

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/16/2023 4:38:34 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Greetings. As an avid, year around, outdoor person, I'd like to make the following observation/concern. I have been enjoying the PNW outdoors since I can remember, over 50 years ago. Primarily on the Selway-Bitterroot, Nezperce and Clearwater National Forests until I moved to Montana about 14 years ago and began enjoying the Lolo NF and the outdoor recreation it offers.

My main concern is the progression of the Great Burn areas GB-PW-INT-01 and GB-PW-08. I enjoy winter motorized recreation in the adjoining areas, especially the Lolo Pass riding area. As you know, winter motorized recreation leave virtually zero footprint on the land. Our footprints literally melt at the end of the season. I would like to see those areas opened to winter motorized recreation. 1) Why were they closed in the first place? 2) Who closed them to motorized recreation? I have not been able to garner an answer to either, leading me to believe that it was an arbitrary decision, not based on any public input or "science". Please consider opening those areas to winter motorized recreation!

As a member to two off-road travel organizations, I can tell you that both of them preach and teach the "tread lightly" approach to motorized travel, all year around. Our presence in the Lolo can enhance the safety and health of the forest by reporting back on any damage we have seen or areas of other concern.

I spent most of my life enjoying these areas "on the ground". For the last 14 years, I have had the unique opportunity to see most of them from the air as an Aerial Firefighting Pilot. Access on the ground for firefighting troops is made easier by having access trails and road. It helps quicken their access to fire lines and lessens the amount of burned and scarred landscape. My input to the fire control is to aid the ground troops...they are the ones that "put it out". Rarely do we, as a support mechanism, extinguish the fire.

We all know that fire is a natural part of the life cycle of these forests, but when the timber growth is as mismanaged as some areas are, the fire becomes an untenable force, of which I have personal experience with. "Lock it up and keep them out" seems to be the mantra of a host of organizations, many of who's members have likely not set foot in any of the areas they deem as necessary to close.

Thanks for the opportunity to may an input.

Loren Crea