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Comments: Original Message-----

From: Gordon Nathan [mailto:g.nathan@prodigy.net]

Sent: Sunday, July 19, 2015 1:13 PM

To: Ashmead, Phyllis -FS

Subject: Proposed plans to allow for OSV use in the Stanislaus National Forest

We understand that the Forest Service is in the process of formulating plans to allow the use of Over Snow Vehicles in certain areas of the Stanislaus National Forest during the winter months, providing there is at least 12 inches of snow. We further read that the proposed plan calls for up to 58 miles of groomed trails, 98 miles of ungrounded routes, plus an additional 141,000 acres above 5,000 feet for recreational use of snowmobiles. In addition, the plan may allow use of an additional 13,000 acres in road-less areas for snowmobile use. While it is certainly necessary to include all types of uses of our valuable and beautiful national forests, some common sense must come into play when formulating these plans.

We are sure you will receive many comments and suggestions on the proposal, however, we urge the Forest Service to think of the big picture, Your charge is to guard our natural resources so that along with motorized recreational use, in moderation, all of our natural wonders are preserved for all to enjoy. We have seen in other wilderness areas how excess use by motorized vehicles can damage the landscape, but more importantly, the habitat of beautiful, and sometimes rare creatures who share their space with us.

In the proposed plan, what thought has been given to the endangered Sierra red fox, the martin and the fisher? The area of the proposed OSV routes are the prime habitat area for these endangered animals? Does the Stanislaus unit have the personnel and capacity to monitor the winter use of the proposed areas? Can we trust every snowmobile user to remain within the bounds of the marked trails? What harm will the noise of the vehicles cause the animals?

Please do not rush into a program that may well damage the areas in question and endanger the rare and beautiful animals that call the Stanislaus their home. We think it fair to share the forest with all those wanting to use it, but we believe all things in moderation, including much smaller OSV access, and at lower elevations.

Respectfully Submitted,

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