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Comments: From: 108SnowMachines . [mailto:mikesouther108@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 5:54 PM

To: Ashmead, Phyllis -FS

Subject: Snowmobile Map and Comments

Hi Phyllis, my name is Mike Souther. We spoke on the phone and at the Pinecrest meeting. Below are my comments specifically about the map. Thanks again for your time and consideration.

1. The area inside of the Herring Creek Rd loop (4n12) Hammill Canyon/Willow Creek is un-rideable on osv vehicles. This area would be ideal for snow shoes and cross country skis as would the north (left) side of the loop. The left side could be for ski access and the south side (right) heading towards Pinecrest Peak and the McCormick pocket area could be for osv. This area is enjoyable and challenging osv terrain but not ideal for ski access. The 5n74 Rd Eagle Peak trail would also be ideal for ski access on the North side of the loop with spectacular terrain and views.

2. To help with access for osv and cross country use the gate on Herring Creek Rd at Hwy 108 should be open and closure points flexible. Without this much of the season we are unable to actually reach any rideable terrain. Snow rarely reaches the highway but being able to open the road (based on snow line) as far as the gargoyles would allow for easy access, better safety and less resource damage. Users of all kinds would not have to travel over intermittent uncovered ground or pavement just to reach a safe and enjoyable riding area. This would also allow for parking off the highway which would be far safer in snowy conditions. This would also make access to this terrain possible for more skiers who previously would not have traveled that far out.

3. A designated osv departure spot and path is necessary for the Leland Meadows area connecting it to 4n12 and or 5n17 to allow safe public and cabin owner access the riding areas. This could be a dual access or a separate path could be designated for ski access. Currently the cross country skiers that leave from Leland enjoy using the snowmobile path as it is a steep climb up out. This neighborhood was developed around and has a long standing snowmobile and cross country history that should be preserved not taken away. Real estate values would decrease as would the local economy. This is true in general limiting snowmobile access in this area. We have great terrain that draws a crowd from far and wide. The eat out, buy gas, rent cabins, and go ski. Those outside dollars being spent in our small tourist towns is crucial to our survival and growth.

4. Near Natural terrain should be rideable with either 12 or 24 inch snow depths depending on location. This would be a good compromise and help save the resources from any damage. Near Natural terrain in the Castle Rock, Cooper Peak, Pinecrest Peak and McCormick Pocket area specifically is historic riding area with ideal terrain. This area is seldom used by skiers due to how far out it is. The only skiers in this area are accessing via osv.

5. The Emigrant Wilderness boundary from Pinecrest Peak to the end of Long Valley in Eagle Meadows is an ideal snowmobile boundary for osv use. This has been long enforced, respected, and is the most dominant ridge making patrol, recognition of boundary and signage simpler and less confusing for the user. Avoiding these confusions will pay off for the enforcer and the user due to less frustration and confrontation.

6. The Cascade Creek area north of Hwy 108 is unusable to osv use. This however could be used as off highway ski access terrain that is reachable from the snow park closure gate.

7. The closure point on Hwy 108 should be flexible between Snow Park and Eagle Meadows depending on snowline and depth. Without this NOBODY has access to our lands, ski or osv. This would also increase safety with less users having to travel over uncovered ground as snow melts off quickly and depths can change.

8. The Eagle Meadows area boundaries are undefined, unreadable, and will only lead to frustration, misunderstanding and disputes. This too is an area with long snowmobile history and cabins specifically built for osv use. Eagle Meadows is littered with roads, cabins, and private land. Deciphering in bounds, out of bounds, and private land would be extremely difficult as would marking and patrolling it.

9. Bear Valley Ski Resort and Dodge Ridge Ski Resort should be open to osv use after closing for the season. Bear Valley currently allows this and it is very popular and well managed. The people are happy to have access to their lands and have safe access to late season snow.

10. The Pinecrest basin has many cross country only trails around Dodge Ridge and Crabtree Rd allowing access easy ski access without any osv allowed. This area is amazing and should be developed and promoted further. The other upside for ski access here is high elevation access where there is consistently a usable snow pack.

11. These Cross Country ski access areas should have some level of grooming. This would make for easier access and a more enjoyable ski and snowshoe experience. These trails can be accessed off of Dodge Ridge Ski Resort, they could be contracted to groom these trails!

12. The riding area at the top of the Sonora Pass should be enlarged using a minimum snow depth. Snow depths there are generally substantial and possibility of resource damage is minimal. This is amazing terrain with great history in ski and osv use. Ski access people in this area use osv to access terrain unreachable otherwise. Without osv you can not access the top of Sonora Pass from the West side.

13. Can we please have a special sit down session to talk about mapping as a group? I think it is very necessary clear up confusion on what is and is not desirable terrain for what kind of access.

14. I feel the interactive map should be reopened for comments and re done to show and name features. Deciphering what is what on that map is nearly impossible. The link to the map was also not live and many people discussed frustration with finding and or using it. The fact it only got one comment on it should show this need. Also the map was closed for comment on the 10th of August when it should have been open according to the announcement.

Thanks again for your consideration. Please call with any questions you might have!

Sincerely

Mike Souther

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