

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/31/2023 3:49:26 AM

First name: Lynne

Last name: Metcalfe

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the Kootenai winter travel plan scoping documents. I really appreciate that the public was provided the opportunity to see the minimization criteria at this early phase. I also commend the Forest Service for not allowing snowmobiling in wild places like recommended Wilderness and research natural areas.

It is my heartfelt opinion that snowmobiles, except those used by rescue and professional forest maintenance providers, do not belong in any wilderness situation, protected legally or not. They are noisy, scaring wildlife; they are gas guzzling, adding to unnecessary global warming and petroleum pollution; they damage the soil and delicate land formations; they bring humans into situations that lead to dangerous bear-human interactions; and they bring people who do not have respect for the precious balance of nature into the wilderness. Knowing that a total ban on frivolous snowmobile use may not happen, I'd like to see the Kootenai National Forest create a robust implementation, monitoring, and enforcement system that will help keep snowmobiling out of areas where the use is prohibited.

There are some areas in particular that I believe should not be opened to snowmobile use due to the important habitat and connectivity they provide. This includes large portions of the Galena, Barren, and Allen Peak inventoried roadless areas south of the Cabinet Wilderness. I also encourage you to look at collaborative proposals that have been brought forward over the past ten years.

Thank you for considering my comments. I look forward to seeing the environmental analysis.