be designated routes and access areas for both human and motorized power use. This will benefit both in the experience and safety of the nation forest that should be available for all.

PCT

The PCTA website states "Winter time travel is discouraged as dangerous conditions exist"

Limiting crossings will only make it more dangerous in the crossing areas due to avalanche terrain and amount of users concentrated to one area. Limiting crossings will only make snowmobile users travel further to get around. The PCT is a summer used trail and I never see any PCT Hikers in winter from Sonora Pass to the Sierra Buttes. The PCT does not get used in the winter and should not be taken into account for snowmobiles as I consider it to be a summer use trail. How many summer use motorized crossing are there? I feel there are hundreds of motorized use roads and trails that cross the PCT trail in the summer time. When the PCT is covered in snow there is NO IMPACT to the National Forest or the trail. Sierra Nevada's average 450 inches of snow a year on the crest and that is the main location of the PCT and the heart of snowballing. When the snow melts and the hikers return there is no evidence of a snowmobile use.

SOW DEPTH

Measurements should take into account several factors due to changing mountain conditions and the environment we live in. We need to take into account trailhead access/parking, wind, and new snow storm totals in the alpine, sun and compaction. Are hikers, cross country skiers, backcountry skiers subject to any snow depth requirement? With fluctuations in snow levels, depths should only be considered none the alpine as roads and trails are used for access. Fluctuating snow levels need to be considered so parking and access for all can be achieved.

SHARING

We need to share the National Forest; snowmobilers are not trying to close anyone else's lands. The Stanislaus National Forest Land needs to be open to EVERYONE. I feel the fact the federal government accepted a lawsuit from a private entity such as Snow Lands or any biased group is absurd. The amount of dirt bikes, mountain bikes, jeeps/off road vehicles, 4 wheelers, power boats all are used in this same National Forest Area year round which is motorized use. It is not fair to discriminate between any motorized vehicles or man powered use between seasons. For hikers, backcountry users, cross country skiers, there are many areas to use in the Stanislaus National Forest where snowmobiles are not allowed. Backcountry skiers have many options to

choose from to avoid snowmobile traffic.

ENVIRONMENT

People think snowmobiling is so bad for the environment because of the noise and smell. New machines are more fuel efficient and due to being all fuel injected which emits fewer emissions than a carbureted motor. My new snowmobile gets 16 miles to the gallon which is what most cars and trucks get. People travel for thousands of miles via car, airplane, bus, and helicopter to go skiing and snowboarding. I use my snowmobile to access every legal area I can to go snowboarding. I chose to not ride the resorts and mainly the backcountry. How many millions of people come to Tahoe every year to go skiing at the resorts and the backcountry? Then ALL ski resorts should be closed due to motorized use/access in the national forest when leasing the land from the forest service.

ECONOMY

There are several snowmobile touring companies as well as local shops, restaurants, hotels, resorts, and countless others that will suffer from the closure. These businesses rely on the National Forest Lands to be open for everyone to use and enjoy. The snowmobile community and tourism puts money into local businesses to promote the local economy.

LOCATIONS

I use both snowmobiles and my own two feet to hike and snowboard Every National Forest. I chose my location based on my activity for the day. If I chose to hike/splitboard, I will not go to an area where snowmobiles are allowed. There is already so much terrain closed to snowmobiles where backcountry users can enjoy without snowmobile use. Such as -every Wilderness in the Sierra Nevada range, Clark Fork, Eagle Creek, Highlight Basin to name a few.

Please NEVER close any of the high alpine country along the Sierra Crest as this my favorite place to snowboard and snowmobile. It is world class terrain and again too far for most backcountry skiers/splitboarders to access the crest.

Please NEVER close Ebbetts Pass or Sonora Pass. Again, this area these areas are too deep that no foot travel accesses this terrain in the winter time. If the Stanislaus National Forest gets closed, then nobody will use it. National Forest service lands need to stay open to all public type of access including over snow vehicles (OSV). Please never close Bear Valley Ski Resort, Bulla Run Peak, Peep Sight Peak, Lookout Peak, and the high country of the highland Leaks Area. There is so much great high country access around Bear Valley and Lake Alpine for all Non-Motorized Users to enjoy. The high country near the crest is not accessible for most due to the distance from any trailhead which is why it needs to stay open for Over Snow Vehicle use.

Please never close any OSV are in the Stanislaus. This is hands down the most beautiful high country to in the West Coast. Do not close anything in Kennedy Meadows, any of the high country in Long Valley Creek including The Three Chimneys/East Flange Rock, any of the high country in Clarks Fork. Again, this is some of the last great accessible high-country by OSV on the Sierra Nevada Range and it must stay open for All to enjoy or there will be no OSV high country left.

National Forest are in or around highway 108.

RESORTS/SNOW CATS

What is the impact on the environment with all the ski resorts in the Sierra Nevada's? Resorts use diesel generators and power which is run by fossil fuels to run the resort for people to enjoy the National Forest. No different than snowmobilers using their snowmobiles to access the Stanislaus National Forest. Public lands need to stay open for all. If our areas close, the resorts will not close on the same National Forest lands. If so, this is clearly not a fair option as a diesel snow cat being used over snow use rather than my snowmobile?

REGULATION

As an avid snowmobiler and backcountry snowboarder I believe in access regulation. I am discouraged when I see snowmobile tracks in a designated closed area. I am in favor of fines and regulations for offenders. I feel snow park parking passes, OSV vehicle registration funds should go towards access and regulation enforcement.

There is a place for all types of access and understanding the rules/laws is the foundation. A shared access for all with a complete understanding of the rules by all the Stanislaus National Forest can be enjoyed by all.

SAVE TAHOE SNOWMOBILING

Thank you again for taking the time to read my comment. I truly hope that ALTERNATIVE 4 is chosen as snowmobiling is my life passion.

THANK YOU

BRIAN NIGON