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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, I am writing to offer input in support of non-motorized trail designations and nordic skiing opportunities on the Rio Grande National Forest. Nordic skiing is my favorite winter sport and activity, and I spend all of my time skiing on trails on the Rio Grande National Forest. These include trails at Rock Creek, Big Meadows, Ivy Creek near Creede, Near Wolf Creek, near the Beaver Creek ad site, down near Chama where they have the Chama Chili Ski Classic race, and other areas that are not groomed. Having access to skiing at these places is a very important component to my experience in the winter on my public lands, and is really the only available nordic skiing in the San Luis Valley. It is very important to me that these areas continue to be made available for grooming by the San Juan Nordic Club and other local nordic clubs, and that there continue to be non-groomed roads and trails that remain only open to non-motorized use. I enjoy both classic and skate skiing. Skate skiing really requires a nice groomed path to be doable, and so I really value the places that are groomed by the nordic clubs. When motorized travel goes over these groomed trails, it destroys the corduroy and makes skate skiing practically impossible. I would really like to protect places for skate skiing by only allowing non-motorized use. Additionally, the peace and tranquility to be out in a quiet area, without engines and fumes, is very important to me. I really like looking for wildlife tracks, especially lynx, while I am out skiing, and enjoy the peace and stillness of a non-motorized winter day out. At Big Meadows, I would love to see better signage or management to make sure snow mobiles do not go in the campground area, as to maintain the quality of the ski trails. I am active in the San Juan Nordic Club and usually see others out enjoying the trails on nordic skis when I go out - some club members, but not all. I am so thankful that we have these spaces for skiing. If we didn't my winter experiences would be greatly diminished. I want to make sure these places are protected from motorized use, and would also ask that management consider designating some more areas as non-motorized to expand these opportunities on our huge forest. Thank you.