



Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance
(307) 733-9417 • www.jhalliance.org

Sept. 8, 2009

Re: Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks Winter Use Plans

Submitted electronically via:

www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/home.html#documentDetail?R=09000064809fa1b8

The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance (Conservation Alliance) has been an active participant in the National Environmental Policy Act process for determining appropriate winter use of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. We continue our involvement by submitting these comments on the Winter Use Plans Environmental Assessment. The Conservation Alliance, representing 2,000 members in 50 states and six foreign countries, is dedicated to responsible land stewardship in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and works to ensure that human activities are in harmony with the area's irreplaceable wildlife, scenic and other natural resources. To that end, we respectfully provide the following comments for your consideration.

Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks are the heart and foundation of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. These unique parks are vital to the region's naturally functioning ecosystem and to our economy and their influence spreads far beyond. It is a widely held belief that the wildlife and the habitat they rely on should take priority over motorized recreation. Many areas of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, the state and the nation have recreational opportunities on them, but few areas of the nation have a healthy functioning ecosystem with a full complement of wildlife. In addition, any action that the parks take should set worthy examples for other land managers in the region.

We have joined with other conservation organizations throughout this process in advocating for use of the latest scientific research on snowmobiles and snowcoaches in Yellowstone National Park. The known impacts to wildlife by motorized winter travel are well documented and have been an integral part of the environmental analyses done on winter use in the parks. Strong scientific evidence should be the deciding factor in a decision to manage winter motorized use.

We also believe that the National Park Service should allow only Best Available Technology snowmobiles within Yellowstone National Park, the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway and on Jackson Lake and adequately enforce daily limits on their access.

At all times, the health and welfare of the wildlife, habitat, employees and visitors of the national parks should be the utmost consideration in determining policy and directives for park management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Louise Lasley, Public Lands Director
Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance