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Comments: I am a frequent visitor to Stanislaus NF lands year round. My winter visits are usually on skis or snowshoes, though I have snowmobiled in the area and am not opposed to OSV use in the backcountry, or even to expanding the current acreage open to OSV use. I AM opposed to increasing OSV acreage in near wilderness areas, and in particular increasing access without a clear commitment to better education and enforcement of boundaries. More will be needed than an updated map. The current map is easily available but every winter I still see plenty of OSV tracks where they are not supposed to be. I make it a point to avoid areas where OSV use is permitted, both for my safety and for the experience - but illegal access (intentional or not) threatens both.

I've heard the argument that a few skiers are asking to be accommodated at the expense of many OSV riders. Skiers and snowshoers are not very visible to other winter forest users. We don't take up much space and we don't make any noise - there are more of us in the backcountry than non-skiers might think.

Skiers and snowshoers are aware of OSV presence from miles away, the opposite is not true. OSV tracks can ruin the ski experience or even make it dangerous, skier tracks have no impact on the OSV experience. Skiers pose very little safety threat to OSV users, the opposite is not true. Anything that can be done to avoid mixing these groups is useful, including designating boundaries in such a way so as not to encourage illegal access by motorized vehicles, and improving education, signage and enforcement.

I strongly support the proposed designation of the area around the Round Valley/Poison Canyon Sno-Park on highway 4 as OSV prohibited. This area sees heavy use by families for sledding and snow play, as well as by backcountry skiers and snowshoers. Permitting OSV use at this location poses a safety hazard.

I question the proposed opening of Stanislaus Meadow to OSV use. This is accessible as a day trip on skis, and there is potential for both user conflict and resource damage if OSV travel is permitted here.

Our National Forests belong to everyone, including those who enjoy winter riding on an OSV. Sometimes, I'm one of them. But please don't forget that non-motorized access to all of these lands long preceded OSV use and deserves serious consideration in this plan.

Thank you for your consideration,

Debra DiBiase