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Organization: no

Title:

Comments: I favor alternative D for both winter and summer seasons. There is in my opinion no justification for increasing access for motorized travel in our national forests. We can still see the effects of less than 100 years of mining history on our public lands. Motorized travel scars the land, scares the wildlife, disturbs vegetation, and spreads noxious weeds. We don't need more places in the world where we can be assaulted by sound. Rather, we need more places where we can seek respite from the noise and hubbub of everyday life. One need only look at the Blue Lakes trailhead and trail to know that there are huge and ever-increasing numbers of people trying to leave the noise behind. The last thing we need is more opportunities for motorized travel.

Specifically, I favor Alternative D for winter travel on the Grand Mesa. I am a member of the Grand Mesa Nordic Council, because I love cross-country and Nordic skiing. I can be found on the Skyway, County Line, or Ward area trails as often as twice a week during the winter. These three Nordic areas represent a very small portion of Grand Mesa, and as such should be entirely off limits to over-the-snow motorized vehicles, except for the grooming equipment and for the single snowmobile corridor that cuts between the Skyway and County Line systems.

Given these general arguments, here are some important points that need to be made. First, the Winter Travel Map, which purports to show the present situation regarding winter travel, errs in that it shows the eastern portion of the Ward trail system as being open to oversnow vehicles. The northern edge of the Skyway system should also be entirely within the non-motorized category. Please correct the present Winter Travel Map to reflect that all three of the Nordic areas should be wholly within the "Oversnow Vehicles Prohibited Seasonally" category. There should even be a sizeable buffer around all three areas, except where the snowmobile corridor goes through between Skyway and County Line.

As for the future, I favor Alternative D for Grand Mesa, because it provides the greatest amount of protection from damage to the Nordic trails by motorized traffic. The Nordic Council strives to create a quality skiing environment for its members and for non-members alike, and it spends a great deal of money preparing the trail surfaces for classic and skate skiers. They do a superb job, with some of the best trails in the state. Please don't compromise that quality by allowing access from more motorized traffic.

Thanks for the opportunity to express my opinion.