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Comments: "Let's be super clear. We do not condone criminal activity of any kind, nor do we support any actions intended to obstruct or hinder anyone's use of or recreation on public lands by any legitimate means." This is a direct quote from the Winter Wildlands Alliance website in a recent response to illegal activity by one of their ambassadors".

In addition to the above quote they(WWA) are also touting how they are reclaiming lost terrain which confuses me since non-motorized backcountry users have open access to ALL areas whereas motorized and some mechanized groups have limited and restricted access in designated areas. Essentially the non-motorized groups can go everywhere the motorized groups can yet the motorized groups are limited to their designated areas. There are already large non-motorized areas not including wilderness designations where complete silence and isolation are possible.

The WWA claims they are not trying to take anyone access away yet their legal tactics are questionable at best by folks who are not even local. Their comments and actions contradict each other. This group of well funded urban weekend warriors are feeling entitled to others land and access for their own personal use. These are our public lands. To be managed and shared by all.

What this boils down to is the definition of the Over-Snow Management which should never be confused or combined with Over-Land Management which is a completely different beast. 6 months after a snowmobile has been in an area there is no trace. Snowmobiles don't disrupt the soil, water or vegetation, and therefore be subjected to the same restrictions as Over-Land motorized use.

Now the proposed plans are just that, proposed which means they can be morphed and changed as this planning process moves forward. I know that there are many people who reside within this area who are opposed to the 'proposed' changes which again is confusing that an outside group without any direct ties to the area is being allowed to bully the Forest Service into making unnecessary changes to the regional Travel Management Plan. There are State and Federal laws in place to protect a certain amount of access to our public lands by everyone. Seems that the groups who complain the most and make the most noise get the most attention from the regional government agencies. Whereas the motorized groups are the quiet ones on the sidelines who pay the most in fee's, usually bring the most economic impact to an area, and can be the best stewards of the land.

So without suggesting that the current plan stay in place, I suggest a plan with minimal impact to motorized winter access be implemented. Have a discussion with the people who use the area the most without the presence of Winter Wildlands and see what the tax paying members of that community would like to see happen.

I enjoy both human powered and motorized recreation and know that there is plenty of room for all on Public Lands.

Thank you for your time,  
Gaylan Hellyer