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Comments: From: Kerry Rice [mailto:kerryannrice@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2015 2:34 PM

To: Ashmead, Phyllis -FS

Subject: snowmobile use in the wildlands of our forest

Dear Phyllis,

I am worried about the Forest Service opening up more areas to snowmobile use. It is so nice to be able to go up into the mountains and take a quiet adventure in the snow. I just got new snowshoes for Christmas and am hoping for more snow this year so I can try them out! It would really be a bummer if loud snowmobiles break up the peaceful feeling of the snow-blanketed forest. But, even more worrying is the effect the loud machines may have on animals who are sensitive to loud noises and to their home being torn up by big machines rocketing through their lands. People have taken so much already of wild animals' habitat. Why do we need to allow these snowmobiles up there? Please do all you can to keep snowmobiles out of our wild lands! Below are some of the biggest concerns outlined:

- 1) Opening up the Pacific Valley, Eagle, and Night Roadless areas to motorized use in the form of snowmobiles - The 1991 Stanislaus Forest Plan explicitly states these Near Natural areas are to be managed for "semi-primitive non-motorized" use, yet they are proposing to allow over snow vehicles, which is clearly a motorized use. Roadless wild areas provide high value for wildlife, including the rare American Marten and Sierra Nevada Red Fox. Recreationists seeking quiet and solitude without accessing the more remote wilderness also value these wild areas.
- 2) Self-regulation ineffective - The plan proposes a 12-inch minimum snow depth for over-snow motorized travel, to be determined by the individual rider. CSERC knows that it is unrealistic to expect snowmobile riders to self-restrict and stop riding if there is less than 12 inches of snow.
- 3) Lack of enforcement results in trespass - A number of proposed boundaries do not follow a natural feature such as a ridge or water way, making it challenging for riders to recognize boundaries, a prerequisite for complying with them.

Thanks for your commitment to wildlife!

Kerry Rice

P.S. I hope you and your family are doing great!