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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To all concerned

I have stated before that I have spent my entire life in the Stanislaus National Forest. That's 44 years of hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, camping, hunting, packing with horses, OHV use and snowmobiling. I was raised by my father who was a paraplegic and confined to a wheelchair. I was taught by him to respect every aspect of our forest. He was able to find freedom and tranquility in the Stanislaus National Forest via the means of OHVs, snowmobiles, and 4x4s. These different modes of transportation allowed him to access our public lands that other people without physical limitations had access. This allowed him to be able to hunt, fish, and recreate in all these places. OSVs have given "legs" back to many people that have been stricken with physical limitations. We have a family cabin in the Cow Creek cabin tract and take advantage of all these opportunities from there as well as visit many other areas of the Stanislaus National Forest as well as the highway 4 corridor and Bear Valley areas.

I have continued raising my family and passing on these traditions the way that I was taught and for certain will be passed on to the next generation to come.

I have been able to take people, young and old, with physical handicaps to all these areas so they can enjoy our public lands as we without physical limitations do. It would be unfair to strip them of the access and opportunities the forest offers by limiting access to OSVs.

Near natural areas need to be managed differently for OSV use as the impact that OSVs cause is almost nonexistent. This is based on research and personal experience. They should be managed as near natural OSV use only.

Snow depth is another area that needs to be looked at for OSVs. 12" of snow in all cases is more than adequate. 6" of packed snow or 2-4" of ice is also adequate for safe OSV operation. Most OSV users do not want to operate their OSVs in conditions less than this because of damage to the environment and their equipment. The snow conditions change daily and should be more forgiving as conditions warrant.

Highway 108

From Strawberry and surrounding areas forest roads 4n27 and Fiddlers green area should remain open to OSV use to Herring Creek rd (4n12) and Herring Creek reservoir area all the way through Pinecrest Peak and 5n31.

All of the Herring creek loop trail areas on the outside of the loop should extend to the ridge lines on the east side of the loop trail from Pinecrest peak to Cooper peak, Castle Rock to Eagle peak ridge lines and connecting to the Long Valley area in Eagle meadows. The west side of the Herring loop trail should be open over the ridgeline allowing access to the eagle meadows area. This is great riding that allows us sufficient room to ride and explore and has been going on in these areas since the inception of snowmobiling in these areas with zero impact. I have been in these areas in summer and winter both and have never seen any harm done from OSVs. All of the Herring Creek and Eagles meadows areas are open to summer OHV recreation and OSV recreation is far less intrusive to these areas than OHVs.

Eagle meadows area needs to be looked at in the Silver Mine areas as there are people who want to access their cabins on private property via OSVs and recreate in these areas on private property and public forest land.

Sonora pass and 108 corridor

This area needs to be open to riding until the snow depth is not allowable. There is great riding well into the

spring months on good winters. The PCT trail crossing to access Levitt lake areas and Bridgeport rec areas needs to be large enough to allow multiple places to cross instead of all in one location. The PCT is covered by more snow than most places and never sees any direct impact.

The lower areas in and around Long Barn and Miwok are historically in low elevations with minimal snow accumulation to operate OSVs and should not be taken away as riding areas but not considered as riding area either for this reason.

Highway 4 and Bear Valley

From the snow park at Lake Alpine to Cape Horn on the left hand side of the highway or northwest side needs to be open to OSVs as this is great riding/skiing area and makes for easy boundary identification.

Pacific valley areas should be opened up to allow access to Bull Run And Lookout peak areas as this is great backcountry skiing areas via OSVs.

There should be a connection from Mosquito lakes and Pacific Valley area to Martial Mathers to Highland lakes as this is all great terrain challenging and both scenic with opportunities to back county ski via OSVs.

I hope that with this information you will not restrict public access to these areas and take away the ability of people with physical handicaps to access them in the winter via OSVs. It has been very rewarding and inspiring for those with physical handicaps/limitations that are able to do so. These areas are no where near a natural state and never will be.