

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/13/2015 1:54:26 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am concerned about the amount of land being designated for motorized winter travel in the Stanislaus National Forest. I recreate by ski and snowshoe in the forest, and my experience is dramatically diminished by the use of snowmobiles. I love spending time in the backcountry in the winter because of the solitude and level of quiet that can only be experienced this way. Even newer snowmobiles make a significant amount of noise, as well as pollution, that make this experience not nearly as fun, peaceful, or renewing. In addition, snowmobiles make it difficult for skiers to find or make good ski tracks and ruin any powder that is there. Please limit even further the areas of the Stanislaus National Forest that are available to motorized snow use and increase areas for exclusively non-motorized use, which area healthier for the planet and the individual, mentally, physically, and emotionally.

Specifically, please consider formal closure of the Poison Spring, Pumpkin Hollow, Mattley Ridge, Flagpole Point, and Thompson Meadows areas near the Cabbage Patch Maintenance Station north of Highway 4 and west of Bear Valley Village. These have traditionally been used by backcountry skiers but are being encroached upon by snowmobiles, which drastically diminishes the experience for nonmotorized users.

Please also formally close the Eagle/Night and Pacific Valley Natural Areas. These areas were supposed to be managed as nonmotorized, but because it was not formalized by a Forest Order, they have been used by snowmobilers. Now they are being considered for motorized use because of "historical use," thereby rewarding those who ignored the Forest Plan designation.

Finally, please close the area around Herring Creek Road near Strawberry just off Highway 108.

Thank you!