



NEWS RELEASE

Lolo National Forest

United States
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Forest Service
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Snowmobilers Cited for Riding in Non-motorized Area

Missoula, MT. – Seven snowmobilers were cited recently by Forest Service law enforcement officers for operating snowmobiles inside a non-motorized portion of the Great Burn Proposed Wilderness on the Lolo National Forest. Three of the snowmobilers were also cited on March 14 by a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks law enforcement officer for not having their snowmobiles registered with the state of Montana.

The violations occurred on March 14, when two of the snowmobilers were found and cited in the Irish Basin area of the Great Burn. A separate group of five riders was also located at that time by a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks helicopter, which landed near the five riders and issued three registration violations. That group of five was also subsequently cited for motorized use when it was determined through Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates that they were also within the non-motorized portion of the Great Burn.

According to Forest Service law enforcement officers, the assistance and support of officers from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks was crucial in discovering the violations of the group of five riders, as well as in the subsequent investigation that led to those citations.

The citation for operating a motorized vehicle within a non-motorized area includes a fine of \$150 plus a \$25 administrative fee. Forest Service law enforcement officers typically write about one dozen violations each year for illegal snowmobile activity inside the Great Burn area. For the winter of 2008/2009 they have written violations only to the seven individuals involved in the March 14 incident – though law enforcement officers have contacted 70 riders as part of routine compliance checks.

For additional information please contact the Lolo National Forest Public Affairs Office at (406) 329-1024.

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