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Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a snowmobiler and backcountry snowboarder, I value all winter recreation opportunities provided by the Stanislaus National Forest.

I grew up in Pinecrest, my Father was on the Pinecrest Snowmobile Rescue Team. I was taught to help anyone and everyone in need and have assisted many stranded or injured in the backcountry. In my 25 years of snowmobiling in the Stanislaus I have never had a negative interaction with a cross-country skier.

I understand that alternative 5 is the Forest Service's preferred alternative. However, it fails to protect access to backcountry skiers and snowboarders. It also fails to protect historical snowmobile routes and areas that locals have used for generations. These areas include:

Herring Creek Loop - The interior of the loop itself and areas surrounding the loop road. Specifically quadrants: 1,7-20,24-25 and 31.

Top of the Sonora Pass - Just prior to the Tuolumne/Mono county line. Highway 108 to the Emigrant Wilderness to the right and Highway 108 to the Iceberg Wilderness to the left. This includes Saint Mary's Pass.

Long Valley (Eagle Meadows) and surrounding mountains to ridgelines

Bear Valley Ski Basin - open to wilderness boundaries

Lastly, snowmobiles have minimal environmental impact when used properly. The Forest Service should promote safe and proper ways of utilizing the forest instead of restricting access to any type of use.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Rob Smith