

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/23/2026 10:42:32 PM

First name: Wesley

Last name: Christensen

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Austin Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement. As the Grooming Chairman for the Sumpter Valley Snowmobile Club, I am writing to express concerns about how the proposed changes to Forest Road 2620, particularly between Highway 7 and Highway 26, will affect our club's use and access. This route is essential for connecting our snowmobile trail system with the Austin House, providing direct access to fuel, food, and a place to warm up-needs that are especially important given that a large portion of our club's members are over 50 years old.

The DEIS presents conflicting and unclear information regarding the status of Forest Road 2620 and its future accessibility. While some maps suggest the road remains open from Highway 7 to Highway 26, the text describes a combination of decommissioning, new construction, and reopening of stored roads to create continuous access. The description of relocating Crawford Creek Road, including decommissioning and realignment of snowmobile trail S-5402, is difficult to follow and does not provide enough detail for the public to fully understand what will be accessible, and how these changes will impact established snowmobile routes. It is not clear how these changes support continued, reliable motorized access, or if they might unintentionally restrict it.

Given the project's stated Purpose and Need to improve access while addressing resource concerns, the DEIS should clearly show-using maps and tables-how the proposed actions will maintain or enhance motorized access for recreational users like our club. At present, the document does not explain why limiting access to designated or stored roads is necessary to meet the project's objectives, nor does it analyze reasonable alternatives that would maintain existing access patterns. The lack of a clear, enforceable plan for motorized access raises concerns that the outcome could fall short of the project's stated goals.

I urge the Forest Service to provide a more detailed and transparent analysis of how these road relocations and changes will affect public motorized access, especially for snowmobile users. Please ensure that the final decision is informed by a thorough evaluation of on-the-ground impacts and that the rationale for any restrictions or changes is plainly disclosed so the public can meaningfully review and respond. Without this clarity, it is difficult to see how the decision is grounded in a full understanding of impacts and community needs.