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Comments: COLLABORATIVE INFORMATION. RECREATION.

I have been snowmobiling the Surveyor, Kelly Creek, Beaver Ridge and HooDoo areas since I moved to Missoula in 1989. I have NEVER seen 4 legged critters in the high country of these areas, short of squirrels and rabbits, so the idea of disturbing wildlife is not a legitimate argument.

The economic impact of snowmobiling can be readily measured by canvassing the increasing number of gasoline dealerships that sell non-oxygenated fuel during the winter. Currently there is at least one for any direction leaving Missoula. Ask them how many gallons they sell, keeping in mind that only a portion of sledders pay the premium price for this fuel.

The Great Burn has been a proposed wilderness area for years, but should never become one. I have been into the area in both summer and winter, and in addition to using Google Earth, it is readily seen that the area is roaded with old mining roads. This provides little "Wilderness" character. The government's purpose should be to manage our resources, not lock the people off public lands. It is imperative that we come to resolution on continued access. Closing these areas off to snowmobiling would create a great deal of peace and solitude, but I have never seen a two legged critter without a snowmobile in these areas either.

The answer is not locking up more public land, but responsible, multi-use management.