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Dear Mr. Foster,

The first time we skied the Gardiner Headwall was early summer 1996. At that time there were only a handful of skiers and generally a low-key atmosphere. This experience is in direct contrast to what has evolved in recent years. Devolved is perhaps more descriptive, it has become an absolute circus of recreational excess and environmental abuse. Technology and the pressure of humanity has far outstripped any ethical context that respects the variety of values represented by our National Forests. The atmosphere these days is more appropriate for New Orleans Mardi gras than a National Forest.

Least this be dismissed as the grouching of an old wo(man), we point out specific issues and shortcomings of the Shoshone National Forest Travel Plan.

\* Increasingly earlier snowmelt and lower snowpack has led to resource damage by "over-snow" motorized travel in spring and early summer. This is an easy fix, allow motorized use from Dec. through April and restrict to non-motorized use beginning on May 1. Seems to us this would accommodate both user groups avoiding conflict.

\* Over and disrespectful use of the Gardiner Headwall (and beyond) on opening day of the Beartooth Highway. This year was over the top, with flagrant resource damage/abuse by snowmobiles driving over, and cars parking on, fragile alpine ecosystems. There are also serious safety issues, ranging from driving while intoxicated on the Beartooth Highway to questionable stunts like snowmobiles jumping over the highway. We personally saw no Forest Service law enforcement presence, even though this flagrant, dangerous abuse was absolutely predictable based on recent years' experience.

\* The travel plan does not provide adequate protection for wilderness. The High Lakes Wilderness Study Area is a specific case in point. The current travel plan is not in compliance with the Wyoming Wilderness Act, leaving the Forest Service vulnerable to legal challenges to the current travel plan.

\* The Gardiner Headwall previously offered a unique, accessible backcountry skiing experience. This has been lost to overuse and abuse. The Forest Service serves multiple users, and when one group is catered to at the expense of another, the cost/benefit ratio needs to be more carefully assessed. We emphasize that a valued, human-powered, historical experience has been lost. Again, remedied by closing motorized use beginning on May 1.

\* Although not specifically on the Shoshone Forest, we have observed habitual violation of the AB Wilderness boundary in the Wolverine Pass and Lake Abundance areas. In our opinion, this is an indication of general lack of interest on the part of the Forest Service to support and enforce wilderness values. The Shoshone NF travel

plan reinforces this perception by adding new motorized routes in Inventoried Roadless Areas, not to mention increasing wildlife impacts in these important refugia.

Although we appreciate the opportunity to participate in the forest planning process, we sincerely believe that the current travel plan needs a lot more work that addresses the substantive issues we have raised.

Sincerely,

Jesse A. Logan

Catherine P. Logan

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