

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/19/2023 6:32:00 PM

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Comments: As a winter outdoor enthusiast, I am concerned with the proposal to open large swaths of the Forest to OSVs and would encourage further evaluation to strike a fair balance between all types of recreation on public lands. Mixed use of motorized and non motorized recreation creates challenges and danger for all involved, including human conflicts and increased avalanche dangers. Furthermore, once this expansion is granted, it will be difficult to rescind if it becomes problematic.

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", with the intention of expanding this groomed trail system (2009 SHARP Winter Trail Concept). In an effort to provide consistent designation, I encourage 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 as the region embraces and enhances its promotion of the culture of cross-country skiing.

A full closure of the lakes basin to OSV vehicles should be considered as the lack of signage and enforcement has a heightened effect on conflict and impacts on non-motorized recreational users.

Please take the time to evaluate the issue thoroughly and make decisions that benefit all of our community members in their quest to enjoy and recreate safely on our public lands.