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First name: David

Last name: Smith

Organization:

Title:

Comments: David Smith

P.O. Box 1193

Mi Wuk Village, CA

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Phyllis, the following message contains my experience, and feelings about the proposed OSV Action.

I am a past snowmobiler and spent 20 + years riding many miles in the Stanislaus National Forest. Many times accompanied by my wife.

I don't ride today due to health issues, but snowmobiling still holds some of the best memories of mine and my wife's lives.

I have read with interest, the proposed changes to the way things have been done in the past and proposed changes concerning limitations on areas that can be ridden, and area closures.

When I started snowmobiling up country there was no grooming. It was a long day to make it to the Dardenelle's resort area. Cliff Chaney, who owned the resort at that time, started the first grooming in this area. That opened up a lot more areas to ride because then you could make it to Kennedy Meadows in less than an hour. Before there were groomed roads, there weren't any cross country skiers or snowshoers above the gate closure area.

Once the grooming started, (which was funded and still is), by California State Green Sticker money, for off road Hiway vehicle use, they found a smoother and easier area to ski and snowshoe.

It appears to me that cross country skiers and snowmobilers should have their own areas to use. I have snowmobiled in other states and that is what you see.

By closing back country areas to snowmobilers, there will be more interaction between both groups. I have never seen skiers further than a few miles past the gate closure point. Making a smaller area to ride will worsen the problem.

As far as the impact on wildlife, I have never seen any large animals while riding. I have seen very few small animals as well. An occasional marmot or squirrel, which was rare.

As far as destruction to the terrain, I know you've heard this before, but "when the snow melts the tracks are gone". For some reason, over snow vehicles have been linked together with ATV's & 4x4's. I have seen the destruction to the terrain caused by both. There is nothing easier on our Forest resources than snowmobiling.

Snow depth guidelines should be followed. Anyone with any riding experience will not ride in less than 18" to 24" of snow. They can cause expensive damage to their equipment on exposed stumps or rocks. None of them want to do that!

If you go up to the gate closure during the week there may be 6 to 8 pick-ups with trailers in the parking lot. Most of those riders will be locals.

I know there are larger crowds on the weekends. Seems to me, there us a lot being made out of something that with such limited use.

The Stanislaus National Forest is big enough for everybody. There should be plenty of room for all.

Why then, should the snowmobile rs be punished when their Green Sticker money makes more accessibility to the rest, due to the grooming their fees pay for.

Once again, the impact of snowmobiles, is nothing compared to that of the ATVs
& 4x4's.

Dave Smith 209-586-9586