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First name: Jeff

Last name: Perry

Organization:

Title:

Comments: This process of identifying system roads, trails and areas where OSV use will be designated for the future is a once in a lifetime process that cannot be easily undone, we must keep this in mind as we proceed.

It is important to recognize the difference between the old map and the new map - while the boundaries of the current vs proposed designated OSV use area has not altered much, the message of the map has. To put it simply, the old map focused on areas not allowed, the new map will focus on areas allowed. This difference is significant, the new map is an invitation to explore areas. As we invite visitors (and locals) to use spaces, we need to ensure we do so with good foresight and planning, maximizing access and minimizing conflict.

After studying the maps, attending the meeting and engaging with Forest Service employees, I would like to give this feedback:

The proposed slow zone (speed limit 15 mph) on the north side of town is a great addition to the old. According to the maps presented at the meeting, it appears this zone extends roughly 1 mile from the residential area, a "residential buffer" of sorts. I would like to see this buffer extended all the way around town. It would provide access for OSV users while minimizing multi-use conflict. The reduced speed would provide safer interactions between motorized and non-motorized users (as is currently the case in the Shady Rest/Minaret Vista areas). Much outdoor snow-play takes place within a 1 mile buffer zone. Given the fact that many OSV users will travel 50+ miles/day, a one mile buffer seems a minimal compromise.

The town and forest currently have less than 10 miles of regularly groomed fee-free Nordic trails (and 100+ miles of groomed OSV trails). The Town of Mammoth Lakes has, with the approval of the Forest Service, begun a pilot winter grooming program, "Sherwins Winter Trails", a 1.2 mile out and back groomed multi-use winter trail with the intention of expanding this groomed trail system (2009 SHARP Winter Trail Concept). In an effort to provide consistent designation, I ask that the Forest Service restrict OSV use in this pilot area as they have in existing groomed Nordic areas: Obsidian Dome, Shady Rest and the Lakes Basin. It would be good planning to restrict OSV use in this area intended for an expanded groomed trail system.

Currently, the lakes basin prohibits the use of motorized OSVs until April 17th, when the area is opened to use within prohibited wilderness boundaries. Those boundaries are not marked, motorized OSV users frequently stray into the wilderness areas and enforcement has proven untenable. Additionally, the confusion around the mixed status of the area results in unauthorized use of the groomed trail system prior to the April 17th date, impacting the authorized users. A full closure of the lakes basin to OSV vehicles would eliminate the confusion and significantly reduce the use of motorized OSV vehicles over the wilderness boundaries.

We all love our town, our forest and our personal recreation experiences. The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. As we look to the future, both a "residential buffer", plan to leave space to expand non-motorized fee-free groomed trails and elimination of the post April 17th access to the lakes basin is a reasonable ask. Please consider my suggestions as you make this monumental decision regarding safe multiuser areas in and near town.