

### 3.8 OHV Use of the Snow Trail

This is an over-the snow trail for winter use only and would not be open to summer motorized use. The issue is that off-highway vehicle riders may try to use the snow trail during the summer, because the trail would be visible (from the vegetation removal and blading needed to construct the trail).

The following mitigation measures would be implemented under the proposed action or any of the alternatives to decrease the potential for unauthorized summer use of the trail.

#### Mitigation:

In order to deter unauthorized use of the trail in the summer, signs and barriers (such as rocks and logs) will be placed at the trailheads and along the trail to impede travel on the trail.

### 3.9 Other Resource Effects

#### 3.9.1 Rare Plants

For the analysis of effects on rare plants, potential for habitat is considered for the project area. The area of influence is considered to be the area where ground disturbance would take place. The only actions included in the proposed action or alternatives where ground disturbance would take place would be that portion of the snow trail where vegetation would be removed and blading would be needed to prepare a relatively flat surface on which the groomer can operate. These potential areas would include the beginning of the proposed snow trail in Franklin Basin, as it approaches the White Pine drainage, and as the route climbs out of Clark Hollow. The designation of boundaries would have no effect on rare plants.

No effect on any threatened or endangered plants is expected because there is no suitable habitat present for the *Primula maguirei* (Maguire primrose) within the proposed snow trail route.

Potential habitat for six Forest Service sensitive species exists within the project area. However, of the six species, only very little habitat for the *Cyripedium fasciculatum* (brownie ladyslipper) and *Penstemon cyananthus var. compactus* (Cache beardtongue) was found within the area of potential ground disturbance (snow trail). The proposed route of the snow trail was surveyed on June 22, 2006 and no individuals or populations were found. Therefore, no impact to any Forest Service sensitive plant species is expected as a result of this project. (The Field Report for Rare Plants and Noxious Weeds is available in the project record).

### Cumulative Effects

Since there would be no direct or indirect effects to rare plants, there would be no cumulative effects on rare plants resulting from the project.

### 3.9.2 Noxious Weeds

White top, Canada thistle, hounds tongue, and bull thistle have been found near the Steam Mill Canyon trailhead. Canada thistle and hounds tongue have been found near the Tony Grove winter recreation trailhead. While this particular project is proposed for over-the-snow grooming when the plants are dormant, potential ground disturbing activities, such as mowing or clearing of vegetation along portions of the proposed route has the potential to create favorable habitat for the introduction of seed from the above mentioned known infestations. Of these potential activities, mowing would be the least invasive and still provide native plants and natural ecosystems that would better compete with invasive species. Should an alternative be selected that would construct a snow trail, potential favorable infestation areas will be periodically monitored. It is not likely there will be any negative effects resulting from the proposed action or any of the alternatives. Since there are no direct or indirect effects related to noxious weeds, there would be no cumulative effects resulting from the project. (The Field Report for Rare Plants and Noxious Weeds is available in the project record).

### 3.9.3 Heritage Resources

#### Assumptions and methodologies

**Project Analysis Area:** For purposes of analysis of effects on cultural resources, the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for this project is the proposed snow trail route and a 50 meter buffer zone on either side of the trail's centerline.

**Key Assumption:** The assumption made in this analysis is that the winter trail between the parking areas will not be open to snowmobiles when there is a lack of snow at the beginning of the winter season and in the spring when snow melts away and bare areas are present.

**Existing Inventories, Research Literature Review:** A review of the Wasatch-Cache NF Heritage Site Atlas, Heritage GIS Layer, and a review of GLO PLAT maps for the area did not identify any previous heritage resource surveys or previously recorded heritage sites within the APE of this proposed undertaking.

**Field Inventory and Methodology:** A Class III intensive pedestrian heritage resource inventory was performed on the APE for this proposed undertaking. A 50 meter wide meandering transect was walked on either side of the centerline of the proposed snow trail and provided for 100-meter survey coverage of the APE. Areas that were proposed to be subjected to potential ground disturbance activities were given extra care and intensive investigation.

## **Results of the analysis**

No cultural resources were identified as a result of the Class III pedestrian survey. The Forest Service has made the determination that this proposed undertaking will result in No Historic Properties Affected [36CFR 800.4(d)(1)].

Due to the fact that use of this designated route will take place over snow, and no heritage resources are known to exist within the Area of Potential Effect for this proposed undertaking, this project will not affect heritage resources. Since there are no direct or indirect effects to heritage resources, consequently, there will be no cumulative effects resulting from the project. (The Heritage Resources Technical Report is available in the project record).

### **3.9.4 Tourism and the Local Economy**

In 1999 Utah's Department of Natural Resources Division of State Parks and Recreation commissioned a study to address economic benefits of snowmobiling on the Utah economy (Institute for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, 2001). It was limited to estimating the economic benefits of registered snowmobile use in Utah by Utah residents. The study did not include the economic value resulting from snowmobile rentals, trips by out of state snowmobilers and other factors..

The report found that the economic impact of recreation snowmobiling in Utah is substantial. Of the seven regions evaluated the Bear River Region which includes three popular snowmobiling areas (Hardware Ranch, Monte Cristo and Logan Canyon) was third in annual expenditure.

The report's authors advised caution in interpreting these values. These results cannot be used to analyze the effect of changes in availability of snowmobiling sites or other policy measures which might effect visitation because residents are likely to choose to simply recreation other areas in Utah or to recreate in some other manner (such as skiing ) in Utah. Thus assessing the impact of such changes would require knowing how resident snowmobilers would alter their recreation and spending behavior as a result of the changes.

Consequently, alternatives address the relative mix of motorized and non-motorized winter recreation in the Tony Grove – Franklin Basin area. The total amount of winter recreation use is not expected to change with the implementation of any of the alternatives (even if some of the use is displaced to another area of the district). The effect on tourism and the local economy would not differ between alternatives.

### 3.9.5 Wild and Scenic Rivers

The Revised Forest Plan identified 33 eligible wild and scenic river segments. Forest Plan direction for all eligible segments includes maintaining the free flowing characteristic, protecting the outstandingly remarkable values, and not affecting the river’s classification (See Appendix VIII of the Revised Forest Plan).

Two of the 33 are within the project area and have the potential to be affected by construction of the snow trail.

| River Name and Eligible Segment   | Classification | Outstanding Values |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| White Pine Creek: Source to Mouth | Scenic         | Fish               |
| Bunchgrass Creek: Source to Mouth | Scenic         | Fish               |

Alternative 1A, because of the construction of the bridges, has the potential to affect these to streams. Mitigation incorporated into the alternative will protect the identified values and free flowing character.

All other alternatives would require no mitigation and have no effect; consequently there would be no cumulative effects.

### 3.9.6 Roadless Areas

The project area lies within the Mount Naomi Roadless Area (See Appendix C2-10 through C2-13, FEIS Appendices B-J, WCNF Forest Plan Revision).

As described in the FEIS Appendix C2, roadless values for the Mount Naomi roadless area are mostly medium to medium-high for the values described (including such things as size and context, landscape character and scenic integrity, and others).

The Forest Plan recommended no portion of the Mount Naomi roadless area for Wilderness. Under the Plan, about three quarters of the roadless area’s values are protected by an application of the 2.6 management prescription (undeveloped areas).

Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 7 because they would construct a snow trail, have the potential to affect scenery over a portion of the viewshed (see Scenery, Section 3.6). Measures are included in the alternatives to mitigate this effect to varying degrees, depending on the alternative (see Scenery, Section 3.6).

All other alternatives would require no mitigation and have no effect on the roadless character; consequently there would be no cumulative effects. See the project record for the Roadless Areas Report.