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Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor Petrick,

Thank you for the opportunity to engage on the Kaniksu Over-snow Vehicle Travel Plan. As I am sure you are aware, the opportunity for public engagement in forest decisions makes stronger and more robust decisions in the long run. The Kaniksu Over-snow Vehicle Travel Plan touches critical habitat for a number of at-risk species. Grizzly bear, lynx and wolverine rely upon this area and are at risk given factors ranging from climate change to incursion into critical habitat. That being said, none of those species are more at risk than the woodland caribou.

While it is widely accepted that the woodland caribou is now extinct in the lower 48 states, it is critical that we conserve the habitat that they require for a return. Whether that return is natural or through reintroduction the needs of woodland caribou must be a factor of utmost importance in your final decision. Thank you for the steps so far taken to conserve and protect the critical habitat that woodland caribou will need if they return/are returned to this landscape.

It is also important to acknowledge that although Wolverine are not listed as a threatened or endangered species, steps should be taken to prevent the listing of Wolverine. One of the most essential protections we can afford to wolverines is the protection of denning habitat. The approach the forest should take is minimizing or halting altogether the expansion of recreation the recreation footprint within wolverine habitat. This should be done by limiting use within the Upper Pack River area outside of designated trails. Other factors which should be taken into consideration regarding wolverines limiting the spread of winter recreation in wolverine habitat, managing wolverine habitat for low intensity recreation, establishing season closures for female wolverine habitat to protect denning habitat (February-April), and identifying opportunities to improve wolverine habitat connectivity through winter recreation management by reducing disturbance along corridors that connect high-value habitats. These recommendations by Winter Wildlands Alliance and Yellowstone to Yukon are paramount to the survival of wolverine on this landscape.

Wildlife is an important component of this plan but winter recreation is also important. When identifying potential conflict between users, it is important that the service realizes these conflict are not always two-sided. In my experience on the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, often times motorized users are not aware of their impact to non-motorized users, That is true where both activities are allowed in addition to areas where motorized use is not allowed.

Finally, although difficult to predict, we must envision a future where different technologies change how the forest lands are used. It is important to create a robust monitoring and implementation plan. That way when things are not as expected, there is recourse for the forest to examine potential reasons why things are not as expected.

I support much of the proposed action. Parts of Alternative A should be included. Those parts are

- Not designating the upper Pack River area for OSV use (west of the Pack River Road, including the Harrison Lake Basin south to Mt. Roothaan). This is in response to scoping comments highlighting the value of this area for backcountry skiing and to minimize impacts to Canada lynx.

- Not allowing grooming of the Cow Creek trail (upper National Forest System Road 655) in order to minimize effects to Canada lynx.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. While I cross country ski and back country ski in this region in the

future, I hope I have just the opportunity to glimpse a woodland caribou or wolverine. These are our emblems of wild places and I hope they are there for my children to see. Thank you for the chance to comment.