

DRAFT

**Record of Decision
Lassen National Forest Over-snow Vehicle
Use Designation**

**USDA Forest Service
Lassen National Forest**

**Lassen, Shasta, Tehama, Butte, Plumas, Siskiyou, and
Modoc Counties, California**



**Forest
Service**

Lassen National Forest

August 2016

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Contents

Introduction.....	1
Decision	1
Project Design Features and Monitoring.....	4
Minimization Measures to Address Travel Management Regulation Requirements.....	6
General Monitoring Procedures	13
Background.....	14
Purpose and Need	14
Need for a Manageable System of Snow Trails and Areas.....	14
Need to Identify Snow Trails for Grooming	15
Decision Rationale	16
Issues Considered	17
Significant Issues	17
Insignificant Issues.....	20
Public Involvement	29
Alternatives Considered.....	30
Alternative 1 – No Action	39
Reasons for Not Selecting Alternative 1	39
Alternative 2 – Modified Proposed Action.....	39
Alternative 3	40
Alternative 4	41
Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations	42
National Forest Management Act.....	42
Forest Service Travel Management Regulations (36 CFR Part 212) and Executive Orders 11644 and 11989	42
National Historic Preservation Act.....	43
Endangered Species Act	43
Clean Water Act	43
Clean Air Act.....	44
Civil Rights, Women and Minorities.....	44
Floodplains and Wetlands – Executive Orders 11988 and 11990.....	44
Municipal Watersheds	44
Environmental Justice.....	44
Administrative Review or Objection Opportunities	44
Implementation	45
Contact Person	46

List of Tables

Table 1. Summary of determinations for insignificant issues..... 21

Table 2. Comparison of areas where OSV use will be allowed with total forest land area, by alternative 31

Table 3. Areas not designated for OSV use, by alternative (acres) 31

Table 4. Designated groomed and ungroomed trails for OSV use (miles) 32

Table 5. Designated Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) OSV crossings 33

Table 6. OSV trail systems groomed by the Lassen National Forest (miles) 36

Table 7. Summary comparing current OSV management with the action alternatives for minimum snow depth (in inches) and OSV trail grooming season on the Lassen National Forest..... 38

List of Figures

Figure 1. Map of selected alternative for Lassen National Forest over-snow vehicle use designation 3

Introduction

This Record of Decision (ROD) documents my decision and rationale for selecting a course of action to be implemented for the Lassen National Forest Over-snow Vehicle (OSV) Use Designation Project. I have considered the analysis that is documented in the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) for the Lassen National Forest Over-snow Vehicle Use Designation, information in the project file, and input received from the public during the course of the analysis of this project as required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

This ROD was developed according to requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 USC §§ 4321-4370), the Council of Environmental Quality's implementing regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), Forest Service NEPA regulations (36 CFR Part 220), and Forest Service policy in Forest Service Manual 1900, Chapter 1950, and Forest Service Handbook 1909.15.

Decision

Based on my review of the Lassen National Forest Over-snow Vehicle Use Designation Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), I have decided to implement Alternative 4-Modified. The modifications to Alternative 4 were included in either Alternative 2 or Alternative 3. My selected alternative includes the following:

1. To designate 398 miles of National Forest System snow trails on National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as trails where public OSV use would be allowed when snow depth is adequate for that use to occur. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to trails where public motorized use is not allowed would continue.
2. To designate 900,150 acres of National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as areas for public, cross-country OSV use. This land area represents approximately 78.3 percent of the National Forest System land within the Lassen National Forest.
3. To not designate for public OSV use any existing trail in an area where motorized use is currently prohibited on the Lassen National Forest. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to areas of the forest where public motorized use is not allowed will continue.
4. To not designate (to prohibit public OSV use on) approximately 249,870 acres on the Lassen National Forest for public OSV use. These areas include all of the approximately 186,000 acres of the Lassen National Forest where public OSV use is currently prohibited, and 63,870 acres currently open to OSV use that will not be designated for OSV use in this alternative. This includes the following modifications to Alternative 4 which were included in Alternative 3:
 - a. 31,730 acres of National Forest System land in the Butte Lake area north of Lassen Volcanic National Park will not be designated for public, cross-country OSV use. OSV use will be restricted to a 22-mile ungroomed OSV trail system designated for OSV use through this non-designated area.
 - b. 19,040 acres of National Forest System land in the Fredonyer-Goumaz area will not be designated for public, cross-country OSV use. OSV use will be restricted to a 32-mile groomed OSV trail system designated on the Lassen National Forest for OSV use through this non-designated area, and to an 11-mile groomed OSV trail to be designated on the Plumas National Forest within the Fredonyer-Goumaz area.

- c. 4,490 acres of National Forest System land in the Colby Mountain area will not be designated for public, cross-country OSV use. The 4.5-mile OSV trail on Forest Road 27N06 that is located on the north and east boundary of this undesignated area will be designated for public OSV use. This trail is OSV use will be restricted to the existing 4.5-mile groomed OSV trail on Forest Road 27N06, part of the Jonesville Snowmobile Area, designated for OSV use through this non-designated area.
 - d. 1,840 acres of National Forest System land surrounding a non-motorized trail on the southwest end of Lake Almanor will not be designated for public, cross-country OSV use. This non-designated area surrounds a trail where motor vehicles such as OSVs are currently prohibited.
 - e. 1,680 acres of National Forest System land on the southwest end of Eagle Lake will not be designated for public, cross-country OSV use. This non-designated area surrounds a trail where motor vehicles such as OSVs are currently prohibited.
5. To include the following modifications to Alternative 4, which were included in Alternative 2:
 - a. To designate 28 public OSV crossing points of the Pacific Crest Trail. All but two will be located on roads and trails already designated for wheeled, motorized vehicle use when such use is allowed.
 6. To implement forest-wide snow depth requirements for public OSV use that will provide for public safety and natural and cultural resource protection by:
 - b. Allowing public, cross-country OSV use in designated areas only when there are 12 or more inches of snow or ice covering the landscape based on weather and observations by Forest Service personnel and the public, to prevent impacts to surface and subsurface resources including, but not limited to, archaeological deposits, historic features, and historic properties; and
 - c. Allowing public OSV use on designated snow trails when there are 6 or more inches of snow. Exceptions to this snow depth restriction will be allowed on designated OSV trails overlaying existing paved, dirt, and gravel National Forest System roads and trails in order for OSVs to access higher terrain and legal snow levels when snow depths are less than 6 inches, as long as this use does not cause visible damage to the underlying surface.
 7. Public OSV use that is inconsistent with the designations and snow depth requirements made under this decision would be prohibited under 36 CFR Part 261.
 8. To identify approximately 349 miles of snow trails that will be groomed for public OSV use by the Forest Service's Lassen National Forest Grooming Program. This represents no change from the Forest's current snow trail grooming program.
 9. To groom OSV snow trails when there are 12 or more inches of snow, and formally adopt California State Parks' snow grooming standards requiring 12 or more inches of snow depth before grooming can occur.

The selected alternative is displayed in figure 1 on page 3, below.

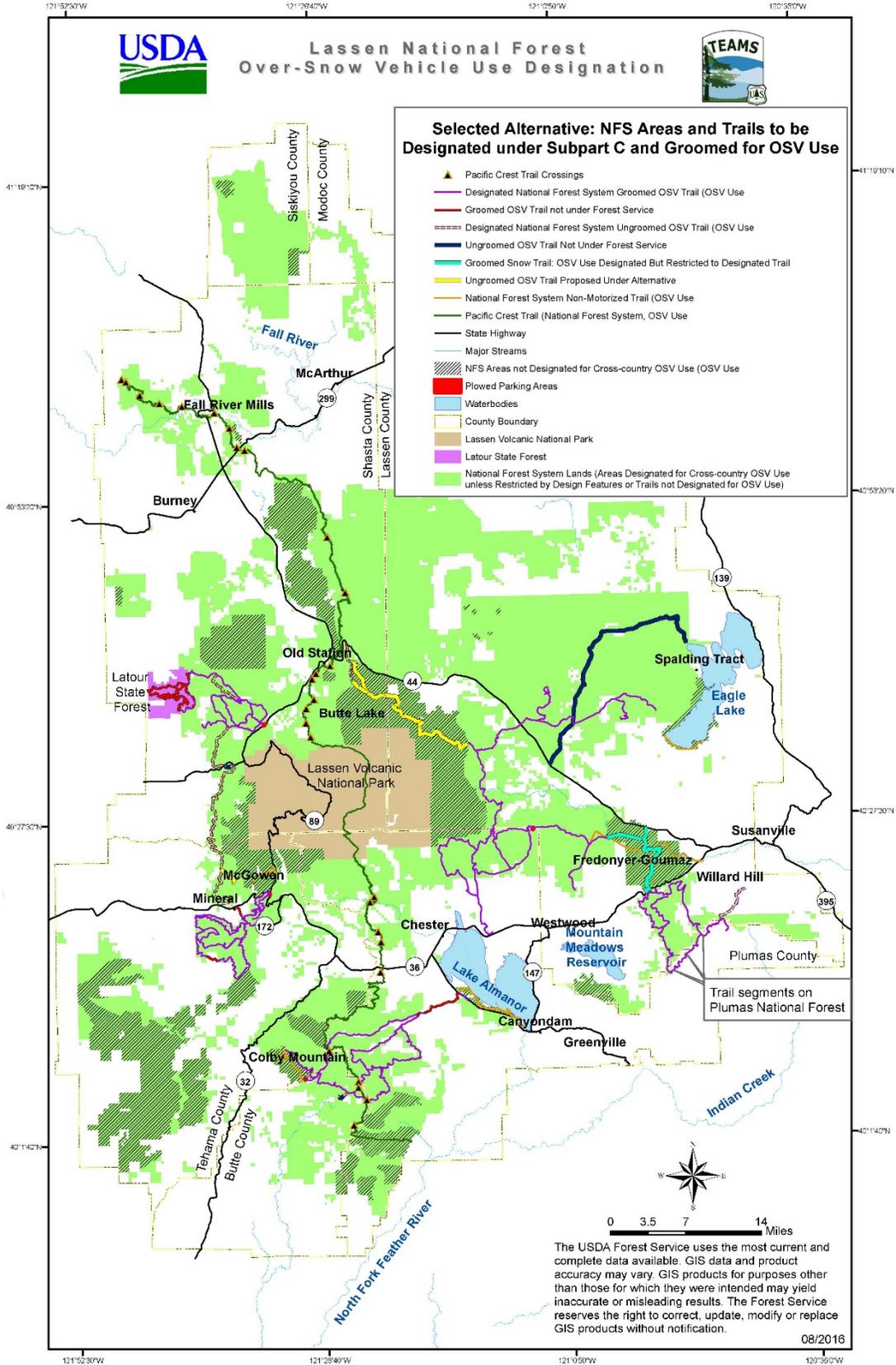


Figure 1. Map of selected alternative for Lassen National Forest over-snow vehicle use designation

Project Design Features and Monitoring

We developed the following project design features and mitigation measures to be used as part of the implementation of all the action alternatives. These practices will apply to the selected alternative. These features were developed to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts from project activities and are incorporated as an integrated part of the selected alternative. Project design features are based upon standard practices and operating procedures that have been employed and proved effective in similar circumstances and conditions.

1. All activities will adhere to Best Management Practices (BMPs) related to Over Snow Vehicle Use from the 2012 USDA Forest Service National Core BMP Technical Guide and the 2011 Region 5 Soil and Water Conservation Handbook (defined in FEIS, appendix D).
2. Forest Service National Best Management Practices for Water Quality Management on National Forest System Lands, Volume 1 National Core BMP Technical Guide (FEIS, appendix D) applicable to OSV use will be implemented under the selected alternative.
3. Grooming of snow trails for OSV use will occur only when the ground surface is covered with adequate snowpack to prevent soil damage or soil rutting (FEIS, table 31). The operator shall consider recent, current, and forecasted weather and snow conditions to ensure these conditions are met.
4. OSV use of groomed trails will occur only when and where adequate snow cover ensures negligible potential for contact with bare soil and practically no disturbance of trail and road surfaces (FEIS, table 31). This will prevent substantial impacts to water quality in perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral streams, or in wetlands or other bodies of water.
5. To prevent substantial impacts to soil resources, areas designated for public, cross-country OSV use will be clearly delineated and marked in the field, where practical.
6. Areas will be protected from substantial impacts to resources resulting from overuse by closing or managing designated OSV areas to mitigate adverse effects to soil, water quality, and riparian resources, by adaptive management, or changing season-of use periods as necessary to allow rehabilitation of an area, particularly hill-climb areas.
7. Watershed resources will be protected by making spill containment equipment available at the facilities where grooming equipment is re-fueled.
8. Watershed resources will be protected by designating equipment maintenance and refueling sites to ensure that they are located on gentle slopes, on uplands, and outside of riparian conservation areas and sensitive terrestrial wildlife habitats.
9. To protect watershed resources, all stream crossings and other in-stream structures facilitating OSV passage will be designed and maintained to provide for the passage of flow and sediment, to withstand expected flood flows, and to allow for free movement of resident aquatic life (California Snowmobile Trail Grooming, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division, 2010).
10. To protect watershed resources, public OSV use of trails and grooming snow trails for OSV use will be prohibited in wetlands unless protected by at least 12 inches of packed snow or 2 inches of frozen soil. If OSV trails must enter wetlands, bridges or raised prisms with diffuse drainage to sustain flow patterns will be used.
11. To protect watershed resources, crossing bottoms will be set at natural levels of channel beds and wet meadow surfaces.

12. To protect watershed resources, actions that dewater or reduce water budgets in wetlands will be avoided.
13. To protect cultural and historic resources, foreign material may be utilized to cover historic properties under the following conditions:
 - a. Engineering staff will design the foreign material depth to acceptable professional standards;
 - b. Engineering staff will design the foreign material use to assure that there will be no surface or subsurface impacts to archaeological deposits or historic features;
 - c. The foreign material must be easily distinguished from underlying archaeological deposits or historic features;
 - d. The remainder of the archaeological site or historic feature is to be avoided, and traffic is to be clearly routed across the foreign fill material;
 - e. The foreign material must be removable should research or other heritage need require access to the archaeological deposit or historic feature at a later date; and
 - f. Indian tribe or other public concerns about the use of the foreign material will be addressed prior to use.
14. Signage will be installed along the Pacific Crest Trail as staffing and funding allow, to enhance wayfinding of winter OSV users and reduce encroachment on the Pacific Crest Trail. Agency signage procedures will be followed. As a guideline, trail markers will be at eye level, approximately 40 inches above the average snow depth.
15. OSV trail grooming will be timed to minimize impacts on non-motorized recreation experiences.
16. Wheeled vehicle use of groomed snow trails will be prohibited from December 26 through March 31.
17. The grooming season generally begins in mid-December and continues through March. Start and stop times vary per trail location and are dependent upon the presence and depth of snow. Snow trails are prioritized for grooming based on visitor use. Grooming has historically occurred several times per week. As part of this proposal, the grooming frequency on priority trails would occur several times per week and after major storms, typically between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
18. Snow trails will be groomed for public OSV use to a minimum width of 10 feet and typically up to 14 feet wide. Snow trails will be groomed up to 30 feet wide in the more heavily used areas such as near trailheads. Groomed trail width is determined by variety of factors such as width of the underlying road bed, width of grooming tractor, heavy two-way traffic on the trail, and trail corners. Snow trails will not be groomed beyond the width of the underlying roadbed, where one exists. Where the terrain allows, main ingress and egress snow trails that connect to the trailhead will be groomed to 18 feet wide or greater to facilitate the added traffic.
19. Snowcats are operated at speeds in the range of 3 to 7 miles per hour. The vehicle is operated with warning lights on at all times. The maximum hours of equipment operation is generally a 12-hour day during peak season (FEIS, table 8).
20. Snow trail grooming for public OSV use will be conducted in accordance with the 1997 Snowmobile Trail Grooming Standards set by the California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division, as follows:
 - a. Operators shall be trained and directed by a grooming coordinator.
 - b. Identify hazards in advance of grooming, preferably in autumn before snow falls.
 - c. Maintain a 10-foot vertical clearance from potential obstructions.

- d. The California OHMVR Division's snowcat fleet is subject to emission regulation by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as off-road equipment. The CARB sets an emission limit for the vehicle fleet as a whole rather than for individual pieces of equipment. Based on the total horsepower of the vehicle fleet, and the model and year of the individual equipment within the fleet, CARB determines how much horsepower per year must be repowered, retrofitted, or retired. The California OHMVR Division then determines what modifications to make to its fleet in order to satisfy CARB requirements.

Minimization Measures to Address Travel Management Regulation Requirements

In designating National Forest System trails and areas on a national forest, the Forest Service Travel Management Regulations require the responsible official to "consider effects on the following, with the objective of minimizing:

- ◆ Damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources;
- ◆ Harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats;
- ◆ Conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreational uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands; and
- ◆ Conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands" (36 CFR §212.55(b)).

Many reviewers of the DEIS expressed the opinion that this language in the Travel Management Regulations requires the decision to minimize damage, harassment, significant disruption, and conflicts to the extent that they would not occur at all. The Department of Agriculture explained the appropriate interpretation of this requirement when it released the Travel Management Regulations in November of 2005:

An extreme interpretation of "minimize" would preclude any [motorized] use at all, since impacts always can be reduced further by preventing them altogether. Such an interpretation would not reflect the full context of E.O. 11644 or other laws and policies related to multiple use of NFS lands. Neither E.O. 11644, nor these other laws and policies, establish the primacy of any particular use of trails and areas over any other. The Department believes "shall consider * * * with the objective of minimizing * * *" will assure that environmental impacts are properly taken into account, without categorically precluding motor vehicle use (70 FR 68281, November 9, 2005).

Criteria for designating trails and areas was applied in two ways, generally in accordance with 36 CFR §212.55(a), and specifically in accordance with 36 CFR §212.55(b) to routes and areas with a granular approach to address the objective of minimizing impacts. By granular, I mean the following:

- ◆ Establishing design criteria to protect specific resources and specific areas on the forest on potential OSV routes and in OSV areas smaller than the entire forest to meet the objective of minimizing impacts; and
- ◆ Applying the minimization criteria to provide for resource protection and a balance of recreation opportunities.

The following describes the minimization measures that will be applied to the management of OSV uses on the Lassen National Forest:

Minimizing Damage to Soil, Watershed, Vegetation, and other Forest Resources (36 CFR §212.55(b)(1))

Minimizing Damage to Soil

All Public OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing impacts of public OSV use to soil resources will be addressed by locating designated OSV routes to overlay existing National Forest System roads (FEIS, page 4). These roads are part of the managed road system and are maintained under best management practices (defined in FEIS, appendix D) as they apply to soil conservation.

Use of Groomed Snow Trails

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to soil will be addressed by grooming over the existing road and trail network. This will not alter landforms or result in perceptible soil disturbance and therefore will not cause substantial impacts to water quality, perennial, intermittent or ephemeral streams, wetlands or other bodies of water (FEIS, appendix D, Water Quality Best Management Practices; Project Record, Hydrology Report).

Public, Cross-country OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to soil will be addressed by requiring that public, cross-country OSV use only occur when and where there is adequate snow coverage to prevent adverse impacts to soil and water resources from OSV use on designated routes and areas (FEIS, table 31).

Monitoring to Minimize Impacts to Soil

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to soils, vegetation and water quality will be addressed by monitoring precipitation and temperature changes and adapting seasons of use for public OSV use (see General Monitoring Procedures, ROD, page 13).
2. The objective of minimizing impacts to soils will be addressed by monitoring to ensure that resource damage is not occurring when there is less than sufficient snow coverage (see General Monitoring Procedures, ROD, page 13, FEIS, table 31).
3. The objective of minimizing impacts to soils, water quality, vegetation, and aquatic species will be addressed by monitoring the High Lakes area and prescribing corrective actions if resource impacts are found (see General Monitoring Procedures, ROD, page 13).

Minimizing Damage to Watershed Resources

All Public OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing impacts of public OSV use to watershed resources will be addressed by adhering to Best Management Practices related to Over Snow Vehicle Use from the 2012 USDA Forest Service National Core BMP Technical Guide and the 2011 Region 5 Soil and Water Conservation Handbook.
2. The objective of minimizing impacts of public OSV use to watershed resources will be addressed by locating designated OSV routes to overlay existing National Forest System roads. These roads are part of the managed road system and are maintained under best management practices (FEIS, page 9) as they apply to water quality.

Use of Groomed Snow Trails

1. The objective of minimizing impacts of public OSV use to watershed resources will be addressed by adhering to Best Management Practices related to Over Snow Vehicle Use from the 2012 USDA Forest Service National Core BMP Technical Guide and the 2011 Region 5 Soil and Water Conservation Handbook.

Public, Cross-country OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by prohibiting public, cross-country OSV use when and where there is less snow coverage than sufficient to prevent damage to underlying soil and vegetation resources.
2. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by prohibiting public OSV use on unfrozen lakes, reservoirs, ponds and any other open surface water.
3. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by providing information to the public of the hazards of running over-snow vehicles on thin ice and the effects of OSV emissions on air quality and water quality.

Monitoring to Minimize Impacts to Watershed Resources

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by monitoring to determine if implementing protective measures ensures that aquatic resources are adequately protected. Possible protective measures include restricting access to aquatic communities where substantial impacts are observed through the dissemination of educational materials and by using signage, or, if necessary, through the use of barriers or trail re-routes.
2. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by monitoring in consultation with forest biologists to ensure that public OSV use is not damaging sensitive resource locations.
3. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by monitoring water quality in spring snowmelt periodically at specified locations, in consultation with the forest hydrologist and aquatic biologist, to determine potential impacts of public OSV use on water quality. If adverse impacts are observed, changes in management of public OSV use will be considered, or other appropriate protective measures will be taken, in consultation with a forest hydrologist.
4. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by periodically monitoring the effects of public OSV use with sufficient snow coverage over road or trail surfaces.
5. The objective of minimizing impacts to watershed resources will be addressed by periodically monitoring water quality in spring snowmelt periodically at specified locations, in consultation with the forest hydrologist and aquatic biologist, to determine potential impacts of OSV exhaust on water quality. If adverse impacts are observed, changes in management of OSV use will be considered, or other appropriate protective measures taken, in consultation with a forest botanist.
6. For the 6-inch or less minimum snow depths allowed on trails, operation of OSVs will be monitored periodically when use is allowed at every site where this standard will apply when snow is less than 12 inches deep. Monitoring will be consistent with BMP 4-7 (see FEIS, appendix D) and focus on whether OSVs are impacting trail surfaces, and be reported to the Forest or District hydrologist and soil scientist. If adverse effects are observed to occur on trail surfaces, use should be discontinued until snow depth conditions permit.

Minimizing Damage to Vegetation

All Public OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing damage to vegetation will be addressed by requiring sufficient snow coverage in the selected alternative to prevent or minimize damage to soil and vegetation.
2. The objective of minimizing damage to vegetation will be addressed by not designating the Cub Creek and Blacks Mountain RNAs for OSV use to protect rare plant species and significant natural ecosystems (Forest Plan, page 3-26).
3. The objective of minimizing damage to vegetation will be addressed by providing public education for invasive species and encouraging cleaning of over-snow vehicles, towing vehicles, and trailers prior to entering public lands to remove dirt, debris, plant parts, and material that may carry weed seeds.
4. The objective of minimizing impacts of public OSV use to vegetation will be addressed by locating designated OSV routes to overlay existing National Forest System roads. These roads are part of the managed road system and no new vegetation would be disturbed.

Public, Cross-country OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to vegetation will be addressed by designating public OSV use only when snow depths are sufficient to protect the underlying vegetation and soil. Such measures will include the implementation season of use restrictions, only allowing public OSV use when the snow pack is expected to be of sufficient depth.

Monitoring to Minimize Damage to Vegetation

1. The objective of minimizing damage to vegetation will be addressed by monitoring in consultation with forest biologists to minimize damage to vegetation by ensuring that public OSV use is not damaging sensitive resource locations. In particular, OSV use will be monitored in the white bark pine stand on Burney Mountain to determine if damage is occurring. If adverse impacts are observed, changes in management of OSV use will be considered, or other appropriate protective measures taken, in consultation with a forest botanist. Considerations will include prohibiting public, cross-country OSV use in this area.
2. The objective of minimizing damage to vegetation will be addressed by monitoring public OSV use in designated Forest Plan botanical special interest areas to determine if damage is occurring. If adverse impacts are observed and it is determined that public OSV use in these areas is not compatible with the intended focus of these areas, per each special area's management plan, changes in management of public OSV use will be considered, or other appropriate protective measures taken, in consultation with a forest botanist. Considerations will include prohibiting public, cross-country OSV use in these special interest areas or restricting OSV use to designated routes only.

Minimizing Damage to Other Forest Resources

All Public OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing damage to other forest resources will be addressed by temporarily closing designated OSV use areas or OSV trails for other types of management activities such as contracted timber or vegetation management or other resource concerns.
2. The objective of minimizing damage to other forest resources will be addressed by using temporary closures in areas designated for public, cross-country OSV use or on public OSV trails if

unacceptable adverse impacts are occurring, a public safety hazard is revealed, or for other site-specific needs by authorization of the Forest Supervisor.

3. The objective of minimizing damage to historic and cultural resources will be addressed by ensuring the accumulation of sufficient snow depth over archaeological deposits or historic features to prevent surface and subsurface impacts. Undertaking activities may be implemented over snow cover on historic properties under the following conditions:
 - The snow cover must be at least 12 inches of snow or ice throughout the duration of undertaking activities on sites.
 - All concentrated work areas shall be located prior to snow accumulation and outside historic property boundaries.
 - Foreign, non-archaeological material (e.g., padding or filter cloth) will be placed within transportation corridors (e.g., designated trails) over archaeological deposits or historic features to prevent surface and subsurface impacts caused by over-snow vehicles or grooming equipment.

Public, Cross-country OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing damage to cultural resources will be addressed by OSV closures in and around the Ishi Wilderness. These closures will address resource concerns in large swaths of land in the south and southwest sections of the Forest to keep them non-motorized for the protection of these areas. These closures will generally apply in areas of the Forest south of Highway 36 to avoid conflicts and adverse effects to natural and cultural resources in these areas.
2. The objective of minimizing impacts to cultural resources will be addressed by not designating areas around the west side of Eagle Lake for OSV use.

Monitoring to Minimize Damage to Heritage Resources

1. Effects will be minimized by monitoring to focus on the potential for any effects to historic properties resulting from OSV traffic.

Minimizing Harassment of Wildlife and Significant Disruption of Wildlife Habitats (36 CFR §212.55(b)(2))

Minimizing Harassment of Wildlife

Designated OSV Trails

1. The objective of minimizing impacts of public OSV use to wolverine will be addressed by locating designated OSV routes to overlay existing National Forest System roads. These roads are part of the managed road system. No new OSV routes will be established by this decision. Wolverine are known to avoid roads and areas of human habitation (Project Record, Biological Assessment, pages F-27–28).

All Public OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing harassment of wildlife will be addressed by developing a public outreach program as part of this project to raise public awareness of winter wildlife habitat, wildlife behavior, and ways to minimize user impacts, as time and funds allow.

Public, Cross-country OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to wildlife will be addressed by ensuring that public OSV use is not occurring in areas not designated for public, cross-country OSV use.

*Minimizing Significant Disruption of Wildlife Habitats***All Public OSV Use**

1. The objective of minimizing impacts to wolverine habitat will be addressed by providing areas of wolverine habitat where OSV use will not be designated to provide for limited human activity in wolverine habitat (Project Record, Wildlife, Map BE-16). Although there have been no recorded sightings of wolverine on the Lassen National Forest, at least 44 percent of suitable wolverine habitat will not be designated or conducive for OSV use.

Designated OSV Trails

1. The objective of minimizing harassment of wildlife habitats will be addressed by minimizing impacts to gray wolf prey base by locating all designated OSV routes outside of mule deer winter range (ROD, figure 1, page 3; Project Record, Wildlife, Map BE-12). Referenced map in the record shows mule deer winter range and the location of designated OSV routes.

Groomed Snow Trails

1. To address the objective of minimizing significant disruption of aquatic wildlife habitats, no grooming will occur on open or flowing water, including stream crossings.

Public, Cross-country OSV Use

1. To address the objective of minimizing significant disruption of wildlife habitats, if public OSV use is found to be causing damage to Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Sensitive species or habitats, corrective actions will be required, including, but not limited to, area closures and signage to protect the sensitive resources.
2. To address the objective of minimizing impacts to gray wolf and their prey species, public OSV use will not be designated on more than 50.3 percent of mule deer winter range under any alternative (ROD, figure 1, page 3; Project Record, Wildlife, Map BE-12). Referenced map in the record shows mule deer winter range and areas not designated for public OSV use.
3. To address the objective of minimizing significant disruption of wildlife habitats, the low risk of modification of the prey/food base from oil, gas, or other vehicle fluids entering waterways, cross-country OSV use will occur only when there is adequate snow cover to protect aquatic and riparian habitats from measurable impacts to wildlife habitats.
4. The objective of minimizing impacts to aquatic habitats will be addressed by prohibiting public OSV use on unfrozen lakes, reservoirs, ponds and any other open surface water.
5. The objective of minimizing impacts to wildlife will be addressed by not designating areas around the west side of Eagle Lake for OSV use (ROD, figure 1, page 3). There are osprey and eagle nests in that area. Eagle Lake will be completely buffered on National Forest System lands from OSV use.

Monitoring to Minimize Significant Disruption of Wildlife Habitats

1. The objective of minimizing harassment of wildlife will be addressed by using the results of annual inventory and monitoring efforts for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species (northern spotted owl, California spotted owl, northern goshawk, bald eagle) to determine proximity of known nesting or roosting sites to designated OSV trails.

2. To address the objective of minimizing significant disruption of wildlife habitats, public OSV use in sensitive wildlife habitats will be monitored in consultation with the forest biologist, to determine if adverse impacts are occurring. If adverse impacts are observed, changes in management will be considered in consultation with the forest biologist.

Minimizing Conflicts between Motor Vehicle Use and Existing or Proposed Recreational Uses of National Forest System Lands or Neighboring Federal Lands (36 CFR §212.55(b)(3))

All Public OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing conflicts between OSV recreationists and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts on the Pacific Crest Trail will be addressed by designating 28 public OSV crossings of the Pacific Crest Trail. These OSV crossings will be located on existing roads and shown on the Over-snow Vehicle Use Map.
2. The objective of minimizing conflicts between OSV use and other existing or proposed recreational use will be addressed by identifying the Pacific Crest Trail as non-motorized on the Over-snow Vehicle Use Map.
3. The objective of minimizing conflicts between OSV use and other existing or proposed recreational use will be addressed by encouraging public awareness and education regarding locations of non-motorized trails or areas where public OSV use is prohibited; considering additional signage; or applying other methods to minimize OSV encroachment in these areas.
4. The objective of minimizing conflicts between OSV recreationists and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts will be addressed by designating OSV routes in the Butte Lake and Fredonyer-Goumaz non-motorized areas to minimize recreational conflicts by facilitating access between areas open to OSV use and further dispersing motorized use (ROD, figure 1, page 3).

Public, Cross-country OSV Use

1. The objective of minimizing conflicts between public OSV use and other existing or proposed recreational use will be addressed by encouraging public awareness and education regarding locations of non-motorized trails or areas where public OSV use will be prohibited. We will install additional signage or other methods to minimize OSV encroachment in these areas where necessary.
2. The objective of minimizing conflicts between public OSV use and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts will be addressed by not designating the 31,730-acre area around Butte Lake, north of Lassen Volcanic National Park, for public, cross-country OSV use. OSV use will be restricted to the designated OSV trail that runs through this area (FEIS, page 141; ROD, figure 1, page 3).
3. The objective of minimizing conflicts between public OSV use and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts will be addressed by not designating the 19,040-acre Fredonyer-Goumaz area for public, cross-country OSV use. OSV use will be restricted to the designated OSV trail system that runs through this area (FEIS, page 141; ROD, figure 1, page 3).
4. The objective of minimizing conflicts between public OSV use and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts will be addressed by not designating the 1,840-acre area along Lake Almanor's south shoreline for public OSV use. Skiers use the bike trail in this area in the winter (FEIS, page 141; ROD, figure 1, page 3).
5. The objective of minimizing conflicts between public OSV use and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts will be addressed by not designating the 1,680-acre area around the south end of Eagle Lake for public OSV use in the modified proposed action. Skiers and fishermen use the lake in the

winter. This will also buffer and protect the lake from potential OSV incursions on Eagle Lake trout (an important forest natural resource) (FEIS, page 141; ROD, figure 1, page 3).

6. The objective of minimizing conflicts between OSV recreationists and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts will be addressed by not designating the 4,570-acre area near McGowan Lake for cross-country OSV use. This area surrounds a popular non-motorized trail and it will provide additional non-motorized cross-country opportunities, offer additional opportunities for solitude, and will provide an additional non-motorized buffer near Lassen Volcanic National Park (FEIS, page 141; ROD, figure 1, page 3).
7. The objective of minimizing conflicts between public OSV use and other existing or proposed recreational use will be addressed by not designating specific areas around the perimeter of Lassen Volcanic National Park for public OSV use (FEIS, page 141; ROD, figure 1, page 3).

General Monitoring Procedures

After this ROD is issued, the implementation phase will begin. We anticipate that an implementation plan, with a monitoring component, will be developed at that time. However, the analysis assumes the following monitoring procedures will be implemented:

1. The Forest Service has an obligation to monitor the effects of public OSV use as required by Subpart C of the Travel Management Regulations. Furthermore, as an ongoing part of our State-funded OSV program, California State Parks provides funding to the Forest Service to monitor our groomed trail systems for evidence of OSV trespass into closed areas, OSV use near or damage of sensitive plant and wildlife sites, and low snow areas subject to erosion concerns (FEIS, page 77).
2. Wilderness boundaries and other closed areas near groomed snow trails and areas open to OSV use will be monitored for OSV incursions. We will coordinate and implement increased education or enforcement actions as needed.
3. Trailheads and groomed trail areas will be monitored for user conflicts and public safety concerns, coordinating and implementing site-specific controls as necessary (such as speed limits, segregated access points for motorized and non-motorized use, increased visitor information, or increased on-site management presence).
4. Areas where OSV use is restricted to designated routes will be monitored to ensure public OSV use is restricted to designated routes and is not encroaching outside the trail corridor in areas where such use is not allowed.
5. Monitoring that will occur during implementation of the selected alternative includes effectiveness monitoring, based on available resources. Monitoring will ensure that:
 - Resource damage is not occurring when there is less than the prescribed minimum snow depth with certain exceptions as described in the description of alternative 4. Snow depth measurement locations and techniques will be developed using an interdisciplinary team approach and will consider terrain, season, proximity to sensitive areas, and resource damage criteria;
 - a) Where resource damage is suspected due to public OSV use on less than the prescribed minimum snow depth, monitoring will occur to help inform the responsible official if damage is occurring, the extent of the damage, and what steps need to be taken to address the issue;

- Public OSV use is not damaging sensitive resource locations, in consultation with forest resource specialists;
- Public OSV use is not occurring in prohibited areas; and
- Public OSV use restricted to designated routes is not encroaching outside the trail corridors into areas not designated for OSV use.

Background

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this decision is to effectively manage public OSV use on the Lassen National Forest and to comply with the Travel Management Regulations and the settlement agreement with Snowlands Network et al. Effective management would provide public OSV access, ensure that OSV use occurs when there is adequate snow, promote the safety of all users, enhance public enjoyment, minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources, and minimize conflicts among the various uses.

Need for a Manageable System of Snow Trails and Areas

In 2005, the Department of Agriculture issued regulations for the management of off-road vehicles on national forests (70 FR 68264, November 9, 2005; 36 CFR Part 212). Those regulations required designation of those roads, trails, and areas on national forests that are open to motor vehicle use. Subpart C of those regulations (§212.81) made the designation of roads, trails, and areas for OSV use an optional decision.

Over-snow vehicle use on the Lassen National Forest has been managed according to the 2005 “Winter Recreation Guide.” There are approximately 964,020 acres of National Forest System land open for public, cross-country OSV use on the Forest. This represents approximately 84 percent of the Forest. There are also approximately 2,450 miles of OSV trail, most of which is located in areas open for public, cross-country OSV use. This includes approximately 350 miles of snow trail that is groomed for OSV use.

In February of 2015, the Department of Agriculture finalized new regulations for the management of over-snow vehicles on the national forests (80 FR 4500, January 28, 2015; 36 CFR Part 212, Subpart C). Specifically, 36 CFR §212.81(a) states, in part,

“Over-snow vehicle use on National Forest System roads, on National Forest System trails, and in areas on National Forest System lands shall be designated by the Responsible Official on administrative units or Ranger Districts . . . of the National Forest System where snowfall is adequate for that use to occur...”

OSV Designations

The existing system of public OSV snow trails and areas on the Lassen National Forest is the culmination of multiple agency decisions over recent decades. Public OSV use of the majority of this available system continues to be manageable and consistent with the Forest Service’s Travel Management Regulations.

Exceptions have been identified, based on internal and public input and the criteria listed at 36 CFR §212.55. These include needs to provide improved access for public OSV users and to formalize prohibitions required by Forest Plan and other existing management direction.

There are also approximately 12 miles of ungroomed OSV trails located within areas where OSV use is currently prohibited by Forest Plan direction. These trails typically extend a short distance into non-motorized areas and reach a dead end. The areas where these motorized trails are located are designated as semi-primitive non-motorized in the Forest Plan. The Forest Plan prohibits motorized recreation, including four-wheel driving, motorcycling, and snowmobiling in semi-primitive non-motorized areas. These semi-primitive non-motorized areas are designated in the Forest Plan as Management Prescription “N” (Forest Plan, page 4-63).

These exceptions represent additional needs for changes in how public OSV use is managed on the Lassen National Forest, and in these cases, changes are proposed to meet the overall objectives.

Improve Public OSV Access

Currently, the Forest Service requires 12 or more inches of snow on the ground for the public to operate an OSV on the Lassen National Forest. Although 12 inches of snow may exist at a given time in many higher elevation areas, there may be less than 12 inches of snow at trailheads, which under current regulations, would leave areas with 12 or more inches of snow inaccessible to public OSV use. To improve public OSV access to designated areas open to OSV use, the proposed action would allow public OSV use on snow trails designated for OSV use that overlie existing roads and trails that have been previously designated for wheeled, motorized vehicles, as long as there are at least 6 inches of snow on the ground.

Ensure OSVs are Operated on Adequate Snow to Minimize Impacts to Natural and Cultural Resources

The Forest Service has also identified areas in which public OSV use should not be designated (i.e., not be allowed), but there are no existing orders or directives that have formally prohibited public OSV use within them. These areas total 42,890 acres in addition to the 186,000 acres of National Forest System land where OSV use is currently prohibited.

These areas are either in lower elevations that do not typically receive sufficient snow for OSV use; are interspersed among areas where OSV use is currently prohibited, such as Wilderness, proposed wilderness, and areas classified as semi-primitive non-motorized in the recreation opportunity spectrum; they have limited access, except from adjacent private land; are not managed consistent with the Forest Plan which prohibits motorized use in the area; or are small areas adjacent to pedestrian trails upon which motorized use is currently prohibited. The selected alternative will not designate these types of areas for public OSV use.

Consistent with the Travel Management Regulations at 36 CFR Part 212 Subpart C, designated public over-snow vehicle snow trails and areas must be displayed on a publicly available over-snow vehicle use map (OSVUM). Once issued, these designations are made enforceable with the provisions of 36 CFR §261.14, which prohibits the possession or operation of an OSV on National Forest System lands other than in accordance with the Subpart C designations. My decision responds to agency regulations for the management of over-snow vehicle use on national forests.

I am complying with the Travel Management Regulations in making this decision.

Need to Identify Snow Trails for Grooming

For more than 30 years, the Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, in cooperation with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (California State Parks) Off-highway Motor Vehicle Division has enhanced winter recreation, and more specifically, snowmobiling recreation by grooming snow trails for

snowmobile use. On the Lassen National Forest, all groomed trails are co-located on underlying roads. Some of the Forest Service's grooming occurs on county roads and closed snow-covered highways not under Forest Service jurisdiction. Grooming activities are funded by the state off-highway vehicle trust fund.

In 2013, the Forest Service entered into a settlement agreement with Snowlands Network et al. to "complete appropriate NEPA analysis(es) to identify snow trails for grooming" on the Lassen National Forest and four other national forests in California (*Snowlands Network, et al. v. U.S. Forest Service* (Case No. 2:11-cv-02921-MCE-DAD, E.D. Cal.)). In a 2015 amendment to the settlement agreement, the Forest Service agreed to

"use its best efforts to issue Final NEPA analyses and Decision documents in a reasonable time after the Draft NEPA analyses are issued, with the first Final NEPA analysis and Decision document [for the Lassen National Forest] to be completed no later than October 31, 2016."

The snow trail grooming analysis addresses the need to provide a high quality OSV trail system on the Lassen National Forest that is smooth and stable for the rider. Groomed snow trails are designed so that the novice OSV rider can use them without difficulty. I am complying with the terms of the settlement agreement by completing this analysis and issuing this decision for the Lassen National Forest.

Decision Rationale

It's important to consider the context of the Lassen's OSV program while weighing the merits of each alternative and making the final decision. The Lassen's OSV system is the largest in the region (at just over 400 miles of groomed trails when non-National Forest System routes are considered) and yet is relatively lightly used. Depending upon the information source, snowmobiling visits to the Lassen may be as high as 25,000 visitors per year, but are also likely to be significantly lower than that estimate. In addition, snowmobile registration in the seven counties covered by this decision has steadily decreased since 2009 (FEIS, page 132). Since the Lassen's system is not near major metropolitan centers, it's unlikely that that current use will increase much over the next 5 to 10 years and is more likely to decrease. Furthermore, there have been relatively few winter recreation user conflicts on the Lassen in the past, and significant user conflicts are not likely in the near future. This decision accounts for all these factors and makes some changes to the current system to better manage the program into the future.

In this decision, I address the purpose and need by designating a manageable system of snow trails and areas for public OSV use within the Lassen National Forest that is consistent with and achieves the purposes of the Forest Service Travel Management Regulations at 36 CFR Part 212. Public OSV use will be allowed only in areas and on snow trails my decision designates for such use. To comply with the settlement agreement, my decision also identifies those designated National Forest System and non-designated snow trails that will be groomed by the Forest Service's State-funded snow trail grooming program for public OSV use on the Lassen National Forest.

My decision recognizes the need to effectively manage public OSV use on the Lassen National Forest and to comply with the settlement agreement with Snowlands Network et al. It will provide public OSV access, ensure that OSV use occurs when there is adequate snow, promote the safety of all users, enhance public enjoyment, minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources, and minimize conflicts among the various uses.

My decision provides improved access for public OSV users by allowing OSV use on designated snow trails overlaying roads as long as no damage to the underlying resource occurs. It also formalizes

prohibitions on public OSV use in areas that the Forest Plan and other existing management direction have previously designated as off-limits to public OSV use, but no formal closures had been in place. These areas include the 520-acre Blacks Mountain Research Natural Area. My decision provides an additional OSV noise buffer within Lassen Volcanic National Park by restricting OSV use to designated trails in the Butte Lake area north of the Park. My decision enhances safety of all winter recreation enthusiasts by designating additional non-motorized winter recreation areas where public OSV use is restricted to designated OSV trails, only. This minimizes conflicts among users. A complete list of design features, minimization measures as required by 36 CFR §212.55, and monitoring procedures that will be implemented with this decision begins on page 4 of this ROD.

Finally, and of no less importance, my decision identifies the snow trails that will be groomed for public OSV use by the Lassen National Forest's OSV Trail Grooming Program.

I recognize that the public was passionate about what they felt was best for the land, and that there is no single management strategy that could completely satisfy all concerns expressed about the Lassen National Forest OSV use designations. I have selected a modified alternative that addresses concerns expressed, but is not likely to resolve conflicting points of view.

Issues Considered

Issues identified from public comments and during the analysis serve to highlight effects or unintended consequences that may occur from the proposed action and alternatives, giving opportunities during the analysis to reduce adverse effects and compare trade-offs for the decision maker and public to understand. Issues are best identified during scoping early in the process to help set the scope of the actions, alternatives, and effects to consider (FSH 1909.15, Chapter 10, Sec. 12.4).

Significant Issues

Significant issues are those issues that identify "a cause-effect relationship between a proposed action and a significant effect" (FSH 1909.12, Sec. 12.41). The interdisciplinary team recommended, and I approved, significant environmental issues, measures, and indicators, and resulting alternatives deserving of detailed study (FEIS, Chapter 1, pages 11-14). My determination is that there are two significant issues in this analysis (see FEIS, beginning on page 103):

1. Motorized Recreational Opportunities:

The decision has the potential to impact the amount of available opportunities for public access and use of National Forest System lands by OSV-equipped winter recreation enthusiasts seeking enjoyable and challenging motorized experiences. The designation of snow trails and areas for public OSV use has the potential to impact the opportunities these enthusiasts seek by:

- a. Changing the location of and/or reducing the amount of high quality and desirable areas designated for public, cross-country OSV use on the forest;
- b. Designating an insufficient number of opportunities for public OSV use of snow trails on the forest; and
- c. Providing an insufficient number of opportunities for public OSV use of groomed snow trails on the forest. These opportunities are subject to an external constraint due to limits on the amount of funding from the State for grooming snow trails for public OSV use. Snow trail grooming for OSV use on National Forest System land is 100 percent State-

funded. The State's financial support of snow trail grooming for OSV use is not expected to increase.

2. Non-motorized Recreational Opportunities:

The decision has the potential to impact the amount of available opportunities for public access and use of National Forest System lands by non-motorized winter recreation enthusiasts seeking solitude and challenging physical experiences. The designation of snow trails and areas for public OSV use and grooming of snow trails for OSV use has the potential to impact the opportunities these enthusiasts seek by:

- a. Displacing non-motorized winter recreation enthusiasts, or requiring them to travel longer distances through motorized snow trails and areas than they are physically able to traverse to access their desired quiet, non-motorized experiences;
- b. Consuming untracked powder desired by backcountry skiers;
- c. Making the snow surface difficult to ski on;
- d. Tripling the amount of OSV use on snow trails that are groomed for OSV use, increasing the potential for all other impacts to opportunities these enthusiasts seek;
- e. Creating concerns for their safety when non-motorized winter recreationists share winter recreation routes and areas with OSVs;
- f. Creating noise impacts that intrude on the solitude these enthusiasts seek;
- g. Creating local air quality impacts that intrude on the unpolluted air and solitude these enthusiasts seek; and
- h. Creating visual impacts that intrude on the unaltered scenery these enthusiasts seek.

The significant issues used for analysis of environmental effects of each alternative analyzed in detail are discussed in chapter 1 of the FEIS. The results of the analysis (FEIS, pages 111-169) support my determination.

Motorized Recreational Opportunities

My decision improves public OSV access by allowing public OSV use on designated snow trails when there are 6 or more inches of snow. However, exceptions to this snow depth rule will be allowed on designated OSV trails overlaying existing paved, dirt, and gravel National Forest System roads and trails in order for OSVs to access higher terrain and legal snow levels when snow depths are less than 6 inches, as long as this use does not cause visible damage to the underlying surface. All snow trails designated for public OSV use will overlay existing National Forest System roads or trails used by wheeled, motorized vehicles when such use is allowed or by non-motorized users.

My decision will not change the number of miles of snow trail to be groomed for public OSV use. This mileage will remain at 349 miles. The depth of snow required for grooming operations will be set at 12 inches. Grooming of OSV trails is funded by the State of California, and the 12-inch snow depth makes the Lassen National Forest's grooming depth guideline the same as the State of California's.

Currently, there are six plowed trailheads that provide access for motorized and non-motorized winter use, and my decision will not change this number. My decision will designate 900,150 acres for public OSV

use, a 21 percent decrease from existing management. This use will be subject to a 12-inch snow depth requirement.

My decision will designate 398 miles of snow trail for OSV use. Although this represents an 86 percent decrease from existing management, 99 percent of the existing OSV trail system will either be designated as OSV trail, or located within areas designated for cross-country OSV use.

Finally, my decision identifies 349 miles of snow trail to be groomed for OSV use by the Lassen National Forest's OSV Trail Grooming Program. These trails will be groomed when there are 12 or more inches of snow, but can be used by OSVs, subject to the snow depth restrictions for OSV trails described above.

Non-motorized Recreational Opportunities

My decision will designate approximately 900,150 acres of National Forest System land for public, cross-country OSV use. This represents approximately 78 percent of the Lassen National Forest. The amount of National Forest System land open to cross-country OSV use will decrease by 63,870 from what is currently available for OSV use. There will be no change in the number of miles of groomed OSV trail.

My decision will not designate (will effectively prohibit) public OSV use in primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized ROS classes. This will resolve the inconsistency of current OSV management with direction in the Lassen National Forest Plan, which prohibits motorized use in primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized ROS classes.

My decision will designate approximately 9 miles of groomed OSV trails within ½ mile of the Caribou Wilderness, Caribou extension proposed Wilderness, Mill Creek Proposed Wilderness and Thousand Lakes Wilderness boundaries.

My decision will designate groomed OSV trails ¾ mile east of the southeast corner, and 1½ miles north of the northwest corner of Lassen Volcanic National Park.

My decision will designate 28 crossing points for the Pacific Crest Trail. Motorized use is generally prohibited on the Pacific Crest Trail. Three of those crossing points are accessed by designated, groomed OSV trails.

My decision initiates no known conflicts with tribal or spiritual areas, historic areas, or populated areas.

My decision will result in potential short-term impacts to the experience of recreational visitors in the vicinity of OSVs and grooming equipment due to the smell of exhaust emissions. However, there will be a 6 percent decrease in the number of acres available for public OSV use on the forest when compared to existing management (Air Quality section, FEIS, pages 441-466).

My decision will result in potential cross-country OSV use that creates temporary tracks in the snow that "crisscross" the landscape, but it will be less than under current management. The visual evidence of snowmobile use will decrease as fresh snow covers the tracks and when the snow melts at the end of the season

My decision will affect opportunities for solitude due to the sights and sounds of OSVs near the wilderness or proposed wilderness boundaries. I will designate approximately 25,560 acres for public OSV use within ½ mile of designated and proposed wilderness boundaries. However, the duration of the potential impacts will be short-term, and only occur during the winter while snow depth is adequate for OSVs to access the area.

My decision will designate approximately 72,884 acres of Inventoried Roadless Area for public OSV use. Opportunities for solitude will be temporarily affected in portions of four roadless areas that are within areas where high to moderate OSV use is expected.

Six plowed trailheads provide access for motorized and non-motorized winter use. Approximately 79,740 acres of National Forest System land will be available for non-motorized recreation within 10 miles of plowed trailheads. Approximately 44 miles of cross-country ski trails and other non-motorized trails will also be available within 10 miles of plowed trailheads.

My decision is consistent with the recreational opportunity spectrum (ROS) classifications on the Forest and will enhance opportunities for non-motorized recreation experiences.

Approximately 249,870 acres of National Forest System land will not be designated for OSV use, which represents a 34 percent increase from existing management. A total of 148 miles of trail will not be designated for motorized use. This is in addition to any other non-motorized trails within areas not designated for OSV use, such as Wilderness, semi-primitive, non-motorized ROS classification areas, and Research Natural Areas.

958,930 acres open to OSV use, potentially affected by noise; 191,090 closed to OSV use, available for quiet recreation.

Insignificant Issues

I used the scoping process “not only to identify significant environmental issues deserving of study, but also to deemphasize insignificant issues, narrowing the scope of the environmental impact statement process accordingly” (40 CFR 1500.4(g)). Insignificant issues were grouped according to common resource topics, which include:

1. Transportation and Engineering (FEIS, pages 170-179)
2. Impacts on Soil Resources (FEIS, pages 180-192)
3. Impacts on Water Resources (FEIS, pages 193-226)
4. Impacts on Heritage Resources (FEIS, pages 218-242)
5. Impacts on Botanical Resources (FEIS, pages 243-291)
6. Impacts on Terrestrial Wildlife (FEIS, pages 292-383)
7. Impacts on Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (FEIS, pages 384-408)
8. Impacts on Socioeconomic Conditions (FEIS, pages 409-424)
9. Noise Impacts (FEIS, pages 425-440)
10. Impacts on Air Quality (FEIS, pages 441-466)

A summary of the effects analysis for these insignificant issues is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Summary of determinations for insignificant issues

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Transportation and Engineering					
<i>Safety</i>	Public Safety and Traffic	The current Lassen National Forest Winter Recreation Guide map provides adequate information to maintain a reasonable level of public safety and avoid traffic conflicts	The over-snow vehicle use map would provide adequate information to maintain a reasonable level of public safety and avoid traffic conflicts; this would also improve understanding of allowed uses and prohibitions.	The over-snow vehicle use map would provide adequate information to maintain a reasonable level of public safety and avoid traffic conflicts; this would also improve understanding of allowed uses and prohibitions.	The over-snow vehicle use map would provide adequate information to maintain a reasonable level of public safety and avoid traffic conflicts; this would also improve understanding of allowed uses and prohibitions.
<i>Cost</i>	Affordability	Minor effects (minor costs) due to over-snow vehicle use for access roads to popular parking and staging areas.	Minor effects (minor costs) due to over-snow vehicle use for access roads to popular parking and staging areas.	Minor effects (minor costs) due to over-snow vehicle use for access roads to popular parking and staging areas.	Minor effects (minor costs) due to over-snow vehicle use for access roads to popular parking and staging areas.
<i>Transportation Property</i>	Effects to underlying NFS roads and trails	18 inches (grooming) and 12 inches (OSV use) snow depth requirement provides more than adequate protection of underlying roads.	12 inches (grooming and general OSV use), and 6 inches (OSV use on underlying routes) snow depth requirement provides adequate protection of underlying roads.	18 inches (grooming), 12 inches (general OSV use) and 6 to 12 inches (OSV use on underlying routes) snow depth requirements provide adequate protection of underlying roads.	12 inches (grooming, general OSV use) and 6 inches (OSV use on underlying routes) snow depth requirements provide adequate protection of underlying roads.
Soil Resources					
<i>Soil Productivity and Soil Stability</i>	OSV acres open to cross-country travel on sensitive soils (including wet meadows, areas with potential low stability, and areas with potential erosion hazards).	There would be no change in acreage of area currently open to cross-country OSV travel on sensitive soils. Approximately 53,902 acres with mapped sensitive soil types are open to cross-country OSV travel.	Approximately 52,964 acres of sensitive soils would be open to cross-country OSV travel within the forest. This is slightly less acres than the no-action alternative and alternative 4, but more acres than alternative 3.	Approximately 40,590 acres of sensitive soils would be open to cross-country OSV travel. Under this alternative, the least amount of sensitive soils would be open to OSV cross-country travel.	Approximately 53,507 acres of sensitive soils would be open to cross-country OSV travel. Under this alternative, there would be more acres of sensitive soils open to cross-country OSV travel than the proposed action, no action, and under alternative 3. This

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
					alternative has the greatest acreage of sensitive soils open to cross-country OSV travel.
<i>Soil Stability</i>	Minimum snow depths on trails (inches)	Minimum snow depth is 12 inches of unpacked snow prior to any OSV travel over existing roads and trails. This minimum snow depth has been observed to be sufficient to prevent contact of OSVs with the bare soil surface.	Minimum snow depth is 6 inches of snow prior to any OSV travel over existing roads and trails. This minimum snow depth may potentially create conditions in which the road surface is exposed to OSVs and there is potential for some soil erosion or rutting of the road surface. Monitoring of this snow depth is recommended to further evaluate the potential effects to soils.	Minimum snow depth is 12 inches of snow prior to any OSV travel over existing roads and trails. OSV use on trails with 6 inches would be allowed if site review determines there would be no damage to the underlying resources. Monitoring of this snow depth is recommended to further evaluate the potential effects to soils.	Minimum snow depth is 6 inches of snow prior to any OSV travel over existing roads and trails. This minimum snow depth may potentially create conditions in which the road surface is exposed to OSVs and there is potential for some soil erosion or rutting of the road surface. Monitoring of this snow depth is recommended to further evaluate the potential effects to soils.
<i>Soil Productivity</i>	Minimum snow depths for cross-country travel (inches)	Minimum snow depth for cross-country OSV travel is currently 12 inches of unpacked snow. Potential effects to the soil are unlikely to occur with at least 12 inches of snow covering the soil surface.	Minimum snow depth of 12 inches of unpacked snow for cross-country OSV travel would not change. Potential effects to the soil are unlikely to occur with at least 12 inches of snow covering the soil surface.	Minimum snow depth of 12 inches of unpacked snow for cross-country OSV travel would not change. Potential effects to the soil are unlikely to occur with at least 12 inches of snow covering the soil surface.	Minimum snow depth of 12 inches of unpacked snow for cross-country OSV travel would not change. Potential effects to the soil are unlikely to occur with at least 12 inches of snow covering the soil surface.
<i>Soil Productivity</i>	Total acres open to OSV use	Approximately 964,020 acres of the forest are open to OSV use. Under the no-action alternative, the most acreage is open to OSV use; therefore, the most potential for soil	Approximately 921,130 acres of the forest would be open to OSV use. This is less area open to OSV use compared to the no-action alternative and alternative 4, but it is greater than alternative 3. The proposed action has	Approximately 834,660 acres of the forest would be open to OSV use, which is the least amount of land open to OSV use out of all four alternatives.	Approximately 958,930 acres of the forest would be open to OSV use, which is a greater area than under the proposed action and alternative 3, but less area than the no-action alternative. Alternative 4 has the potential to have

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
		damage exists under this alternative.	the potential for more impacts than alternative 3, but less than the proposed action and alternative 4.		the greatest soil impacts out of the 3 action alternatives.
Water Resources					
	Consistency with Riparian Conservation Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6	Complies with RCOs 1,2,4,5,6	Complies with RCOs 1,2,4,5,6	Complies with RCOs 1,2,4,5,6	Complies with RCOs 1,2,4,5,6
Heritage Resources					
		No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect
Botanical Resources					
	Threatened and Endangered plants	All alternatives equal (issue sufficiently addressed – no effects)	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal
	Threatened and Endangered plant Critical Habitats	All alternatives equal (issue sufficiently addressed – no effects)	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal
	Sensitive plants	All alternatives equal (issue sufficiently addressed – minor potential effects)	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal
	Survey and Manage plants	All alternatives equal (issue sufficiently addressed)	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal
	Special Interest plants	Alternative 1 holds the greatest potential for effects (issue sufficiently addressed – minor potential effects)	Alternative 2 has the second to least potential for effects (issue sufficiently addressed – minor potential effects)	Alternative 3 holds the least potential for effects (issue sufficiently addressed – minor potential effects)	Alternative 4 has the second greatest potential for effects (issue sufficiently addressed – minor potential effects)
	Invasive plants	All alternatives equal (issue sufficiently	All alternatives equal (very low risk)	All alternatives equal (very low risk)	All alternatives equal (very low risk)

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
		addressed – very low risk)			
	Special Interest Areas	All alternatives equal (issue sufficiently addressed)	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal	All alternatives equal
Terrestrial Wildlife					
<i>Giant garter snake</i>	Threatened	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
<i>Sierra Nevada red fox, Southern Cascades Distinct Population Segment</i>	Federal candidate for listing; Forest Service Sensitive	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
<i>Gray wolf</i>	Endangered	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
<i>California wolverine</i>	Federal Proposed; Forest Service Sensitive	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
<i>Northern spotted owl</i>	Threatened	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
	Designated Critical Habitat	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
<i>Valley elderberry long-horned beetle</i>	Threatened	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
	Designated Critical Habitat	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
<i>Yellow-billed cuckoo</i>	Threatened	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
	Designated Critical Habitat	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
<i>Fisher</i>	Forest Service ¹ Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Pacific marten</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Fringed myotis</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL

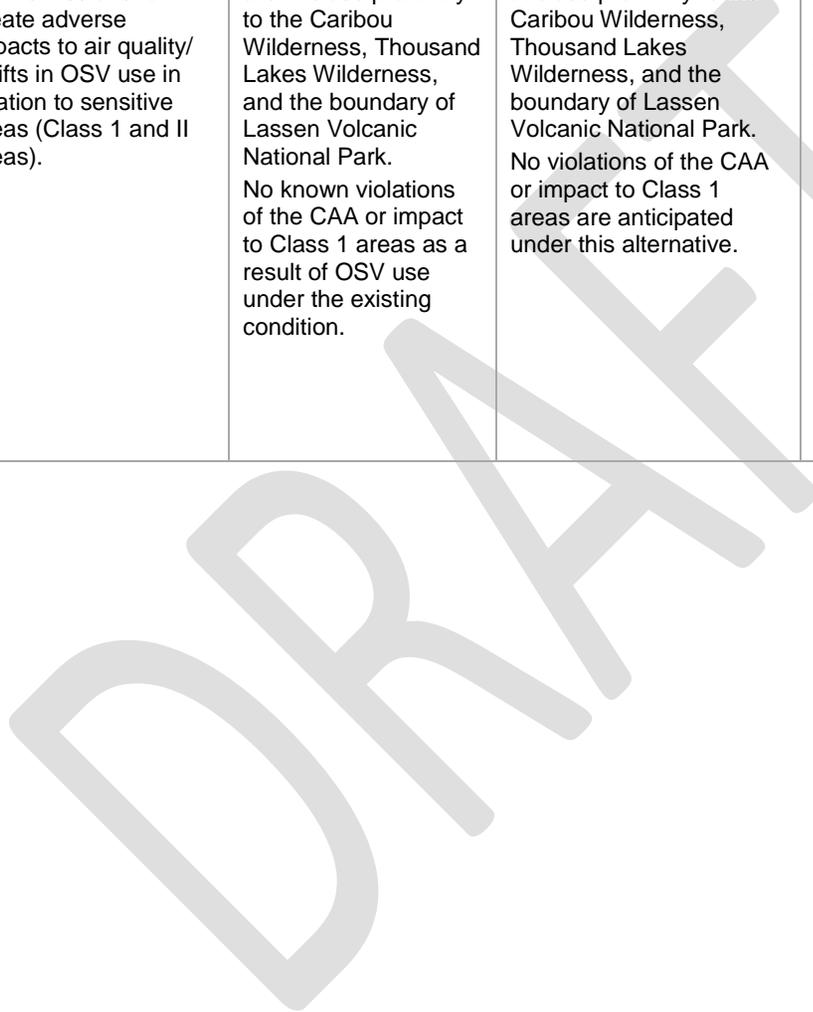
¹ NI = Will not impact; MINL = may impact individuals, but is not likely to lead to a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability for the species; MIL = may impact individuals and is likely to lead to a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability for the species.

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<i>Pallid bat</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Townsend's big-eared bat</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Bald eagle</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>California spotted owl</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Great gray owl</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Greater Sandhill crane</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	NI	NI	NI	NI
<i>Northern goshawk</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Willow flycatcher</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	NI	NI	NI	NI
<i>Yellow rail</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	NI	NI	NI	NI
<i>Western pond turtle</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Shasta Hesperian snail</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	NI	NI	NI	NI
<i>Western bumble bee</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	NI	NI	NI	NI
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources					
<i>Chinook salmon, Central Valley Spring Run ESU</i>	Threatened	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect			
	Critical Habitat	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect			
<i>Central Valley Steelhead</i>	Threatened	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect			
	Critical Habitat	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect			

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<i>Sierra Nevada Yellow-legged Frog</i>	Endangered	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
<i>Cascades frog</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
<i>Black juga</i>	Forest Service Sensitive	MINL	MINL	MINL	MINL
Socioeconomic Conditions					
	Economic activity	No change due to management; increased visitor use over time would increase number of jobs, labor income, and tax revenue	No change due to management; increased visitor use over time would increase number of jobs, labor income, and tax revenue	No change due to management; increased visitor use over time would increase number of jobs, labor income, and tax revenue	No change due to management; increased visitor use over time would increase number of jobs, labor income, and tax revenue
	Quality of life - Recreation visitation	No change due to management; visitor use expected to increase over time	No change due to management; visitor use expected to increase over time	No change due to management; visitor use expected to increase over time	No change due to management; visitor use expected to increase over time
	Quality of life - Values, beliefs, and attitudes	No net change in quality of life relative to current conditions; user conflict may increase due to population growth and increased visitor use	23% increase in acres closed to OSV use would benefit quality of life of non-motorized winter recreation users; potential for continued user conflict due to trails in proximity to wilderness, national park, and shared trailheads	70% increase in acres closed to OSV use would benefit quality of life of non-motorized winter recreation users; potential for continued user conflict due to trails in proximity to wilderness, national park, and shared trailheads	No net change in quality of life relative to current conditions; user conflict may increase due to population growth and increased visitor use
	Environmental Justice	No change due to management; climate change may increase distances winter recreation users must travel for adequate snow depth	Minor change in travel costs due to reduction in acres open to public OSV use; climate change may increase distances winter recreation users must travel for adequate snow depth	Minor change in travel costs due to prohibition on OSV use below 3,500 feet in elevation and reduction in acres open to public OSV use; climate change may increase distances winter recreation users must	No change due to management; climate change may increase distances winter recreation users must travel for adequate snow depth

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
				travel for adequate snow depth	
Noise					
	Opportunities for motorized winter uses	964,020 acres open to OSV use and potentially affected by noise	921,130 acres open to OSV use and potentially affected by noise, a 4.5% decrease from existing conditions	834,660 acres open to OSV use and potentially affected by noise, a 13.4% decrease from existing conditions	958,930 acres open to OSV use and potentially affected by noise, a 0.5% decrease from existing conditions
	Size of areas (acres) open to public, cross-country OSV use; percentage change compared to current management	186,000 acres closed to OSV use and available for quiet recreation	228,890 acres closed to OSV use and available for quiet recreation, a 23% increase from existing conditions	315,360 acres closed to OSV use and available for quiet recreation, a 69.5% increase from existing conditions	191,090 acres closed to OSV use and available for quiet recreation, a 2.7% increase from existing conditions
	OSV designations Length of snow trails (miles), groomed and ungroomed, designated and identified for public OSV use	2,760 miles designated /349 miles groomed	323 miles designated /349 miles groomed	316 miles designated /349 miles groomed	398 miles designated /349 miles groomed
Air Quality					
	Estimate of change (increase/decrease) in emissions and the potential to create adverse impacts to air quality/ Miles of trail open to OSV visitor use	964,020 acres open to OSV use. No known violations of the Clean Air Act (CAA) as a result of OSV use under the existing condition	921,130 acres open to OSV use, a 4% reduction from existing conditions. No violations of the CAA are anticipated.	834,660 acres open to OSV use, a 13% reduction from existing conditions. No violations of the CAA are anticipated.	958,930 acres open to OSV use, a <1% reduction from existing conditions. No violations of the CAA are anticipated.
	Estimate of change (increase/decrease) in emissions and the potential to create adverse impacts to air quality. Acres open to OSV visitor use	349 miles designated for OSV use. No known violations of the CAA as a result of OSV use under the existing condition.	349 miles designated for OSV use. No change from existing conditions. No violations of the CAA are anticipated.	349 miles designated for OSV use. No change from existing conditions. No violations of the CAA are anticipated.	349 miles designated for OSV use. No change from existing conditions. No violations of the CAA are anticipated.

Resource Condition	Impacts Considered/ Species Status	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
	<p>Potential effects of OSV emissions to create adverse impacts to air quality/ Shifts in OSV use in relation to sensitive areas (Class 1 and II areas).</p>	<p>Groomed OSV trails are in close proximity to the Caribou Wilderness, Thousand Lakes Wilderness, and the boundary of Lassen Volcanic National Park. No known violations of the CAA or impact to Class 1 areas as a result of OSV use under the existing condition.</p>	<p>Groomed OSV trails are in close proximity to the Caribou Wilderness, Thousand Lakes Wilderness, and the boundary of Lassen Volcanic National Park. No violations of the CAA or impact to Class 1 areas are anticipated under this alternative.</p>	<p>Groomed OSV trails are in close proximity to the Caribou Wilderness, Thousand Lakes Wilderness, and the boundary of Lassen Volcanic National Park. Designation of Butte Lake Backcountry Solitude area minimizes OSV impacts and reduces emissions near Caribou wilderness and Lassen NP No violations of the CAA or impact to Class 1 areas are anticipated under this alternative.</p>	<p>Groomed OSV trails are in close proximity to the Caribou Wilderness, Thousand Lakes Wilderness and the boundary of Lassen Volcanic National Park. No violations of the CAA are anticipated or impacts to Class 1 areas.</p>



Public Involvement

The Lassen National Forest Over-snow Vehicle Use Designation is an activity implementing a land management plan. It is not an activity authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (Pub. L. 108-148). Therefore, this activity is subject to pre-decisional administrative review consistent with the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 (Pub. L. 112-74) as implemented by subparts A and B of 36 CFR Part 218.

A pre-scoping meeting was held on November 5, 2014, which was attended by interested and affected stakeholders. The meeting's objectives were to share information about the project and the NEPA process, gather input on public engagement, and confirm and collect public input on a preliminary purpose and need for action through shared concerns and solutions with current OSV management on the forest. The meeting was attended by 28 people. A more detailed description of this meeting and outcomes are included in the December 2014 Pre-NEPA meeting summary report, available on the web and in the project record. The project first appeared on the Lassen National Forest's Schedule of Proposed Actions in January 2015.

A scoping letter describing the proposed action and seeking public comments was sent via regular mail or email to approximately 138 interested groups, individuals, and agencies on January 14, 2015, with comments requested to be returned by February 15, 2015. A press release was sent to local news media outlets on January 14, 2015. A notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement was published in the Federal Register on January 20, 2015 (80 FR 2676). All notices included a web address for the project's website where comments could also be submitted. The project's website could also be accessed from the home page of the Lassen National Forest's public website.

The public was invited to comment on the proposed action, identify potential conflicts or benefits, and provide any relevant information that would be useful in the subsequent environmental analysis. The Forest Service received and considered responses from 66 interested groups, individuals, and agencies in the form of letters, emails, and website submissions. All comments were thoughtful narratives responding to the proposed action with support, opposition, concerns, or requests for revision and new alternatives. The Forest Service appreciates the time and perspectives shared by each commenter, and the willingness of all to engage in the environmental analysis process.

We reviewed and analyzed all of the comment letters. See the FEIS Appendices A and E for a list of respondents; a list of the subject categories represented by all of the comments; and a description of classification codes used for identifying preliminary issues. We held and attended meetings and discussed the OSV designation process with local county governments, and we considered their opinions in developing alternatives.

The draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) was released for public review and comment. A notice of availability to comment on the DEIS was published in the Federal Register on January 29, 2016 (81 FR 5013). The 45-day comment period began on January 30, 2016. A legal notice of opportunity to comment was published in the newspaper of record on February 2, 2016. Letters were sent to 402 interested groups, individuals, and agencies, notifying them that the draft environmental impact statement was available for review. As a result of these solicitations, the Forest Service received 156 comment letters containing 623 comments from 142 interested groups, individuals, and agencies in the form of letters, emails, and website submissions. These comments were sorted for redundancies and the Forest Service addressed the 357 remaining comments that were considered materially relevant to the analysis. Appendix E of the FEIS includes a list of all commenters and the specific written comments (as defined in 36 CFR §218.2) that were addressed.

Using the comments from the public during the 45-day draft EIS comment period, we clarified the descriptions of the proposed action and alternatives, refined the analysis, and produced the FEIS.

Alternatives Considered

In addition to the selected alternative, I considered four other alternatives, which are summarized, below. Alternative 4 is the preferred alternative. All alternatives are summarized in table 2 through table 7, below, and in the text that continues on page 39 of this ROD. A more detailed comparison of these alternatives can be found in chapter 2 of the EIS.

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Table 2. Comparison of areas where OSV use will be allowed with total forest land area, by alternative

Area	Alternative 1 – No Action*	Alternative 2 – OSV Designations	Alternative 3 – OSV Designations	Alternative 4 – OSV Designations	Selected Alternative – OSV Designations
National Forest System Land Area within Administrative Boundary of Lassen National Forest (Acres)	1,150,020	1,150,020	1,150,020	1,150,020	1,150,020
Total Areas Open (Designated in Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and Selected Alternative) for Cross-country OSV Use (Acres)	964,020	921,130	834,660	958,930	900,150
Percentage of NFS Land Area Open (Designated in Alternatives 2 - 4) for Cross-country OSV Use	83.80%	80.10%	72.60%	83.40%	78.27%
Total Areas OSVs Not Allowed and Not Designated for OSV Use (Acres) (Table 27)	186,000	228,890	315,360	191,090	249,870

*Because no Subpart C designations of areas and trails for OSV use have been made, areas and trails are not “designated,” but are either “open” or “closed” to OSV use under no action (current management).

All area size and total trail distance estimates are approximate and are rounded to the nearest 10 acres or nearest mile.

Table 3. Areas not designated for OSV use, by alternative (acres)

Area	Alternative 1 – OSV Use Prohibited under No Action	Alternative 2 – OSV Use Not Designated	Alternative 3 – OSV Use Not Designated	Alternative 4 – OSV Use Not Designated	Selected Alternative – OSV Use Not Designated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OSVs Prohibited Under Current Management 	186,000	186,000	186,000	186,000	186,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blacks Mountain RNA 	-	520	520	520	520
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deer Creek Anadromous Fish Closure 	-	1,520	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butte Lake Closure (OSV prohibited except where restricted to trail only) North of LVNP 	-	-	31,730	-	31,730
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited OSV Access in Southwest Corner of Lassen NF 	-	27,400	-	-	-

Area	Alternative 1 – OSV Use Prohibited under No Action	Alternative 2 – OSV Use Not Designated	Alternative 3 – OSV Use Not Designated	Alternative 4 – OSV Use Not Designated	Selected Alternative – OSV Use Not Designated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Below 3,500-foot Elevation on the Lassen NF 	-	-	59,130	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fredonyer-Goumaz Closure (OSV prohibited except where restricted to trail only) Between Hwys 36 & 44 	-	-	19,040	-	19,040
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McGowen Lake Non-Motorized Area (North of Mineral, East of Rd. 17) 	-	-	10,300	4,570	4,570
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colby Mountain Closure 	-	-	4,490	-	4,490
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southwest Shore Lake Almanor 	-	1,840	1,840	-	1,840
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Shore Eagle Lake 	-	1,150	1,680	-	1,680
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pacific Crest Trail and Non-motorized Corridor 	-	10,460	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willard Hill Closure 	-	-	630	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Areas OSVs Not Allowed and Not Designated for OSV Use in Alternatives 2 - 4 (Acres) 	186,000	228,890	315,360	191,090	249,870

All area size and total trail distance estimates are approximate and are rounded to the nearest 10 acres or nearest mile.

Table 4. Designated groomed and ungroomed trails for OSV use (miles)

Snow Trails for OSV Use	Alternative 1 - Current Management	Alternative 2 – OSV Designations	Alternative 3 – OSV Designations	Alternative 4 – OSV Designations	Selected Alternative – OSV Designations
Groomed and Ungroomed Snow Trails on Lassen NF for OSV Use (miles) (Includes groomed designated OSV trails in Table 30)	2,760	323	316	398	398
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ungroomed Snow Trails where OSV Use would be Allowed (Designated in Alternatives 2 - 4) (miles) 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCT OSV Crossing Access Trails (Table 29) 	-	7	-	-	-

Snow Trails for OSV Use	Alternative 1 - Current Management	Alternative 2 – OSV Designations	Alternative 3 – OSV Designations	Alternative 4 – OSV Designations	Selected Alternative – OSV Designations
• Road 29N10	5	5	5	5	5
• Road 30N16 from 31N17 To McGowan OSV Closure	2	-	-	2	2
• Road 27N11 Ungroomed Designated SE of Jonesville	1	-	-	1	1
• Road (3xN17) West of McGowan Designated Ungroomed to Ashpan Groomed System	28	-	-	28	28
• Forest Road 21 & County Road 105 from Hwy. 44 to Eagle Lake	25	-	-	25	25
• Designated Ungroomed North of LVNP (Butte Lake)	22	-	-	22	22
• Road 32N46 in Ashpan Designated Ungroomed	4	-	-	4	4
• Ungroomed OSV Trail in OSV Prohibited Areas	12	-	-	-	-
• Other Ungroomed OSV Trail in Areas Open to Cross-country OSV Use (Marked and Unmarked)	2,350*	-**	-**	-	-
Total Trails Open for OSV Use but not Groomed	2,449	12	5	87	87

*Most of these OSV trails are mapped on the Lassen National Forest’s 2005 Winter Recreation Guide.

**Alternatives 2 and 3 would not designate ungroomed OSV trails located within areas designated for public, cross-country OSV use.

All area size and total trail distance estimates are approximate and are rounded to the nearest 10 acres or nearest mile.

Table 5. Designated Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) OSV crossings

OSV/PCT Crossing	Alternative 1 - Current Management	Alternative 2 – OSV Designations	Alternative 3 – OSV Designations	Alternative 4 – OSV Designations	Selected Alternative – OSV Designations
Designated Pacific Crest Trail Crossing Points (#)	No PCT Crossing Points or Corridor*	28	No PCT Crossing Points or Corridor Designated*	No PCT Crossing Points or Corridor Designated*	28
Designated OSV Access Trails Through Designated Pacific Crest Trail Crossing Points by Road Name (miles)	-	8	-	-	-

OSV/PCT Crossing	Alternative 1 - Current Management	Alternative 2 – OSV Designations	Alternative 3 – OSV Designations	Alternative 4 – OSV Designations	Selected Alternative – OSV Designations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pit River Canyon Rd. (St Rt. 50) – Only a crossing point designated in Alternative 2. No PCT corridor or access trail designated due to lack of NFS jurisdiction on adjacent land. 	-	Designated as Crossing Point Only	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St. Bernard So Rd. (Collins 1) - Only a crossing point designated in Alternative 2. No PCT corridor or access trail designated due to lack of NFS jurisdiction on adjacent land. 	-	Designated as Crossing Point Only	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37N05 and 37N052Y - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.4	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37N05 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.4	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37N5C - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.3	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37N05 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37N02 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.1	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36N10 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36N36Y - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36N09 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36N33B - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35N10 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.3	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 34N94 and 34N34 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.6	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33N22 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32N99 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32N20 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32N12 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.3	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32N92 - Designated Ungroomed 	-	0.2	-	-	-

OSV/PCT Crossing	Alternative 1 - Current Management	Alternative 2 – OSV Designations	Alternative 3 – OSV Designations	Alternative 4 – OSV Designations	Selected Alternative – OSV Designations
• 32N42Y - Designated Ungroomed, 0.095 mile not on underlying route.	-	0.3	-	-	-
• 29N97 and 29N27 - Designated Ungroomed	-	0.3	-	-	-
• 28N61 - Designated Ungroomed	-	0.8	-	-	-
• 28N16 - Designated Ungroomed	-	0.4	-	-	-
• 28N16 , 29N17, and 29N17J - Designated Ungroomed	-	0.3	-	-	-
• 27N11G - Designated Ungroomed	-	0.6	-	-	-
• 26N74 - Designated Ungroomed	-	0.2	-	-	-
• Humboldt Rd./28N43 - Designated Groomed Included in Jonesville Groomed Total	-	0.3	-	-	-
• Humbug Rd./BU915 - Designated Groomed Included in Jonesville Groomed Total	-	0.2	-	-	-
• 26N02/Cirby Meadows - Designated Groomed Included in Jonesville Groomed Total	-	0.3	-	-	-
Designated OSV Access Trails Through Designated PCT Crossing Points (#)	-	26	-	-	-
Designated Groomed OSV Access Trails Through Designated PCT Crossing Points - Jonesville Groomed Trail System (#)	-	3	-	-	-
Designated Groomed OSV Access Trails Through Designated PCT Crossing Points - Jonesville Groomed Trail System (miles)	-	1	-	-	-
Designated Ungroomed OSV Access Trails Through Designated PCT Crossing Points (#)	-	23	-	-	-
Designated Ungroomed OSV Access Trails Through Designated PCT Crossing Points (miles)	-	7	-	-	-

*In alternatives 1, 3, and 4, OSV use would be allowed adjacent to and across the PCT. Motorized use would be prohibited on the tread of the PCT in all alternatives. All area size and total trail distance estimates are approximate and are rounded to the nearest 10 acres or nearest mile.

Table 6. OSV trail systems groomed by the Lassen National Forest (miles)

Groomed OSV Trail System	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Selected Alternative
La Tour State Forest Snowmobile Area					
• Groomed by Forest Service; Trail Not Under NFS Jurisdiction	20	20	20	20	20
• Groomed by Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated in Alternatives 2 - 4)	3	3	3	3	3
• Subtotal	23	23	23	23	23
Ashpan Snowmobile Area					
• Groomed by Forest Service; Trail Not Under NFS Jurisdiction	-	-	-	-	-
• Groomed by Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated in Alternatives 2- 4)	34	34	34	34	34
• Subtotal	34	34	34	34	34
Morgan Summit Snowmobile Area					
• Groomed by Forest Service; Trail Not Under NFS Jurisdiction	2	2	2	2	2
• Groomed by Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated in Alternatives 2 - 4)	60	60	60	60	60
• Subtotal	62	62	62	62	62
Jonesville Snowmobile Area					
• Groomed by Forest Service; Trail Not Under NFS Jurisdiction	5	5	5	5	5
• Groomed by Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated in Alternatives 2 - 4)	64	64	64	64	64
• Subtotal	69	69	69	69	69

Groomed OSV Trail System	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Selected Alternative
Swain Mountain Snowmobile Area					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groomed by Forest Service; Trail Not Under NFS Jurisdiction 	-	-	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groomed by Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated in Alternatives 2 - 4) 	71	71	71	71	71
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subtotal 	71	71	71	71	71
Bogard Snowmobile Area					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groomed by Forest Service; Trail Not Under NFS Jurisdiction 	-	-	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groomed by Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated in Alternatives 2 - 4) 	47	47	47	47	47
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subtotal 	47	47	47	47	47
Fredonyer Snowmobile Area					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groomed by Forest Service; Trail Not Under NFS Jurisdiction 	-	-	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groomed Lassen NF by Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated on Plumas NF) 	11	11	11	11	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groomed by Lassen NF Forest Service Under NFS Jurisdiction (Trail to be Designated on Lassen NF in Alternatives 2 - 4) 	32	32	32	32	32
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subtotal 	43	43	43	43	43
Total OSV Use Allowed (Designated on Lassen NF in Alternatives 2 - 4) and Groomed by Lassen NF	311	311	311	311	311
Total OSV Use Allowed (on Plumas NF) and Groomed by Lassen NF	11	11	11	11	11

Groomed OSV Trail System	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Selected Alternative
Total Groomed but not Under NFS Jurisdiction	27	27	27	27	27
Grand Total Groomed	349	349	349	349	349

All area size and total trail distance estimates are approximate and are rounded to the nearest 10 acres or nearest mile.

Table 7. Summary comparing current OSV management with the action alternatives for minimum snow depth (in inches) and OSV trail grooming season on the Lassen National Forest

OSV Management	Alternative 1 – No Action	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Selected Alternative
Minimum Snow Depth for Public OSV Use on Snow Trails (Inches)	12	6 inches on snow trails overlaying roads and trails 12 inches on 0.1 mile of trail not overlaying roads or trails	12 inches, generally. 6 inches only where site review determines there would be no damage to underlying resources	No restriction with 6 or more inches	No restriction with 6 or more inches
Minimum Snow Depth for Public, Cross-country OSV Use (Inches)	12	12	12	12	12
Minimum Snow Depth for Snow Trail Grooming to Occur (Inches)	18	12*	18	12	12
OSV Trail Grooming Season	12/26 – 3/31	12/26 – 3/31	12/26 – 3/31	12/26 – 3/31	12/26 – 3/31

*The originally scoped proposed action has been modified to be consistent with the state grooming standard which states, "Begin grooming when the snow depth is at least 12 to 18 inches" (OSV Program Draft EIR, Program Years 2010-2020 – October 2010, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division, page 2-12).

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the no-action alternative, current management plans would continue to guide management of the project area. The no-action alternative is required under NEPA regulations [40 CFR §1502.14(d)]. This alternative represents the existing, baseline condition or trends by which the action alternatives are compared. Under alternative 1, there would be no changes to the existing system of OSV use on roads, snow trails, and areas within the Lassen National Forest except as prohibited by forest order.

Most of the existing system of OSV use on the Lassen National Forest is shown on the 2005 Winter Recreation Guide for the Lassen National Forest. In addition, only those seasonal restrictions as specified in the Lassen Forest Plan and contained in existing Forest Orders would be continued. The 2005 Travel Management Regulations, Subpart C, would not be implemented, and no OSV use map would be produced.

Reasons for Not Selecting Alternative 1

I considered the potential outcome to the public use of OSVs on the Lassen National Forest if I had selected the no-action alternative (FEIS, pages 24-26, Chapter 3). I find that alternative A, the no-action alternative, fell short of addressing the purpose and need for action.

The need to improve public OSV access and designate trails and areas for public OSV use as established under the Forest Service Travel Management Regulations (36 CFR Part 212) would not be addressed. Furthermore, the need to ensure OSVs are operated on adequate snow to minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources would also not be addressed. Finally, public snow trails to be groomed for OSV use would not be analyzed and identified in a timely manner as required by the settlement agreement. My choice is to act now and I believe that it is the most responsible course of action to take. As such, I did not choose the no-action alternative.

Alternative 2 – Modified Proposed Action

The Forest Service proposes several actions on the Lassen National Forest to be analyzed as required by the NEPA. The actions proposed are as follows:

1. To designate 323 miles of National Forest System snow trails on National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as trails where public OSV use would be allowed when snow depth is adequate for that use to occur. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to trails where public motorized use is not allowed would continue.
1. To designate 921,130 acres of National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as areas where public, cross-country OSV use would be allowed when snow depth is adequate for that use to occur. This land area would represent approximately 80.1 percent of the National Forest System land within the Lassen National Forest. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to areas of the forest where public motorized use is not allowed would continue.
2. To not designate (to prohibit public OSV use on) approximately 228,890 acres on the Lassen National Forest for public OSV use. These areas include all of the approximately 186,000 acres of the Lassen National Forest where public OSV use is currently prohibited, and 42,890 acres of areas currently open to OSV use that would not be designated for OSV use in this alternative.
3. To implement forest-wide snow depth requirements for public OSV use that would provide for public safety and natural and cultural resource protection by:

- a. Allowing public, cross-country OSV use in designated areas only when there are 12 or more inches of snow or ice covering the landscape based on weather and observations by Forest Service personnel and the public, to prevent impacts to surface and subsurface resources including, but not limited to, archaeological deposits, historic features, and historic properties; and
 - b. Allowing public OSV use on designated snow trails when there are 6 or more inches of snow covering the trail. Except for approximately 0.1 mile of OSV trail (which would require 12 or more inches of snow for OSV use), all snow trails to be designated for public OSV use or identified for OSV grooming in all alternatives would overlay an existing paved, gravel, or native surface travel route. These travel routes are trails and roads already designated for use by wheeled, motorized vehicles when such use is allowed, and non-motorized recreation.
4. To not designate for public OSV use any existing trail in an area where motorized use is currently prohibited on the Lassen National Forest.
 5. To designate 28 public OSV crossing points of the Pacific Crest Trail on roads and trails already designated for wheeled, motorized vehicle use when such use is allowed. Two of the Pacific Crest Trail crossing points that would be designated are adjacent to private land.
 6. To establish a corridor for the Pacific Crest Trail, within which public OSV use would not be designated (public OSV use would be prohibited), except on 26 designated public OSV trails across this corridor. This corridor is included in the areas that would not be designated for public OSV use in item #3, above.
 7. Public OSV use that is inconsistent with the designations and snow depth requirements made under this decision would be prohibited under 36 CFR Part 261.
 8. To identify approximately 349 miles of snow trails that would be groomed for public OSV use by the Forest Service's Lassen National Forest Grooming Program.
 9. To groom OSV snow trails when there are 12 or more inches of snow, and formally adopt California State Parks' snow grooming standards requiring a minimum of 12 inches of snow depth before grooming can occur.
 10. Project design features, including minimization measures and monitoring procedures are described beginning on page 4 of this document.

Alternative 3

This alternative addresses the non-motorized recreational experience significant issue. This alternative includes the following actions:

1. To designate 316 miles of National Forest System snow trails on National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as trails where public OSV use would be allowed when snow depth is adequate for that use to occur. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to trails where public motorized use is not allowed would continue.
2. To designate 834,660 acres of National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as areas where public, cross-country OSV use would be allowed when snow depth is adequate for that use to occur. This land area would represent approximately 72.6 percent of the National Forest System land within the Lassen National Forest. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to areas of the forest where public motorized use is not allowed would continue.

3. To not designate (to prohibit public OSV use on) approximately 315,360 acres on the Lassen National Forest for public OSV use. These areas include all of the approximately 186,000 acres of the Lassen National Forest where public OSV use is currently prohibited, and 129,360 acres currently open to OSV use that would not be designated for OSV use in this alternative.
4. To implement forest-wide snow depth requirements for public OSV use that would provide for public safety and natural and cultural resource protection by:
 - a. Allowing public, cross-country OSV use in designated areas only when there are 12 or more inches of snow or ice covering the landscape based on weather and observations by Forest Service personnel and the public, to prevent impacts to surface and subsurface resources including, but not limited to, archaeological deposits, historic features, and historic properties; and
 - b. Allowing public OSV use on designated snow trails generally when there are 12 or more inches of snow covering the trail. This use would be allowed when there are as few as 6 inches of snow only where site review determines there would be no damage to underlying resources.
5. To not designate for public OSV use any existing trail in an area where motorized use is currently prohibited on the Lassen National Forest.
6. Public OSV use that is inconsistent with the designations and snow depth requirements made under this decision would be prohibited under 36 CFR Part 261.
7. To identify approximately 349 miles of snow trails that would be groomed for public OSV use by the Forest Service's Lassen National Forest Grooming Program.
8. To groom OSV snow trails consistent with historical grooming practices, when there are 18 or more inches of snow.
9. Project design features, including minimization measures and monitoring procedures are described beginning on page 4 of this document. In addition, the following project design feature would also be implemented:
10. Education on responsible practices, trail restrictions, or separations to reduce conflicts.

Alternative 4

Alternative 4 is the preferred alternative. This alternative addresses the motorized recreational experience significant issue. This alternative includes the following actions:

1. To designate 398 miles of National Forest System snow trails on National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as trails where public OSV use would be allowed when snow depth is adequate for that use to occur. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to trails where public motorized use is not allowed would continue.
2. To designate 958,930 acres of National Forest System lands within the Lassen National Forest as areas where public, cross-country OSV use would be allowed when there are 12 or more inches of snow. This land area would represent approximately 83.4 percent of the National Forest System land within the Lassen National Forest. All existing OSV prohibitions applying to areas of the forest where public motorized use is not allowed would continue.
3. To not designate (to prohibit public OSV use on) approximately 191,090 acres on the Lassen National Forest for public OSV use. These areas include all of the approximately 186,000 acres of the Lassen

National Forest where public OSV use is currently prohibited, and 5,090 acres currently open to OSV use that would not be designated for OSV use in this alternative.

4. To implement forest-wide snow depth requirements for public OSV use that would provide for public safety and natural and cultural resource protection by:
 - a. Allowing public, cross-country OSV use in designated areas only when there are 12 or more inches of snow or ice covering the landscape based on weather and observations by Forest Service personnel and the public, to prevent impacts to surface and subsurface resources including, but not limited to, archaeological deposits, historic features, and historic properties; and
 - b. Allowing public OSV use on designated snow trails when there are 6 or more inches of snow. Exceptions are allowed on designated OSV trails overlaying existing paved, dirt, and gravel National Forest System roads and trails in order for OSVs to access higher terrain and legal snow levels when snow depths are less than 6 inches, as long as this use does not cause visible damage to the underlying surface.
5. To not designate for public OSV use any existing trail in an area where motorized use is currently prohibited on the Lassen National Forest.
6. Public OSV use that is inconsistent with the designations and snow depth requirements made under this decision would be prohibited under 36 CFR Part 261.
7. To identify approximately 349 miles of snow trails that would be groomed for public OSV use by the Forest Service's Lassen National Forest Grooming Program.
8. To groom OSV snow trails when there are 12 or more inches of snow, and formally adopt California State Parks' snow grooming standards requiring 12 or more inches of snow depth before grooming can occur.
9. Project design features, including minimization measures and monitoring procedures are described beginning on 4 of this document.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

National Forest Management Act

My decision is consistent with the intent of the long-term goals and objectives identified in the Forest Plan and the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment. The project was designed in conformance with forest plan standards and incorporates appropriate Forest Plan guidelines for OSV use (Forest Plan, chapter 4 and appendix E, page E-4; Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Record of Decision, page 59).

Forest Service Travel Management Regulations (36 CFR Part 212) and Executive Orders 11644 and 11989

My decision is consistent with the Forest Service Travel Management Regulations implementing Executive Orders 11644 and 11989.

1. It designates discrete, specifically delineated spaces that are smaller, and, except for over-snow vehicle use, in most cases much smaller, than a Ranger District.
2. It designates National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands where over-snow vehicle use is allowed pursuant to 36 CFR §212.81.

3. It will facilitate the production of an over-snow vehicle use map reflecting trails and areas designated for over-snow vehicle use on an administrative unit of the National Forest System. This map will be made available to the public at headquarters of corresponding administrative units and Ranger Districts of the National Forest System and, as soon as practicable, on the Web site of the corresponding administrative units and Ranger Districts.
4. It considers effects on National Forest System natural and cultural resources, public safety, provision of recreational opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses of National Forest System lands, the need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that will arise if the uses under consideration are designated; and the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration.
5. It considers the effects on the following, with the objective of minimizing:
 - a. Damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources;
 - b. Harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats;
 - c. Conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreational uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands; and
 - d. Conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands.
6. It considers compatibility of motor vehicle use with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account sound, emissions, and other factors.
7. It does not designate Wilderness areas or primitive areas for public OSV use.

National Historic Preservation Act

Because all surveys and site protection measures have and will follow standards defined in the Regional Programmatic Agreement and/or Travel Management Programmatic Agreement, all alternatives have a No Adverse Effect to historic properties under NHPA and have no direct, indirect, or cumulative effects under NEPA (FEIS, page 242).

Endangered Species Act

Potential effects to listed botanical, wildlife, and aquatic species are disclosed in the FEIS (chapter 3). For those species affected, consultation will be completed before the issuance of this decision.

Clean Water Act

The alternatives will have a negligible impact on water quality as a result of hydrocarbon emissions from OSVs. Beneficial uses of water bodies will be protected under the selected alternative, as only 6 inches of snow will be required, but sufficient for use of designated OSV trails. As a result, alternatives 2, 3, and 4 will be consistent with the Clean Water Act and Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act as water quality and beneficial uses will be protected. No watersheds will be at risk of cumulative watershed effects as result of these alternatives, and these alternatives will be consistent with applicable riparian conservation objectives (RCOs) in the 2004 Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (FEIS, pages 219-220).

Clean Air Act

It is expected the levels of pollutants for the alternatives will fall within the ranges currently experienced and no violation of State or Federal ambient air quality standards will occur on the Lassen National Forest during the OSV season (FEIS, page 466).

Civil Rights, Women and Minorities

No adverse effects on civil rights, women, and minorities not already identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan will be expected to result from implementation of any alternative. Snow grooming contracts will be governed by the State of California, are awarded to qualified contractors and/or purchasers regardless of race, color, sex, religion, etc. Such contracts also contain nondiscrimination requirements (FEIS, page 423).

Floodplains and Wetlands – Executive Orders 11988 and 11990

Executive Order 11988 requires the Forest Service to avoid “to the extent possible the long and short term adverse impacts associated with the occupation or modification of floodplains...” The selected alternative will avoid adverse effects to floodplains, and are consistent with this Executive Order (FEIS, page 198).

Executive Order 11990 requires the Forest Service to “avoid to the extent possible the long and short term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands.” The selected alternative will avoid adverse effects to wetlands, and is consistent with this Executive Order (FEIS, page 198).

Municipal Watersheds

There are no de-facto or designated municipal watersheds in the Lassen OSV Use Designation project planning area (FEIS, page 207).

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 requires that Federal agencies adopt strategies to address environmental justice concerns within the context of agency operations. With implementation of any alternative, there will be no disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations. My decision will result in no change due to management; climate change may increase distances winter recreation users must travel for adequate snow depth (FEIS, page 423).

Administrative Review or Objection Opportunities

This decision is subject to pre-decisional objection pursuant to 36 CFR Part 218. Objections will only be accepted from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project during scoping or other designated opportunities for public comment in accordance with 36 CFR §218.5(a). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless the issue is based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities.

The following address should be used for objections sent by regular mail: Objection Reviewing Officer, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592.

Objections sent by private carrier or hand delivery must go to: Objection Reviewing Officer, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, excluding Federal holidays.

Objections can be faxed to the Objection Reviewing Officer at (707) 562-9229. The fax coversheet must include a subject line with “Lassen OSV Designation Objection” and should specify the number of pages being submitted.

Electronic objections must be submitted to the Objection Reviewing Officer via email to FS-objections-pacificsouthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us, with “Lassen OSV Designation Objection” in the subject line. Electronic submissions must be submitted in a format that is readable with optical character recognition software (e.g., Word, PDF, Rich Text) and be searchable. An automated response should confirm your electronic objection has been received.

The objection must meet the minimum content requirements of 36 CFR §218.8(d), and include the following information: (1) the objector’s name and address, with a telephone number or email address, if available; (2) a signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for email may be filed with the objection); (3) when multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in 36 CFR §218.2 (verification of the identity of the lead objector shall be provided upon request); (4) the name of the project being objected to, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name of the national forest and ranger district on which the project will be implemented; (5) a description of those aspects of the project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the project and, if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; and supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and (6) a statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunity for formal comment. With certain exceptions, all documents referenced in the objection must be included with the objection and incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in 36 CFR §218.8(b).

Any objection, including attachments, must be filed with the appropriate reviewing officer within 45 calendar days following publication of the legal notice of the objection filing period in the *Lassen County Times*, which is the newspaper of record for Forest Supervisor decisions on the Lassen National Forest (80 FR 44024, July 24, 2015). The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Objectors should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. It is the objector’s responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to 36 CFR §218.9. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process. Responses that do not adhere to these requirements make review of an objection difficult and are conditions under which the reviewing officer may set aside an objection pursuant to 36 CFR §218.10.

For more information or to request a copy of the FEIS and Draft ROD, please contact Christopher O’Brien, PhD, Ecosystems and Public Services Staff Officer, Lassen National Forest, 2550 Riverside Drive, Susanville, CA 96130, by telephone at 530-252-6698, or by email at cjobrien@fs.fed.us with “Lassen OSV Designation” in the subject line.

Implementation

Once objections are resolved, this decision will be issued and implementation will begin immediately.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this draft Record of Decision or the Forest Service pre-decisional administrative review process, contact Christopher O'Brien, PhD, Ecosystems and Public Services Staff Officer, Lassen National Forest, 2550 Riverside Drive, Susanville, CA 96130, or by telephone at 530-252-6698.

RUSSELL HAYS
Forest Supervisor
Lassen National Forest

[DATE]