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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I am an active outdoor recreationalist. Although I live in Colorado, I travel frequently to California to recreate in the Sierra. I strongly urge the USFS to prioritize management strategies that protect the environment, wildlife, and the experience of human-powered recreationalists.

I support the alternative being developed by the Inyo NF and the Town of Mammoth Lakes to separate motorized and nonmotorized winter recreation in the Shady Rest area. This new proposed scenario would allow for motorized staging at the New Shady Rest Campground dumpstation at the corner of CA203 and Sawmill Cutoff Road, with a designated OSV trail around the west side of Shady Rest Park for direct groomed access to nearly 100 miles of groomed snowmobile trails. The town's groomed Nordic loops, accessible from the Welcome Center parking lot, as well as Shady Rest Park itself, would not be designated open to motorized over-snow use. This would minimize conflict between incompatible uses at one of the town's most popular winter recreation access points, and would be a huge improvement for all users over the current situation.

The Sherwins Front, from Mill City and Mammoth Rock to Bardini and the Tele Bowls, is a renowned, world-class, frontcountry human-powered ski and snowboard area right at the edge of Mammoth Lakes. The Sherwins Meadow is a popular and easily-accessible area for walking, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing and family snowplay. These areas are generally nonmotorized in summer-with trails open to equestrians, hikers and mountain bikers but not e-bikes or dirt bikes-and were recommended to be nonmotorized in winter in the community-developed Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (SHARP), as adopted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes in 2009. As with the Shady Rest proposal above, I highly support the development of an alternative that would leave the Sherwins area not designated for motorized OSV use, separating motorized staging at the propane tanks and allowing for direct OSV access to thousands of acres of cross-country snowmobiling by way of a designated OSV trail that follows Sherwin Creek Road to the motocross area and beyond.

A common-sense, equitable winter travel plan should work for everybody, not just the 1-2% of people who have snowmobiles. The USFS should seek a fair balance between all types of recreation on public lands, minimizing conflict between different uses, and minimizing impacts to wildlife, natural resources and neighborhoods.

Thank you,
Aaron Ray