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Organization:

Title:

Comments: RE: "Great Burn" Snowmobile Access

Hello Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests:

I heard from the Lands Council in Spokane that there is the possibility of opening the Hoodoo Roadless Area to snowmobiles.

I implore you to maintain your legacy of Recommended Wilderness status for the "Great Burn" by selecting Proposed Action Option A and adding the Bighorn-Weitas Roadless area to the same status.

As you know, these areas are critical winter habitat for mountain goats, wolverine and lynx, and serve as vital passageways for grizzly bear and other species traveling between northern Idaho/Montana and north-central Idaho/western Montana. Introducing snowmobiles and people into these areas during winter would cause irreparable harm to these species and likely to the entire ecosystem.

I also urge you to eliminate Option B from the Proposed Action. People have shown time and again that they ignore boundaries and signage as they know that with the limited resources available to the USFS, there will likely be no enforcement of these regulations.

I have had BLM rangers tell me that if it weren't for reports made by citizens (me), they would rarely be able to catch or prosecute violators on BLM land in eastern Washington. I expect that you will experience the same problems in Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest if you allow snowmobile use in the Hoodoo Roadless Area.

And we all know that if snowmobiles are allowed to use an area, it would open the doors to all manner of motorized vehicles and land abusers. The area in question is too important to allow that to happen.

If allowed, Idaho and Montana's big game animals will be at even greater risk due to increasing predator populations that will use packed snowmobile trails to run down game. And that doesn't begin to address the threat to the native species that are so rare in the Lower 48.

Idaho and western Montana is a special place. All citizens rely on the USFS to keep it that way.

Please select Option A and eliminate Option B from the Proposed Action. "Recommended Wilderness" is just that. Don't fold to the pressures of snowmobilers and off-road recreation. The future of this special wild place, the species within it and generations of Americans will thank you for your foresight.

Sincerely,

Rick Hosmer

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