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Comments: Below are my comments related the scope of the environmental impact statement (EIS) that will be used in the decision-making process about how motorized over-snow vehicle (OSV) use will be allowed in various areas of the RGNF.

The informational meetings held on this issue have been very informative. I was shocked to learn that the proposed action includes approximately 1,342,162 acres (73 percent) of the Rio Grande National Forest lands to be designated for public cross-country OSV use. This is not equitable between motorized and non-motorized use nor is it acceptable. The impacts to wildlife and the resource in general needs to be taken into consideration in the new plan. 73 percent of the forest open to indiscriminate travel by motorized vehicles is unacceptable and detrimental to wildlife.

I have been skiing in the Cumbres/La Manga Pass area for over 35 years. It used to be an incredible place to ski. I have spent many, many nights at the Southwest Nordic yurts and the Spruce Hole yurt. There were always snowmachines around but they never bothered the yurts and it was possible to find great skiing that was free of snowmachine tracks, noise and odor. That is no longer the case in that area. The snowmachines now have unlimited use of the area no matter what any of the signs say. Most people I know that skied there in the past no longer try to ski there including me. The snowmachines no longer respect the yurts and the entire skiing experience is completely ruined. There needs to be a separation of snowmachine use between cross-country skiers and the yurts. It is essential to designate sufficient areas for non-motorized use so that we all have a place to enjoy quiet non-motorized recreation. The present situation in this area is a disaster.

The Big Meadows Campground, groomed by the San Juan Nordic Club is another place I love to ski. In the winter the road from the junction of FS roads 410 and 430 used to be closed to snowmachines. Now they regularly ride up the road from the intersection and into the campground. This area should also be a large closure to minimize impacts to wildlife. For a few short months in the winter this area should be closed to OSV use other than the equipment needed to groom the trail. Other areas I like to ski include the Rock Creek Archery/Ski Trail, and the Matchless area adjacent to the Wolf Creek Ski Area. The meadows near the highway on both sides of the pass, were once a favorite XC ski location, and one of the only good places to go during low snow years. Now they are totally dominated by snowmachines. The Rock Creek trails and surrounding area should be closed to OSV use. The north side of Wolf Creek Pass should be closed to OSV use to allow skiers a quiet place to ski. The road to the Overlook is now overrun by snowmachines taking skiers and snowboarders to the top to utilize the "powerline" run. This is not acceptable.

Over-snow motorized use needs to be more strictly defined. The OSV travel map should clearly show the Restricted or Closed Areas designations. I think the proposed action should greatly reduce the amount of area where public cross-country OSV use is largely permitted. 73 percent of Unrestricted OSV use is far too much. Easily-enforceable borders need to be defined in the exclusion areas. An area of reduced OSV use in the southwestern part of the RGNF could be defined by the main portion of the area between US Highway 160 in the north and Colorado State Highway 17 in the south, with allowances for the current roads that are used for OSV use now, and a few "play areas" near main roads and highways.

A more equitable area between OSV use and non-motorized use needs to be developed. 73 percent of unsupervised, unregulated area where "anything goes" is totally unacceptable and unfair.

Snowmachine use within the habitat of any special status or sensitive wildlife species should not be allowed.

Winter puts wildlife under greater stress during the due to old temperatures and limited food supplies. OSV use subjects wildlife to the increased stress from loud, disruptive, and polluting snowmachines.

The impact OSV use to climate change should be a serious consideration in the new plan.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on this issue.