



File Code: 1950

Date: November 17, 2006

On November 17, 2006, I signed the Record of Decision for the Flathead National Forest Winter Motorized Recreation Plan. This decision establishes a plan for managing over-snow motorized vehicle recreation and amends the Flathead National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

I have selected Alternative 6 with minor modifications for implementation. This alternative was developed in response to public and other agency comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and was analyzed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. It seeks to balance the environmental impacts on resources while responding to the project's Purpose and Need to:

- Clarify management direction regarding over-snow motorized use;
- Meet the requirements of the Settlement Agreement resulting from a lawsuit challenging over-snow motorized use on the Flathead NF, and
- Determine over-snow recreation management direction related to motorized over-snow use.

The over-snow motorized vehicle recreation season would generally run from December 1 through March 31, with an extended use season in four areas of the Flathead National Forest for spring over-snow vehicle use. Areas and travel routes open to over snow motorized vehicle use along with associated time periods for use are detailed in the Record of Decision (ROD) and ROD maps.

I believe Alternative 6 with minor modifications represents the best long-term winter recreation management direction consistent with our multiple management responsibilities. More specifically, it authorizes the continuance of quality over-snow motorized vehicle recreation while ensuring that this use is not significantly affecting important wildlife habitat and natural resources.

My decision is based on the information contained in the FEIS, the supporting information contained in the Project Record, and comments received through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping and public comment process.

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.11. Any person or non-Federal organization may file an appeal. An appeal must be submitted within 45 days of publication of this decision in the newspaper of record (*Daily Inter Lake*).



If you have any questions concerning this decision, please contact Rob Carlin, Planning Staff Officer, at (406) 758-5322.

Thank you for your interest and involvement in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cathy Barbouletos

CATHY BARBOULETOS
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure