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Comments: I strongly disagree with the proposed action of this Environmental Assessment and any of the alternatives. I have been snowmobiling areas in the proposed plan for 25 years and have not witnessed any impacts or effects to wildlife, etc. Simply stated, disturbance to the land does not exist by snowmobiles and the basis for purpose and need of this EA does not exist in my opinion. In the proposed action, the USFS is proposing to take away 80% of the "open OSV yearlong" acreage and convert it to some sort of restriction or complete blockage. This is a "multi-use" forest on our public lands.

Here are my comments:

1. The area (30 mile radius) around the saddle on Keeler/Rattle road USFS (NF-473) needs to remain open all year. This is a popular riding area accessed from the Troy, MT, Kootenai National Forest. The Troy Snowmobile Club hosts several rides in the spring in this area. I do not think that the study considered adjacent towns and folks that access the areas. An open area was designated around Moose Lake, the same should be done at the top of Keeler/Rattle (Bear Mountain) since it is a popular riding area. Our warming hut is located here.

2. In the Yaak area, all areas west of Murphy Mtn, Thunder Mtn., Keno Mtn, Buckhorn Ridge, and Canuck Peak should remain open. I am also a member of the Troy Snowmobile Club and we are working to approve and build a warming shelter at the upper end of Spread Creek. Near the pass where it drops into Deer Creek. This proposed OSV plan in the Kaniksu would ruin the club's spring rides and trips for its members.

3. The entire EA should be retracted and re-studied because the acreages are not based upon area that is truly rideable for snowmobiles after April 1. For example, the EA is full of acreage totals and comparison on what remains accessible to snowmobilers but none applies to snowmobilers unless it is ~4000' in elevation and above. This grossly mis-states and underestimates the impacts to the public (snowmobilers.)

4. The effects analysis in the EA is grossly dramatized and overstated as it pertains to impacts from snowmobiles. This is based on my 25 years of snowmobiling in these areas.

a. Not once have I had a conflict or issue with a skier or non-motorized user. If there are areas that have an issue, then the snowmobile restriction should only apply to that area and not the entire forest.

b. There are no impacts to wildlife by OSV travel in these areas. Recent population studies by the University of Washington and USGS in the CYE show that the grizzly bear population is likely much higher than the current numbers being used as basis for grizzly bear management. Based upon that, the grizzly bear is recovered and thriving in the area. The grizzly bear should no longer be used to restrict access and drive management practices on the Kaniksu Forest or any adjacent forest for that matter.

c. The impacts to the economy section is understated. Mainly because the data only goes to 2020. Jobs will be taken away from the local economies by limiting and restricting OSV access. These are jobs created by out of state riders being in the area during the spring. Also, the local snowmobile dealerships will suffer due to reduction in business. At a time when unemployment rates are at its highest percentages in Northern Idaho and Northwest Montana, this is last thing we need.

There has to be other ways to manage forest land concerns other than blocking off the public. Lets figure out a different way. For example, methods such as public outreach and communication could be utilized. Site specific protocols could be implemented for small, individual areas if required.

Thank you,

Denver Winslow

Troy, MT