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Title:

Comments: It is remarkable how opening up an area of public land to a specific activity can have so much contention. Motorized use in some areas is seen as disruptive & amp; obnoxious, even when environmental concerns are addressed & amp; mitigated. This snowmobiling area has a lot of terrain & amp; poses challenges for those who choose to explore it, that is the allure. I see this as an opportunity to enhance multi-use recreation in the Stanislaus & amp; adjacent forests. Concerns to be addressed are how to regulate use when seasonal snowpack is limited, & amp; protect Wilderness that borders the winter recreation area. Having much experience in the area I have found that terrain boundaries can work when there is the presence of USFS Snowmobile Rangers. Making public contacts & amp; having an adequate & amp; free map is a good start. I believe that the Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area & amp; the Bridgeport Avalanche Center have set good operating standards & amp; have given the snowmobilers excellent references. Active Rangers that engage the user can address the where & amp; why areas should be avoided, & amp; recommend current avalanche conditions. The BAC also offers free snowmobile specific avalanche awareness classes, that both enhance the experience & amp; create an element of proactive safety. On-the-ground logistics is important & amp; reasonable boundaries need to be set. In proposed mapping layouts, some areas at the Sonora pass summit have non motorized delineations that will be unmanageable. Feasibly having a non motorized border in a meadow area will not work. The attraction of open riding areas is too much for most to pass up, leaving a scrambling workload for rangers to enforce, more likely making enemies than allies. If you are considering opening a meadow area, encompass all or most of it. Much of the Stanislaus side of Sonora pass is well defined by confining terrain, although some riverbeds that lead into Wilderness must be well signed & amp; patrolled. A strong cooperation must also exist between the H-T & amp; Stanislaus forests, making it a unique snowmobile ranger force. The Stanislaus should also rely on & amp; help fund the already established Bridgeport Avalanche Center, who puts out up to three avalanche advisories a week. Allowing harmonious inclusion of the center can help it grow & amp; improve the overall product & amp; visibility of the safety messages given. I support this management expansion of snowmobiling in the Sonora pass area but regulations & amp; boundaries need some revision. There is opportunity to create a recreation community where riders will self-regulate themselves if given realistic parameters. Please let me know where I can help.