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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Clearwater NF plan for Special Management Areas

I support the Clearwater NF plan proposed action for special management areas.

I have been snowmobiling in the Great burn RWA for over 45 years. That's probably longer than anyone commenting or currently working for the USFS on this. Back in the 60's, it was much more difficult to get in there due to inefficient sleds. In all the years I have ridden in this area, I have never seen tracks of a skier, snowshoer, elk or deer. In the dead of winter, it is a wonderland void of all animal and human activity except for snowmobilers. During the fall, I have had a hunting camp in the same area for 25 years. It is much different that time of the year with wildlife activity and human recreational use.

The Great Burn is one of the last premier areas left to ride in our country. To close this great resource to winter snowmobiling would be a tragedy to outdoor enthusiasts and local retail business. I understand this well being both a Great Burn recreational user for 45 years and a snowmobile dealer. I have seen several of our frequent customers that have decided not to purchase a new sled and some have quit the sport due to this closure. This will affect all dealers in the area and out, slow part sales dramatically and effect all taxpaying employees that depend on the industry for a job. There are several income streams to Montana and Idaho that will dry up if this is kept closed.

Being an environmentalist myself, I have tried to see both sides and the affects. Looking back on 45 years of experience in the area, I cannot see any positive effect of a Great Burn closure.

1. There is literally no wildlife to affect.
2. No human conflicts between skiers, snow shoers and snowmobilers as in other areas.
3. Literally no damage is done to trees, shrubs or grasses.
4. This area's use stimulates business dramatically.
5. And worst of all, this will shut down possibly the country's premier recreational riding area forever!

I would urge to keep these points open when re-writing the winter use travel plan.

Thank You,

Dennis Anderson

President

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