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Comments: Dear Committee,

I have a few questions in regards to the proposed closure of the Granite Goose Restoration Project that I hope you will consider. As a 5th generation Idahoan and 12 month outdoorsman of the Payette National Forest I feel it is my duty to say something and your duty as a committee or reviewer to do what is right. Especially if we want to keep the outdoors open and recreational opportunities open to all involved throughout the winter months.

First, why is this area being recommended for closure? What data / analysis has been done to say that over snow travel is impacting this zone and a closure is actually needed? Is there hard data supporting that motorized travel needs to actually be shut down? What is this information?

If the data and analysis was in fact accurately and unbiasedly done; which any federal entity should be doing. Why is there not a proposal for the Brundage Reservoir Area to also be closed? Do cross country skiers, backcountry skiers, snowshoes, and other non-motorized winter activities also co-exist in this area? Why is there no proposal for this to also be closed? It's the exact same issue? So why Granite Mountain? I guess I am confused here; please help me understand.

Has there been an analysis or study done with the Idaho Fish and Game. I personally know 4-5 individuals who have a Trap Line during the winter from snowmobile in and around this area. They all harvest multiple animals each winter from a variety of species and subgroups. Has Idaho Fish and Game been involved or contacted for or about the impacts of not having this open to over snow travel? Also, the implications of cat hunters in early season and not taking or harvesting as many animals. What will this due to the population or ecosystem of not only cats but also the deer and elk within the area over time. Has this even been thought about?

Many years ago snow travel was also allowed on the back side of Brundage and now it isn't. Does Brundage resort want this closure? What is their opinion on the matter? I know snowmobilers who stop at the lodge to eat after a day of riding, who may no longer do so. (I think some people feel this is getting pushed by Brundage; or are they the public scape goat here)?

Lastly, I have ridden this area on a good and early snow year. I can tell you that I have never seen an issue with the safety or having snowmobiles or motorized over snow vehicles on the trail with non-motorized users. In all of Valley County there are designated shared trails within the Payette National Forest. Are we going to close these as well? How many incidents have there been where motorized vehicles and non-motorized users had incidents or issues? Has there been data or an analysis done on this? I have been snowmobiling in Valley County for over 30 years and ridden thousands of miles on the Payette National Forest and have never once seen or witnessed an incident with motorized and non-motorized users.

I am hoping that you as a committee chair and reader of public comments will in fact see that there is honestly no clear justification for this closure. Like I stated earlier Closing the Granite Mountain Area is no different operationally to what is also happening in the cat ski area North of Brundage. There is absolutely zero difference; how can you honestly sit and justify the closure of one and not the other with little or no clear data that I can see to support this decision? Maybe it is a local honey hole for someone who is a non-motorized user tied to or involved in this decision as a stake holder or user of the area? That would very very unethical and corrupt but this is the only thinking or justification of why now and not there (North of Brundage Reservoir)?

Thank you for the opportunity to be able to comment publicly about a variety of issues that I feel should enable

the Payette National Forest to see that more evaluation , comparison, and analysis should be given when considering this closure as it doesn't make sense to me from multiple viewpoints and aspects.

Cade Ritthaler