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First name: Mike

Last name: Scarlett

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

My name is Mike Scarlett. I enjoy using the Pole Creek Nordic Ski Area and wish to continue doing so for many years to come. Please consider the following list of substantive comments that I have prepared.

1. As an active nordic skier who enjoys regular usage of the Pole Creek recreational area, I ask that the Pole Creek Nordic Area be removed from the proposed treatment areas in the Pole Creek Vegetation Management Project. The parts of the trail system lacking tree cover lose snow quickly due to sun and wind. Not only do nordic skiers enjoy the trees for their aesthetic beauty, but they need the conifers to protect and maintain snow on the trails for the enjoyment of the many nordic skiers who use this recreational area.

According to project maps for the Pole Creek Vegetation Management, the proposed clear cut areas directly impact our ski trail system. A significant number of people who enjoy the trails are in their 40's, 50's or older. Because it will take 50 years or more to grow trees large enough to protect the snow that falls on the trails, I am requesting that the Pole Creek Nordic Area be removed from the Pole Creek Vegetation Management Project.

The Pole Creek trails have been in the area for over 50 years. This nordic ski area is well known and widely used. Part of the draw to this area is the quality of the trail system. Dedicated Powder Pass Nordic Club members volunteer their time to groom and pack these trails. Groomed and packed trails make for exceptional skiing and the quality of work put into these trails at Pole Creek make them some of the best in the Bighorns. On many occasions pulling into the parking lot I take note of vehicles from not only Johnson county, but also neighboring counties like Big Horn, Sheridan, and Campbell. It is also not unusual to see out of state license plates in the Pole Creek parking lot as well. People of all ages enjoy this trail system. As a member of the Buffalo community I am grateful to have such a quality recreational facility located approximately a half hour from town where so many people can enjoy the beauty of nordic skiing in the Bighorn mountains. I am requesting that the Pole Creek Nordic Area be removed from the Pole Creek Vegetation Management Project.

I request that the U.S. Forest Service recognizes the Pole Creek Nordic Area as an officially recognized winter sports area. Doing so would protect this highly used recreation area for future generations to enjoy.

I disagree with the Pole Creek Vegetation Management area using the Pole Creek Nordic Ski Area because many of the ski trails intersect with logging roads that would be highly used for timber harvest during winter months. Since the public would lose access to this area, it would bring the Pole Creek Nordic Ski area to an end. For this reason I am requesting that the Pole Creek Nordic Area be removed from the Pole Creek Vegetation Management Project.

The Pole Creek Vegetation Management encompasses a large area of the Bighorn mountains. The highly used and well established Pole Creek Nordic Ski Area represents a very small percentage of overall acres in this project. When moving forward with the planning of this project I ask that the U.S. Forest Service remove the Pole Creek Nordic Ski Area from the areas being considered for vegetation management.

So in conclusion, I ask that the Forest Service remove the Pole Creek Nordic Area from the Pole Creek Vegetation Management Project. Thank you for taking the following list of substantive comments into consideration as decisions are made in the development of this project.

Sincerely,

Mike Scarlett

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