

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/3/2024 3:57:10 AM

First name: Graham

Last name: Clark

Organization:

Title:

Comments: First a little background on me. I have a long history in this area, as I grew up in Mount Vernon, then went to Western Washington University to get an environmental geology degree with a Gis minor. have been skiing at Mount Baker my entire life, 25 years of Backcountry skiing and 13 years of snowmobiling. I have my AIARE motorized pro one avalanche certificate along with my AIARE instructor training certification.

I am in all of the affected user groups being both a skier and snowmobiler, professionally doing outreach to snowmobilers for the NW. Avalanche Center and teaching AIARE avalanche classes.

I fully support the snowmobile clubs warming shelter. There application seems very straightforward as there is no kitchen and we not allowed to spend the night in it. It's there just as a rescue shelter and warming hut during the day. Both club presidents had multiple stories about saving hunters lives who were out in late November.

I also support to the Baker Mountain Guides, Twin sisters, Hut. That location does not really have much use and it also would not have any use or conflict with the motorized versus non-motorized users.

The heliotrope hut on Glacier Creek Road and the Watson Anderson hut at the Watson Anderson summer trail head are a great example of how placement of the hut will affect feasibility and amount of user conflict. The beauty of the Heliotrope Hut at Glacier Creek is that most of the ski terrain there is in the wilderness, so motorized users are not allowed there anyways. That Hut is up the groomed road where majority of motorized users do not go. While we may have some conflict on the groomed access road , that should be fairly safe and not result in dangerous user conflicts. On the opposite side of user conflict I expect not only safety issues, but extreme use or conflicts at Anderson Watson hut. That Hut is to be put on the access road that snowmobilers use, so we will be driving by their front door every day multiple times a day. To add to the noise affect, we will also be going up the trails where the skiers are going to be hiking up. Some of these trails we cannot see around the corner but need some momentum so that we do not get stuck on those tiny hills. I fully expect to have a moment coming around that corner and almost running over a skier, then getting stuck. Personally, it will just suck, but others will probably get very angry unfortunately. Furthermore, I would expect many of the skiers to be skiing in the snowmobile area amongst the snowmobilers, which means they will be angry that we tracking up the areas they would ski. While they do have wilderness areas to Ski, I don't expect people to work that hard or explore enough to and get up into that area.

The location of the Glacier Creek heliotrope Hut lends itself to leading skiers away from the motorized areas.

Where as the Anderson Watson Hut is on the groomed access road and leads skiers directly into the Motorized area which I really think will end with a motorized closure.

With such small motorized, use areas here in whatcom and skagit counties , it would be heartbreaking and a disaster to close any of our small motorized areas. I have spent a lot of time researching areas in Canada, and it seems as if every place non-motorized users access frequently use areas where motorized users are it results in a motorized closure. I think it is safe to assume that, if both user groups are adventuring in the same location there will be user conflict and it will end in motorized closure. Locating non motorized huts in areas that lead those users away from motorized areas, like heliotrope trailhead, seems like the best way for all user groups to continue to safely recreate with minimal conflicts.