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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Nick Stayner. I'm an RN from Billings, MT, and I'm an avid recreational user of the Custer Gallatin National Forest. I am an avid lift and backcountry skier, snowmobiler, mountaineer, mountain biker, fly fisherman, and hunter. Winter recreation is the issue most dear to my heart in terms of moving forward with future forest planning.

My wife and I spend 30-40 days in the Cooke City region each winter, and usually come from the east via snowmobile. Before we lived in Billings, and before we became snowmobilers, we enjoyed the massive amounts of non-motorized ski touring opportunities south of town and within Yellowstone NP. In recent years, we have come to cherish the snowmobile assisted ski opportunities north of Cooke City.

To me, the mountains around Cooke City represent a good balance between winter motorized and non-motorized uses. I understand the effort of certain individuals and organizations to close more areas around Cooke City to motorized use- I also have been irritated by the constant drone of our machines as well as disappointed when highmark tracks ruin a slope's ski potential. However, I would argue that the roadless skier desired a quiet recreational space need only to head south of town or into Yellowstone to enjoy a massive amount of motor-free terrain, which is far more expansive than the acreage currently available for motorized use.

All of this being said, I support an alternative that changes the least amount possible to winter recreation around Cooke City. I would support this being addressed as a "recreation emphasis area".

Another specific I'd like to address is mechanized travel, in my case on a mountain bike. I would like to see more done do work with local advocacy groups to enhance existing trails as well as development of more bike-specific regions in the forest. One area in particular I'd like to see remain accessible to mountain bikes is the Lionhead region.

With all of this in mind, I support Alternative B with emphasis on the specifics I've discussed above.

Thank you for your time,
Nick Stayner