Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/22/2023 12:18:55 AM First name: Tim Last name: Rusdal Organization:

Title:

Comments: I object this these Over Snow Travel plans as we are once again reducing/limiting access and shutting down areas for folks to recreate on that we have had access snowmobile access. We don't need to reduce/limit any more motorized access. All year round open roads, even through big game habitat need to be open to snowmobiles! 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 the 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 Kootenai Forest or any adjacent forest for that matter. It is supposed to be a "multiuse forest". I enjoy recreating on public land and I want to express my support for keeping access open for all types of recreation uses, including OSV use. I believe through proper management and education trails roads and areas can remain open without negative impacts. Proper access will help mitigate damage by preventing concentration of use and impacts. Wildlife in the area of concern within the management plan I believe not to be a problem. Yellowstone NP conducted a study on motorized winter use on wildlife and showed no significant impact. Areas should not be restricted due to potential denning habitat. So I believe that it would be the same in the proposed areas. These forests include wilderness areas and other restrictive designations. In other words, there is already very restrictive management in the areas bordering the forest and Forest Service lands and they should be managed for the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Currently approximately one million acres of the forest is set aside from this planning process due to restrictive management designations. No areas should not be removed due to proximity to Wilderness. The USFS cannot create buffer zones. I am opposed to the USFS closing any areas to OSV use for alleged user conflict. USFS shouldn't be basing its decisions off of the subjective preferences of users who want to restrict the use of others. Areas that are currently closed to motorized users for cross country skiing should be analyzed to be opened to OSV use. It is clear in other areas these uses can co-exist. In conclusion, I believe in shared use and that there is enough public land for all to enjoy as long as agencies use best practices. Please refrain from closing historical snowmobiling areas. We've lost enough already.