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First name: Sarah

Last name: Michael

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Kootenai National Forest

Attn: Over-snow Motorized Travel Plan

31374 US Highway 2

Libby, Montana 59923-3022

Dear Supervisor Benson,

As one of the architects of the 1999 Winter Coalition agreement on the Sawtooth National Forest which separated Nordic and backcountry skier areas from snowmobiles use, I am pleased to report that this agreement still stands today with ongoing dialogue and respect between user groups.

As a result, I am writing in support of the Kootenai's proposal to achieve similar goals. Thank you for a plan that keeps snowmobiles and other OSV out of recommended Wilderness, non-motorized backcountry areas, other areas closed in the Forest Plan, and along cross-country ski trails.

Seasonal closures along the lines that you have proposed have worked successfully on the Ketchum Ranger District and access to the Pioneer Mountains.

I hope that you will also consider limiting motorized access to areas that are the important habitat and connectivity they provide for wildlife.

Clearly, it is important to have monitoring and enforcement. I hope that you will be able to achieve this through user group by-ins as we have on the Ketchum Ranger District and the Sawtooth National Recreation area.

Thank you for developing this Winter Travel Plan.

Sarah Michael, Founder and Board Secretary

Nordic and Backcountry Skiers Alliance of Idaho