

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/1/2024 6:00:00 AM

First name: Brooke

Last name: Lincoln

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Email: Lolo Plan Revision Comments

Attachment #1:

Re: Lolo National Forest Plan Revision comment

To whom it may concern:

I am the owner of the 50,000 Silver \$ in Haugan, Mineral County. My biggest concern is that the forest be open for recreation, particularly motorized.

As we all know, the timber industry in Mineral County is all but gone. Over 90% of Mineral County is government owned. This leaves us little room for industry or commerce other than recreation on our neighbors (the Government). Given our geographic location and Lookout Pass being the largest entry and exit point on Interstate 90 for the state of Montana, we are well-positioned to capitalize on an outdoor recreation economy. The Lolo National Forest must recognize and support this,

I support all forms of recreation and believe there is room for us all however, it is my well-informed experience that motorized recreationists bring and spend their money here. Non-motorized recreationists come, use the forest, and leave with their wallets full. I encourage you to look at more opportunities for well-managed motorized recreation opportunities. Seasonal closures need to be lifted and more routes opened in order to keep this use dispersed. The 50 inch rule should be reevaluated to reflect today's reality of wider recreational vehicles.

My other concern is catastrophic wildfire. While there is a lot of effort being given to the WUI, the general forest we are surrounded by continues to deteriorate, becoming more and more of an overgrown tinderbox, again due to the demise of logging. If the current non-management system persists, we will lose even our next best industry-recreation. When it is all black, they will go elsewhere.

Sincerely,

Brooke Lincoln

March 22, 2024

Attachment 2:

Re: Lolo National Forest Plan Revision

The Montana Nightriders Snowmobile Club (Club) has been in existence for since 1972 (52 years) in the west end of Mineral County. Our mission is to develop and maintain a system of snowmobile trails, many of which are groomed and family-friendly. Several generations of winter enthusiasts have worked tirelessly to keep accessible areas open yet respect the environment we ride in. We are over 300 members strong.

There are several areas that are proposed to be removed from our historical riding territory that we do not want to lose:

*St. Regis Basin & Lakes: If this is some kind of protection for the ski area, please consider what we have already given up for an operation that is run by a different Forest and, generally speaking, gives nothing to our local economy. We can no longer park on top of the pass, causing loss of a trailhead (and parking). The ski area operator consistently plows over or blockades our through-trail losing connectivity to the Idaho winter trail system. Further, this is one of the few spring riding areas we have left, given the decline of logging.

*Forest Road 445: While not a designated trail, this road is well-used as a side trip off the main trail system. It is critical link to the St. Joe on the Idaho side. There are many open play areas, particularly on top under the powerlines.

*State Line area from Silver Creek Road (FS305) west to Dominion Creek Road (FS810). Historically, we have ridden an area paralleling about a mile wide on the north side of the State Line Road (FS391). Natural glades make this a heavily used play area that would be impossible to police if designated other than "open."

On the St. Regis Geographic Area Winter Recreation Opportunity Map, particularly in the Northeast, you have designated areas as Semi-Primitive Motorized yet have provided no connectivity between them. Did you just have to draw some purple areas? These will do winter motorized recreationists no good if we can't legally get there. Please amend the map to provide connectivity.

The Nez-Perce Clearwater Forest has Decided to allow winter motorized access in areas of the Hoodoo's that are contiguous with the Lolo on the Montana side. They have already done the work of the USFS, of which the Lolo is a part. We strongly request you reopen the historically ridden areas of the Hoodoo's to winter motorized recreation. The science on the Idaho side is no different from the science on the Montana side of the imaginary State Line. Just like the deer in the summer, snowmobilers in the winter have no way of knowing where this line is. Enforcement would be impossible.

Sincerely,

Dan Strebeck, President