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Comments: From: rick delvin [mailto:rick.delvin@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, July 20, 2015 3:27 PM

To: Ashmead, Phyllis -FS

Subject: Over-Snow-Vehicle Plan comments

Dear Phyllis,

You may remember me, I worked with you on some Forest Service projects when I worked for WATCH Resources a few years ago. I hope all is well with you.

I will be out of town on July 21 and July 22 and unable to attend the Over-Snow public meetings so please include my comments below when discussing this proposed plan. I have done some research and had discussions with some Forest Service staff on this issue. I have several concerns in allowing snowmobiling in existing wild areas as proposed in the Stanislaus Forest "Over-Snow-Vehicle use" plan.

As an avid hiker throughout the year in the Stanislaus Forest, I am very concerned that the Near Natural areas are included in the 13,000 acres of additional space for snowmobiling. I am not opposed to adding some additional acres for snowmobiling but I am strongly opposed to including the Pacific Valley and Eagle/Night Near Natural areas, for several reasons.

The proposed plan allows for riding snowmobiles in remote habitat areas and higher elevations that have previously been deemed, by the USFS, highly valued for non-motorized recreation. It is my understanding that higher elevation habitats are crucial for rare wildlife like the Sierra Nevada red fox and American marten and other wildlife. The ecosystem is already stressed with climate change and resulting environmental changes. Who knows if or when the current conditions will change. The added stress of loud motorcycle type noise and the physical disturbance of snowmobiles blasting through the forest should be reason enough not to include the "highly valued for non motorized areas" in the proposed plan. If these acres are opened up it will be very difficult in the future to return them to protected Wilderness status.

It is my understanding that due to budget constraints and lack of human resources, the forest service has not been able to effectively enforce the current boundaries where snowmobilers ride. That said, it seems to me that the Forest Service will be unable to enforce an additional 13,000 acres. Many of the proposed new boundaries in the proposal do not follow natural terrain including ridges or streams which will result in snowmobilers trespassing into Wilderness areas. Enforcement of the new boundaries when current boundaries are not enforced, seems unlikely to me.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments on this important topic and look forward to a mutually agreeable solution for all of the public's concerns.

Best regards,

Rick Delvin--