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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I as owner of Bear Valley Snowmobile have been privileged to work with the Forest Service as a Special Use Permittee in renting snowmobiles on Forest Service land at the Lake Alpine and Spicer Snow Parks. The proposed changes will not affect my business as our renters must stay on the groomed trails at both Snow Parks. I am concerned, however, with the economic and safety concerns that will be affected if the Alternative Map #5, the Preferred Alternative, takes effect.

The economic effects would be felt up and down the Highway 4 corridor, particularly in Bear Valley. Avid Snowmobilers stay, eat, purchase gas, groceries, souvenirs, etc. They buy second homes to be near their Winter recreational areas. Simply put, they spend a lot of money on this corridor. If the Preferred Alternative, Map 5, is established, many of these Snowmobilers would go elsewhere.

Another significant concern for me is a safety issue. By adversely restricting the off groomed trail riding. Many of the Snowmobilers would stay on the groomed snowmobile trail which would make these trails more congested and possibly unsafe. I am particularly concerned with Snowmobilers who instead of riding in fresh powder as they have in the past, would now view speed on the groomed trails as an alternative to having their fun in the snow. This could lead to very serious accidents on the snow. In passing, I would like to see an enforced speed limit, maybe 35 mph, for the groomed trails on Forest Service land.

I am a proponent of a 2 foot minimum snow base before snowmobiles are allowed to be ridden. With this base, snowmobiles would not leave any detrimental effects with respect to the surroundings. In fact, after the snow has melted, there would not be any evidence that snowmobiles had ever been there.

In closing, Bear Valley is a snowmobile mecca, an unusual community that uses snowmobiles in the Winter as it's primary mode of transportation. I have lived here, full time, for over 25 years. I am an avid skier, hiker, fisherman and appreciate our great outdoors. My snowmobile related businesses will not suffer significant financial damage if Map 5 goes into effect, but other businesses will, up and down the Highway 4 corridor and safe snowmobile riding on the groomed snowmobile trails will be in jeopardy. I would recommend Map 4 with a 24 inch minimum for on snow use. Thanks you for your consideration.

Mike Denicola