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First name: South

Last name: Snowmobile Association

Organization:

Title:

Comments: [External Email]Shoshone National Forest response

[External Email]

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I appreciate that a good range of snowmobiling opportunities will continue to be offered on the Shoshone National Forest.

I generally support the Proposed Action, Alternative 4, since it continues to provide a good range of snowmobiling opportunities consistent with what exists today: Your EA clearly shows that continued snowmobiling use under Alternative 4 will not damage Shoshone National Forest resources. It further affirms that past snowmobiling use has not harmed the Forest, proving that past management has worked well and that no additional area closures are warranted. Specific reasons for my support as well as my opposition to certain parts of this Proposed Action are as follows:

I support the OSV Season Dates proposed by Alternative 4: The proposed dates of November 1 through June 15 for the North Zone (Beartooth Mountains) and Wind River District (Dubois area) - and December 1 through May 31 for the Washakie District (Lander area) are reasonable and acceptable. The EA does a good job of supporting these dates with historic SNOTEL data which show far more than adequate average snow depths.

I support keeping the entire High Lakes Wilderness Study Area open to snowmobiling: I am opposed to closing the northern and eastern portions of High Lakes as is proposed by Alternative 3. Congress made it clear that snowmobiling should be allowed to continue in this area, so that is how it must continue to be managed going forward. The adjacent Line Creek Research Natural Area should also remain open for snowmobile travel.

I am opposed to allowing Class 2 OSVs (full-sized trucks and SUVs equipped with tracks) to use groomed and ungroomed snowmobile trails: These vehicles are too heavy and too wide to use on snowmobile trails. They will cause trail damage and create safety issues. They absolutely do not belong on Shoshone National Forest snowmobile trails.

I am opposed to setting any minimum snow depth requirement before snowmobile use or trail grooming is

allowed to begin: The 2015 OSV travel rule only requires that there be "adequate" snow depth for OSV use. It does not require that any numerical minimum depth be set. Snow depth is far too variable depending on wind and weather conditions, so this rule would create an unwelcome tool for groups to try to shut snowmobiling down when snow is actually adequate enough to snowmobile.

I support adding two new ungroomed trail areas to your mapped OSV trail system: the proposed new Ghost Creek trail from Highway 212 down to Painter's Store in the Beartooths will provide important access to services. And the ungroomed trails in the Sublette Pass area near Togwotee Pass have actually existed and been signed on the ground for decades. Both will help provide important snowmobiling opportunities.

Thank you on behalf of the South Dakota Snowmobile Association,

Mary Anne Grabow

SDSA Executive Secretary

[PII]

Make today a GREAT day!