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Title:

Comments: Thanks for considering my comments regarding the GMUG Forest Plan. As a Grand Junction native, I have a long history of recreating on Grand Mesa almost exclusively in a non-motorized manner. Even as I age and am less mobile, it is still very important to me to be able to have opportunities to recreate in a quiet non-motorized area. This includes Nordic skiing and snowshoeing in the Winter, mountain biking, running and hiking in the Summer. I am a long time member of the Grand Mesa Nordic Council and have been continually impressed with each year's growing activity on the GMNC trail systems bringing skiers from around the region to experience the Grand Mesa in a quiet and low-impact manner while bolstering local economies greatly.

I think it is very important that the Winter use maps clearly designate the entire Nordic ski pods as "Oversnow Vehicles Prohibited Seasonally". There are parts of the Skyway and Ward systems that are not so designated on the Winter Travel Map but should be. Ideally the USFS will designate the Skyway, County Line and Ward Trail Systems as a special management area for cross country skiing and keep it all non-motorized. Particularly troublesome is the portion of the Ward Trail System that is designated as motorized in Alternative C. Alternative D handles this area in my preferred way and reflects current usage much better.

In general, I greatly prefer Alternative D. This alternative still leaves vast opportunities for motorized use such that users should not feel limited while doing the best job of protecting more area in a natural state. Non-motorized Winter use has proven to be extremely popular and will certainly continue to grow. It is also important that timber sales are managed in such a way so that use of the trail systems is not negatively impacted.

In addition to skiing on the GMNC maintained trail systems, I also often ski the West Bench Trail and in the Waterdog/Griffith Lake area. It is very important that these areas be maintained as a Back Country Nordic Ski Area with motorized travel restricted to designated routes as shown on my Grand Mesa National Forest Winter Recreation map of 1999.