

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/19/2024 9:13:13 PM

First name: Filipp

Last name: Shevtsov

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, I have looked through the environmental assessment, and I would like to bring up the McGinnis Creek area and its designation for snowmobile use. The majority of the proposed snowmobile designated areas will occur in the McGinnis Creek/Canyon Big Creek area, and some parts have a good variety and prevalence of berry-type shrubs/vegetation which include huckleberry, serviceberry, thimbleberry, raspberries, and rosehips. As I understand, the McGinnis Creek area will influence some grizzly bear denning as this was stated in the environmental assessment, but I was curious if the impact on vegetation was considered in the area and what effect it would have or not have as a grizzly bear food source. I would also like to point out the effect this might have on recreationists, specifically "berry pickers". I have seen that previously there were comments regarding snow depth and snowmobile use concerning soil impact, but I was wondering if it was considered for vegetation impact. A study on this in Alaska observed the impact on vegetation when snow depth was below or above 50 cm (20 inches), and they found a measurable difference when snow depth was lower (Mullet & Morton, 2021). I was wondering if this was considered and if it was not that it may be considered when assessing vegetation impact and snowmobile use.

Mullet, T. C., Morton, J. M. (2021). Snowmobile effects on height and live stem abundance of wetland shrubs in south-central Alaska. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*. 33, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jort.2020.100347>