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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Back in the late 70's...that is 1970, as in 40 or so years ago, the Sonora Pass Sno-Goers was created. This group of riders was pretty big and they had a lot of events in the Stanislaus National Forest. They would ride the Eagle Meadows area (5N01, 5N09 and the peaks and valleys between these FS roads), the groomed HWY 108 and venture to the top of the pass for some deep pow.

There is a history here of snowmobiling that needs to stay intact and the riding areas opened. Before the Donnell Fire took out the store at Dardanelles, we were looking forward to being able to purchase fuel from them this year. Getting over the 108/Sonora Pass, is a draw due to the incredible riding terrain and snow levels. It is such a draw that we would carry gas when Dardanelles wasn't open or selling gas. When the snow depths allow, we apply for our permits online or at the border of the Stanislaus and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests. We ride the Levitt Lake area and watch some snowmobiler/snowboarders drop in for some incredible riding. Sometimes we watch the Marines practice their winter training and sometimes we sit there without seeing or hearing another sled and proclaim what a beautiful day others are missing. Being able to ride and get way back into the FS is such a rewarding experience! We work hard to get there and appreciate every moment that we get. Interesting enough, I have not seen any animal life in the area during the winter. The animals have things under control.

The family value witness when riding is a great sight to see. Families riding together, teaching the younger kids how to ride. People heading to the cabins with the excitement of waking up the next day to 6 more inches of fresh snow.

The businesses off of HWY's 108 and 4 need our business as well. The lodging, food and gas we pay for helps them get through the slower months. The sleds, fuel, travel items, etc...help the businesses at lower elevations as well. It has been proven that being stagnant is bad for our health as well as bad for our economy. Our riding is hard physical work that also allows others to make a living. We are a community that is being targeted by a small group who want to keep people from using public lands. I register my sled and I buy a Sno-Park permit that favors non motorized users by giving them 50% more access to the snow and riding areas.

-I would like to see the winter trail from the town of Bear Valley designated open which would relieve parking stress at the Alpine SnoPark.

-I would love to see the spring tradition of riding the Bear Valley Ski area when it closes. This should be a seasonal use item as it is a big draw for the area after the draw of the ski slopes closes. It brings \$\$\$ into the area which is a welcome last push to cover business costs before winter ends and things slow down.

-Please keep the incredible riding around Long Valley open! The ridge up to Three Chimneys to the ridge over looking Relief Res. is a great rip in the snow that isn't duplicated in the Stanislaus NF. We can only get up there when the snow is good and it is a logical boundary.

-it would be nice if HWY 108 was groomed after Kennedy to the top of 108 to allow the less accomplished riders a chance to get there and see the beauty.

-I would like to see the "South HWY 4" area in map (alternative #4) to be designated open like it is in map 4. There are a lot of roads to ride, good elevation and snow.

-Now that the Donnell Fire has cleared things out, it would be nice to have riding areas available that travel up both sides of Eagle Creek from 108 (Dardanelles, up Eagle Creek to Eagle Meadows)

-if cars, motorcycles, OHV can travel the FS roads, snowmobiles should be able to as well, when we get snow.

-We need to be able to mountain ride, staying off of the groomed road. Keep Eagle Peak, Bull Run Rock, Henry Peak to the Wilderness boundary by Peep Sight Peak open.

-For the Herring Creek Loop, only the road is designated open. We like to ride the slopes in the middle of the loop as well as the outside of the loop. Having different terrain for different ability riders is important.

Thank you for your time and for allowing snowmobiling to be a BIG part of the Stanislaus NF!! The Stanislaus National Forest has a reputation of being one of the best places to ride. Taking riding areas away will be a blow to the local businesses and will continue to feed into the biased approach that is already affecting the snowmobile communities right and ability to ride and have the same opportunities as the human powered snow folks.