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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear National Forest service, I am writing in response to the forest service management revision plan (GMUG). Specifically to the area around Crested Butte in Gunnison county, as a motorized user, snowmobiles and dirt bikes. I spend almost all of my free time out and about in our national forest. 150+ days on dirt bike and 100+ days on snowmobiles and numerous days out hiking and using my snowmobile for backcountry ski access in our beautiful landscape. Keeping our areas open to all users groups is important. I think keeping Alt-A or moving into Alt-C keeps a good balance for all NFS users. As a long time restaurant service worker, I believe closing down riding areas will have a negative impact on our local economy. Having open areas for all people to enjoy is detrimental to preserve why people come to our area to recreate thus spending money at local establishments, creating a sustainable local economy.

I understand the opposition to motorized recreation, especially on the environmental impact it has on our forest. I believe the environmental impact is really low compared to the global human impact on the environment. Especially as current snowmobiles and dirt bikes are cleaner running machines due to EPA demands on manufactures, And future machines will be even cleaner running and quieter with the advent of more efficient motors and the use of electric motors becoming available as technology advances. In my time spent in our national forest motorized vehicles do not impact wildlife and in some cases enhance the ability for animals to move around in our deep winter snow pack. For example, I have found that moose prefer to travel in old snowmobile tracks which makes it easier to move from food areas to bedding areas. Also, encountering these beautiful animals on my machine they do not seem to get spooked or stressed. They are often curious on who is in their area and go about their business. I do not encounter many other large animals while out in the winter since they migrate to lower snow level areas. I have also seen that the areas I ride and go back to in the summer on foot there are no visible indications that a snow machine has ever been through them, the vegetation is still thriving and wildlife is still abundant.

As part of Alt-C I feel the management of timber to be important to mitigate of wildfires in the future. Some of the areas we have access to are very overgrown and potential disastrous areas for a fire to break out in, and need to be managed to maintain a healthy forest.

Another important issue to keeping areas open is for safety and for the mental health of the users. Allowing people to get out and access our wonderful areas is the best release for stress that I have found. Happy people make for more productive and less destructive people. On the safety aspect it is important to have large amounts of areas for people to recreate in, keeping distance for all users to enjoy instead of confining them to small areas. Without open areas, there will be more issues with collisions, confrontations and confining people to avalanche prone areas which creates extreme danger to users, and creates stress on our already limited resource of backcountry rescue operations.

It is also important to give future generations the opportunity to enjoy our public land and give them the freedom to experience the wonderful world that is only found outside in the mountains. Giving them the ability to experience nature is the only way that we can sustain a healthy planet. If they don't get to see the natural world why would they care to take care of it?

Thanks for your time, I really appreciate what the NFS provides and the work you do to keep our lands available to all people. Ethan Johnson, Crested Butte.