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First name: Martin

Last name: Smith

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Martin Smith. I served for 10 years as a trail crew foreman for the Superior RD on the Lolo NF. I'm including a letter of support for snowmobiling in the Nez Perce-Clearwater NF. In the 10 years of working the Montana-Idaho state line trail and the SRD trails, such as Heart Lake, Pearl Lake, and Dalton Lake trail complex, the Hoodoo Lake basin I don't recall ever finding debris or damage from any snowmobiling.

Please see the attached letter.

ATTACHMENT BELOW

To Whom It May Concern: My name is Martin Smith, a resident of Bethel, Alaska. I am writing in support of the three proposed special management units, Hoodoo Pass, Surveyor Creek, and Black Lead/Williams Lake in the [ldquo]Great Burn[rdquo] area. I am a former USDA Forest Service Trail Manager from the Lolo National Forest, Superior Ranger District. I[rsquo]ve maintained trails along the Idaho/Montana state line for many years. In all those years I[rsquo]ve observed no damage to vegetation, trail beds, or even on larger trees from Hoodoo Pass all the way to Lookout Pass. I[rsquo]ve managed trails for over a decade in on the SRD in nearly every drainage and ridgeline containing a trail. I[rsquo]ve been in the area as a snowmobiler myself and have seen the damage a natural avalanche can produce including 12[rdquo] trees snapped like twigs and strewn about the hillside, roads severely damaged due to the lack of proper runoff ditches filled with plant matter and brush. I[rsquo]ve seen vegetation destroyed by people walking around a boggy wet area because a spring has [ldquo]migrated[rdquo] along the trial bed and is no longer using the intended drainage path. With that said, there are over a quarter million acres of [ldquo]Great Burn[rdquo] area with 15 [ldquo]proposed wilderness[rdquo] areas in both Idaho and Montana. The general acreage proposed for use by backcountry snowmobilers is less than 10% of that area. Forest plans should include the opportunity to recreate for all members of the community from the basic foot hiker on trails to backcountry horsemen to ATV riders, to hunters, to snowmobiling. Mineral County brings outdoorsmen from all across the country in all seasons to participate in their chosen form of recreation. As a trail manager it always amazed me to see out of state plate from as far away as Arizona, Maine, and of course not as far away, California. Folks from Washington and Oregon travel to Superior to recreate, including snowmobiling, in the Hoodoo area as well as other areas. These snowmobilers bring much needed economic support to the community of Superior, one of the most economically challenged communities along the Interstate 90 corridor in Montana. Closing these areas, especially the Hoodoo area for Superior, means harming the economic intake of the communities around them. I ask you to use caution when considering closing these areas and the impact it would have on winter recreation and the local economies of the communities servicing riders in the area. Thank you for your time and consideration of my letter. Sincerely, Martin L. Smith /s/Bethel, Alaska