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Comments: To: USFS

From: Ryan Burns member of EMPORA (Eagle Meadows Property Owners Association)

I myself and 80+ other members of the association are avid snowmobilers in the Eagle Meadows area of the Stanislaus National Forest. Some of the property owners would not even be able to access their cabins easily if the Alt 5 proposal is approved. In my situation under the Alt 5 proposal I would not be able to ride directly from my cabin to surrounding snowmobile terrain. This is not acceptable as we are not just meadow and trail riders.

Users and USFS personnel will be guessing where boundaries are when in these areas. We want the entire area be opened from the east side of 108 by Strawberry, all the way to Dardanelle and Kennedy Meadow south of 108, to the northern Emigrant Wilderness Boundary. Some of this terrain is steep, and may not get ridden, but designating the entire area as open leaves users, and law enforcement both very clear on boundaries without having to rely on guesswork.

The Proposed action (Alternative 5) only designates the Long Valley lowlands as open to OSV use. We're not just Meadow Riders. We want the slopes around Long Valley be designated open to OSV use! The ridge up to the three chimneys and the ridge overlooking Relief Reservoir are a logical boundary. Designate the Valley open.

In the proposed action the Herring Creek Loop area only designates the road as open. Not the slopes in the middle and not the area outside the loop. We're not just trail riders! We are asking to designate the area inside and outside of the Herring Creek Loop as open to OSV cross-country use. Willow Meadow, Hammil Canyon and the surrounding area needs to be open.

-The proposal designates ZERO high alpine, big mountain terrain for snowmobile use within the Stanislaus. Sonora Pass isn't always reachable from the Hwy 108 Snopark. We need the Eagle meadows area open to the very obvious ridge that defines the Wilderness boundary from Waterhouse lake, to Cooper Peak to Castle Rock to the Three Chimneys. This ridge as a boundary is easy to understand. And we need Eagle Peak and Bull Run Rock open.

The old logging road grades from Dardanelle up to Eagle Meadow along the sides of Eagle Creek are not designated as open in the proposed alternative. These slopes already see use currently, and the Donnell fire has opened up sight lines and travel corridors. We need both sides of Eagle Creek from 108 be designated at open to cross country OSV use.

The Bridgeport Winter Recreation area has great riding but is difficult to get to sometimes. Grooming this route would help access to the pass and reduce the potential impact of use on the rest of the Hwy 108 riding areas. We want this portion of 108 be designated for grooming.

The Proposed action (Alternative 5) designates the area just west of Sonora Pass as closed on April 15 to match the Bridgeport Winter Recreation area. After the pass opens and the hundreds of skiers show up to ski the pass, this small meadow and hillsides are the only places to ride most years on the Stanislaus late in the season. Closing this area on April 15 is not acceptable! Plenty of snowmobilers drive up the pass once it's open to ride this zone. NO CLOSING DATE ON THE PASS.

