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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Special Recreation Management Areas Proposed Option within the Recommended Wilderness

I am writing to show my support of the Special Recreation Management Areas Proposed Option within the Recommended Wilderness.

The 2012 Forest Planning Rules call for sustainable recreation use, both motorized and non-motorized. The 2012 rules do Not prohibit snowmobile use in the RWA.

Snowmobilers have been using these ares for the past 30 years with no proven disruption to the wildlife,(in the winter) and without the conflict of users.

There is discussion that snowmobilers are disturbing Goats in the Goat Lake and the Blacklead Mountain area.

There has never been a sighting of a Goat or a track in this area in the winter. There is an average of twelve feet of snow in these areas making it impossible for goats to even access these areas.

A herd of goats winter on Land Owner Mountain in the Lolo national forest and are regularly seen about 300 to 400 yards from snowmobilers on the 250 road. The goats do not display any reaction that would suggest they are disturbed.

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks has found that snowmobile activity Does Not correlate with declines in goat herds.

The 2012 Travel Plan ROD states that no evidence of Lynx was found in the Great Burn Area (2.b. pg.52).

The Forest Service wildlife biologist at a Clearwater National Forest Collaborative meeting stated that there is no evidence that snowmobiles negatively impact wolverines.

The 2012 Planning Rule does Not prohibit snowmobile activity from a RWA.

There has been No Evidence of any degradation of ecological and social characteristics over the past 30 years caused by snowmobiles.

If there were any the area would not qualify for a RWA designation.

I have been riding the Great Burn Area for over 15 years. There is not another area nearby that can compare to the scenery, the vastness, the terrain, the snow conditions or the solitude. It is far and away the riding area of choice for my friends and me.

The Goat Lake and the surrounding bowls, the Blacklead Mountain, including the south facing bowls, Deer Creek drainage and the surrounding bowls, and Doe Creek drainage and surrounding bowls need to be added to the Williams Lake cherry stem access.

Sincerely,

John Whitmarsh

Sent from my iPad