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Organization:

Title:

Comments: As frequent visitors with family living nearby, we support:

The proposed closure of recommended wilderness to motorized use and mechanized travel.

The proposed use of trailheads or other clear geographical features rather than recommended wilderness boundaries to demarcate changes in allowable modes of travel, as these points are more intuitive for users and easier to enforce.

The proposed winter closure of the route up Puzzle Creek in the Skyland Challenge snowmobile area as this will limit illegal riding in the Badger-Two Medicine and protect mountain goats and other wildlife. However, the new boundary should be near the Morrison Creek bridge where the warming hut and bathrooms are located as this will be a more effective, intuitive, and enforceable boundary.

Please:

Include adaptive closure mechanisms to allow late-season snowmobile areas to close early if minimum snow depths are reached (protects vegetation, water, and soils), or if grizzly bear sows with cubs are out of their dens in the area.

Conduct a finer-scale analysis of potential impacts to lynx and wolverines. The current forest-wide scale ignores potential loss of secure foraging areas, connectivity, and denning habitat.

Not open the Marias Pass zone of the Skyland Challenge snowmobile area all the way to the divide without a clear plan to prevent illegal riding in the Badger-Two Medicine.

Clarify in the proposed forest plan amendment that it is not acceptable for the Forest Service to use ground disturbing motorized or mechanized vehicles to conduct forest restoration work in recommended wilderness. Handheld equipment like chainsaws are okay.