

**Montana Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105
December 16, 1996

TO:

Environmental Quality Council
Director's Office, Dept. of Environmental Quality
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Director's Office
Parks Division
Fisheries Division
Wildlife Division
Regional Supervisors
Lands Section
Design & Construction
Legal Unit

Montana Historical Society, State Preservation Office
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council
Montana Wildlife Federation
Montana State Library
George Ochenski
Montana Environmental Information Center
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation
Custer National Forest, Red Lodge Ranger Station
Department of Transportation
Midland Empire Snowgoers
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
Montana Wilderness Association
Montana Wilderness Association, Eastern Wildlands Chapter

EA EXTENSION NOTICE:

An environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the Beartooth Snowmobile Program. The proposed action will require snow removal from a portion of Montana Highway 212 south of Red Lodge between mile markers 56.5 and 53.1, a total of 3.4 miles. Snow removal will be done by the Montana Department of Transportation through a grant funded by the Montana Snowmobile Association.

Questions and comments may be sent to the undersigned and will be accepted until January 17, 1997. Copies of the draft EA can be obtained from the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks office at 2300 Lake Elmo Drive, Billings, Montana, or by calling 247-2940.

Dick Ellis
Dick Ellis
Regional Supervisor

Carlson

PROJECT NAME: BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY SNOW REMOVAL PROJECT FOR
ENHANCED SAFETY FOR HISTORIC SNOWMOBILE USE

PROJECT SPONSOR: MIDLAND EMPIRE SNOWMOBILE CLUB, BILLINGS

GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION: FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED:

FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

U.S. FOREST SERVICE, BEARTOOTH RANGER DISTRICT

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PROJECT PURPOSES:

1. Enhance safety and reduce potential for avalanche deaths of snowmobilers using the Beartooth Highway.
2. Enhance wilderness boundary identification, thus reducing current minimal motorized encroachment.
3. Reduce stress to big horn sheep and mountain goats from winter recreation intrusion into ungulate winter range.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative 1: Continue funding program as in the past with no changes. Grant program would continue as has been in existence since 1992. This alternative would continue snow removal 5.7 miles from the lower gate. There are nine avalanche chutes in the upper 2.3 miles of this section of roadway which could pose danger to individuals and maintenance crews. The Absaroka Beartooth boundary would continue to lack signing and users would continue to lack immediate on-ground knowledge of its location. The big horn sheep and mountain goat winter ranges would lack adequate boundary signs. However, this alternative would continue to provide enhanced safety to users from avalanche danger, provide basic information about wilderness boundary and ungulate winter range locations at trailhead and at state line as compared to Alternative 2. Use levels would continue at the same levels reported during the past four winters.

Alternative 2: Discontinue grant and terminate program. Snowmobile use would continue as it did for many years prior to 1992. Snowmobilers would park their tow vehicle at snow line on the roadway which may be in the middle of avalanche chutes; individuals not familiar with the area may encounter conditions that are beyond their experience level; no immediate information would be available on the location of the wilderness boundary; ungulate winter ranges would be unidentified, unmarked and thus wintering ungulates would be subject to stresses imposed by winter recreationists. Use levels would continue as reported during the past four winters.

Alternative 3: Continue funding program as in the past but request additional information and make on-ground modifications such as additional signing. This alternative would reduce the amount of plowing from 5.7 miles above the lower gate to 3.4 miles above, thus avoiding the nine avalanche chutes in that final 2.3 miles of roadway; increase efforts to collect and evaluate information regarding wilderness encroachment and other violations; add signing at the lower gates informing people that the road beyond is not maintained and that avalanches are possible; add boundary signing for the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness and ungulate winter ranges.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE: ALTERNATIVE 3.

**SNOWMOBILE GROOMING PROGRAM
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS**

**SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
MIDLAND EMPIRE SNOWMOBILE CLUB - BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY
SNOW REMOVAL**

- The EA document will be submitted to the Environmental Quality Council upon signing of the Decision Notice, following the 30 day comment period.
- A description of the proposed action is provided in the EA document along with maps identifying location of the groomed trails.
- The benefits of the proposed action are to provide snow removal for the sport of snowmobiling, as well as snowmobile safety, education, enforcement and wildlife security.
- The Beartooth Highway is managed by the Montana Department of Transportation. All clearances are provided and included with the EA document.
- Impacts are evaluated and mitigation identified in the Public Awareness Plan included with the EA document. The key issues evaluated are:
 1. Administration - all federal and state environmental analyses are met.
 2. Air Quality - Very minimal impacts due to low use and dispersion.
 3. Topography, Soils, Hydrology - Project is on existing highway and therefore there is no negative impact to soils or hydrology. No problems exist with low snow or stream crossings.
 4. Wildlife - Wildlife clearance has been provided. No rare, threatened or endangered species exist in the area according to NRIS. Three areas are identified as winter range by FWP biologists. Two of those three are in wilderness area. Signing has been placed around these areas advising snowmobilers to stay out, and information signs will be placed at terminus of plowing.
 5. Vegetation - Plowing is on existing Beartooth Highway; therefore, impact to vegetation will be at a minimum.
 6. Socioeconomic - No impact. No promotional activities will occur with this project. Any information is limited to basic facts. It is not the club's and the state's intent to promote increased use in this area.

7. Cultural - All plowing is located on the Beartooth Highway. There are no cultural impacts.
8. Safety/Private Property - Private property is not impacted by this project. Safety is a primary concern, especially as it concerns avalanche and winter survival techniques. The snowmobile club provides safety training, avalanche awareness classes, promotes use of avalanche survival equipment and provides funds for emergency radio. Informational/educational signs will be used extensively. Safety plans and search & rescue plans exist at the local, state and federal levels.
9. Wilderness Areas - Encroachment into the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness associated with this project is minimal. Boundary signs will be posted by the U.S. Forest Service. Signs identifying location of wilderness boundary will be located at terminus of plowing and at top of grade at Wyoming border. Maps will also indicate location of boundary. Snowmobilers will be educated at club meetings and through newspaper articles about the law related to wilderness and wilderness encroachment.
10. Law Enforcement - The Forest Service reports minimal incursion. Cooperative enforcement will continue. See public awareness plan.
11. Changes in Aesthetic Values - Clubs signing strategy includes "Pack-it-in Pack-it-out" signs.

- The EA evaluates mitigation, stipulation and other control measures. Refer to the Public Awareness Plan for details.
- The cover letter lists distribution of document and notice of public comment period.
- Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks contact person is:

Dick Ellis
Regional Supervisor
Fish, Wildlife & Parks
2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105

- This EA evaluation is the adequate level of analysis based on the findings of the Snowmobile Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.



**Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

**Environmental Review Criteria
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Snowmobile Grant Program**

Proposals for grants allocated under the Montana Snowmobile Grant Program shall be reviewed in accordance with the following Environmental Review Criteria. Environmental review on existing funded snowmobile trails will be completed as expeditiously as possible with the Department setting priorities and attempting to complete environmental review first for those funded trails located in the more environmentally sensitive areas. In no case will an existing trail, not in full compliance within three years, continue to be funded under the Grant Program. In some cases, proposed projects may be determined by the Department to be categorically excluded from the environmental review process.

A categorical exclusion may be denied if the Department determines that special circumstances warrant further environmental review. Such circumstances include those where use of the trail may individually, collectively or cumulatively cause significant environmental impacts. If a project satisfies number 1 below, the project qualifies for a categorical exclusion.

1. Continuation of an existing program with no on-ground changes and that has previously satisfied MEPA reviews.

Projects that do not satisfy number 1, but do satisfy numbers 2 through 7, qualify for a categorical exclusion.

2. Snowmobile trail on federal lands is already incorporated in U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management travel plan and Multi-Party Agreement has been signed.
3. Fish, Wildlife and Parks wildlife clearance has been obtained.
4. Snowmobile Project Agreement has been signed by sponsor and Department.
5. Project is on an existing roadway or previously ungroomed, but authorized by the land management agency, snowmobile trail.
6. Development or improvements on federal lands have already satisfied NEPA.
7. Trail is not in a wilderness study area or designated non-motorized area.

If the proposed project does not meet the requirements necessary for a categorical exclusion it must be reviewed in accordance with the Environmental Review Criteria identified below:

When reviewing projects within the checklist that result in a request for additional information, three subsequent requests for the same information will result in a denial of the project, or that portion of the project if it is a stand alone component.

Prior to making a final determination that a new or substantially changed application satisfies the criteria for a categorical exclusion, the Department will provide fifteen calendar days for public review and comment.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
Issue 1 Administration	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	1	Does map clearly identify proposed activities (i.e. trails, parking lots, etc.)?	Y	Go to #2	Attachment #1
				N	Request Submittal	
	Decision memo and env. document from land mgmnt agency	2	Do any proposed activities occur on lands managed by another agency?	Y	Go to #2a	D.O.T.
				N	Go to #3	
		2a	Did the land mgmnt agency prepare an env. document?	Y	Go to #2b	Categorical Exclusion Attachment #2
				N	Go to #3	
		2b	Was the decision memo supplied with application?	Y	Go to #4	Attachment #2
				N	Request Submittal	
	Internal environmental review document	3	Does the proposal include operation and maintenance projects?	Y	Go to #3b	
				N	Go to #3a	



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		3a	Does the proposal include expansion or construction of trails or facilities	Y	Go to #3b	
				N	Go to #4	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		3b	Has checklist EA been prepared	Y	Go to #3c	
				N	Request Submittal	
		3c	Does the checklist EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	
				N	Go to #3d	
		3d	Has an EA been prepared?	Y	Go to #3e	
				N	Request EA	
		3e	Did the EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	
				N	Go to #3f	
		3f	Has an EIS been prepared?	Y	Go to #3g	
				N	Request EIS	
		3g	Did EIS satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	
				N	Request Proposal	
		3h	Did applicant supply decision notice?	Y	Go to #4	
				N	Request Submittal	
	Licenses, Leases, permits, clearances, etc.	4	Has applicant supplied appropriate copies required by other agencies?	(Y)	Go to #6	

DOT Does
Plowing - No
lease required
Interagency Cooperative
Agreement - Attached
#16

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
				N	Request Submittal	
Issue 2 Air Quality	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	6	Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #6a	Attachment #1
				<input type="radio"/> N	Request Submittal	
		6a	Does proposal include expansion of existing or construction of new trails?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #6b	Plowing on existing roadway
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #7	
	Connection to other trails or trail systems	6b	Does the expanded or new trail connect with another trail system or trail?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #7	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Go to #7	
	Public awareness plan	7	Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #9	Attachment #5
				<input type="radio"/> N	Request Submittal	
Issue 3 Topography, Soils, Hydrology	Map identifying proposed trail or facilities	9	Does the map clearly identify proposed activities?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #9a	Attachment #1
				<input type="radio"/> N	Request Submittal	
		9a	Are there areas of known insufficient snowcover along proposed trails?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #9b	
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #9c	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		9b	Are areas of known insufficient snowcover identified on the maps?	Y	Go to #9c	
				N	Request Submittal	
		9c	Are there areas characterized by summer wet meadows?	Y	Go to #9d	<i>ON Existing Roadway</i>
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #10	
		9d	Are areas of known wet meadows identified on the map?	Y	Go to #9e	
				N	Request Submittal	
		9e	Have viable alternatives around areas of known insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows been identified?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #10	
				N	Request Submittal	
	Avoidance	10	Has applicant submitted a plan for avoidance of areas of known insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	Y	Go to #10a	<i>None Exist Within Funded Project</i>
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Request Plan	
		10a	Does the plan identify specific measures for each area identified on the map?	Y	Go to #11	<i>None Exist</i>
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Request Specifics	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
	Seasonal Restrictions	11	Does the proposal include stream crossings?	Y	Go to #11a	Project on Existing Roadway
				(N)	Go to #12	
		11a	Does the proposed stream crossing utilize an existing structure?	Y	Go to #12	
				N	Go to #11b	
		11b	Are there viable alternatives to crossing the stream that would utilize existing structures?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #12	
				N	Go to #11c	
		11c	Is construction of temporary crossing structures viable in the proposed crossing location?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #12	
				N	Reject	
	Public Awareness Plan	12	Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?	(Y)	Go to #13	Attachment #5
				N	Request Submittal	
Issue 4 Wildlife	Map identifying proposed activities	13	Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	(Y)	Go to #13a	Attachment #1
				N	Request Submittal	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		13a	Are there known ungulate wintering areas in the vicinity of proposed trails? Project.	(Y)	Go to #13b	Attachment #1 and #3
				N	Go to #14	
		13b	Are there ungulate wintering areas identified on the map?	(Y)	Go to #13c	Attachment #1
				N	Request Submittal	
		13c	Do proposed trails remain on the periphery of winter ranges?	(Y)	Go to #13f	Proposal Project is well below areas
				N	Go to #14	
		13d	Does proposed trail pass through wintering areas?	Y	Go to #13e	
				N	Go to #13h	
		13e	Is there a viable alternate route available for use?	Y	Go to #13f	
				N	Reject	
	Avoidance	13f	Is the trail length along the periphery of the wintering area the least possible?	(Y)	Go to #13g	Proposal Project well below areas
				N	Revise Plan	
		13g	Was vegetative screening used whenever possible?	(Y)	Go to #13h	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
				N	Revise to utilize veg screen	
		13h	Has signing plan been proposed to keep snowmobilers from disturbing wintering ungulates?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #14	Attachment # 5 Issue 4. Public Awareness Plan
				N	Request Plan	
	Seasonal Restrictions	14	Are there ungulate wintering areas in grizzly bear habitat?	Y	Go to #14a	
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #15	
		14a	Are there proposed trails near these areas?			
	Idle Zones	15	Are there known bald eagle nests or grizzly hibernation areas?	Y	Go to #15a	
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #15d	
		15a	Are trails proposed near any of these sites?	Y	Go to #15b	
				N	Go to #15d	
		15b	Are viable alternatives identified that avoid these areas?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #15d	
				N	Go to #15c	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		15c	Have idle zones been proposed for these areas?	Y	Go to #15d	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #15d	
		15d	Has the Natural Heritage wildlife list for the proposed region been submitted (NRIS - State library)?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #15e	Attachment # 4
				N	Request Submittal	
		15e	Does the Natural Heritage list identify any rare or endangered wildlife species in the area of the proposal?	Y	Go to #15f	
				N	Go to #16	
		15f	Has applicant submitted an avoidance or seasonal restriction plan or other appropriate mitigative measures for these areas?	Y	Go to #16	
				N	Request Submittal	
	Signing	16	Have signing strategies been proposed to identify idle zones?	Y	Go to #17	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #17	
	Public awareness plan	17	Has a public awareness plan been established?	Y	Go to #18	Attachment # 5
				N	Stipulate - Go to #18	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		19k	Are there viable alternatives to avoid areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #20	
				N	Go to #19l	
		19l	Has applicant submitted an avoidance or seasonal restriction plan for areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	Y	Go to #20	
				N	Request - Go to #20	
	Monitoring for noxious weeds	20	Are noxious weeds present within the trail area, particularly in staging areas?	Y	Go to #20a	None Reported by D.T.
				(N)	Go to #21	
		20a	Has noxious weed plan been proposed in application?	Y	Go to #20b	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #20b	
		20b	Has monitoring plan been proposed to survey vegetation damage and spread of noxious weeds?	Y	Go to #21	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #21	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
	Public Awareness	21	Has a public awareness strategy been proposed?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #22	Attachment #5
				<input type="radio"/> N	Stipulate - Go to #22	
Issue 6 Socioeconomics	Planning	22	Does the application include organized events or promotional activities that would utilize funded trails?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #22a	No promotion is involved
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #23	
		22a	Does application include projected number of trail users generated by the events?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #22b	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Request - Go to #22b	
		22b	Does application include a public safety plan for the events?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #22c	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Stipulate - Go to #22c	
		22c	Has applicant identified additional employment requirements during event?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #23	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Request - Go to #23	
Issue 7 Cultural	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	23	Has map identifying proposed trails or facilities been submitted?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #23a	Attachment #1
				<input type="radio"/> N	Request - Go to #23a	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		23a	Is entire proposed trail/facility located within an <u>existing road</u> or trail?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #24	Plowing Existing Roadway
				<input type="radio"/> N	Go to #23b	
		23b	Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on a historic road or trail?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #23d	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Go to #23c	
		23c	Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on an undeveloped land?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #23d	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Go to #24	
		23d	Do viable alternative routes exist that could utilize existing roads or trails?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Stipulate - Go to #24	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Go to #23e	
	Site specific treatment	23e	Was SHPO consulted for determination of need for cultural resource investigation?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #23f	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Stipulate - Go to #23f	
		23f	Was a cultural resource investigation conducted?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #23g	
				<input type="radio"/> N	Inquire as to why	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		23g	Were significant sites found?	Y	Go to #23h	
				N	Go to #24	
		23h	Were adequate mitigations applied (i.e. reroute, etc.)?	Y	Go to #23i	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #23i	
	Public awareness plan	23i	Is a public awareness strategy proposed?	Y	Go to #24	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #24	
Issue 8 Safety/Private Property	Maps identifying proposed trails and facilities	24	Does map clearly identify proposed activities	Y	Go to #24a	Attachment #1
				N	Request - Go to #24a	
		24a	Does application include proposal for signing strategy identifying locations for warning signs?	Y	Go to #24b	Attachment #5
				N	Stipulate - Go to #24b	
		24b	Have private properties along proposed trails been identified?	Y	Go to #24c	None Exist
				N	Request - Go to #24c	
	Avoidance	24c	Do viable alternatives exist that avoid private property?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25	On Existing Roadway
				N	Go to #24d	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
	Signing and public awareness	24d	Has applicant included a strategy for signing and public awareness re: private property?	Y	Go to #25	No. Private Property
				(N)	Stipulate - Go to #25	
Issue 9 Wilderness Areas	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	25	Do maps identify proposed trail ^{project} locations?	(Y)	Go to #25a	Attachment #1
				N	Request - Go to #25a	
		25a	Is ^{is} proposed trail ^{project} located near wilderness boundary or designated non-motorized area?	(Y)	Go to #25b	Within one mile of AB wilderness
				N	Go to #25e	
	Trail location strategies	25b	Is there heavy vegetative cover or <u>topographic features</u> between proposed trail ^{project} and wilderness boundary /designated non-motorized area?	* (Y)	Go to #25e In Project Area	In some areas No in others
				* (N)	Go to #25c Above on plateau	
		25c	Do viable alternatives exist that would utilize vegetative screening between wilderness boundary or designated non-motorized area?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25e	High alpine tundra
				(N)	Go to #25d	

change
←

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		25d	Do viable alternatives exist that would situate topographic features between proposed trail ^{project} and wilderness area or designated non-motorized area?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Stipulate - Go to #25e	At project site, topography limits.
				N	Go to #25e	
		25e	Does proposal include trails on or adjacent to established cc ski trails?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #25f	
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #26	
		25f	Are there viable alts. that would avoid placement of proposed trails on or adjacent to cc ski trails?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Stipulate - Go to #26	
				N	Go to #26	
	Signing	26	Has signing program been established that would warn snowmobilers of shared use areas, <u>wilderness boundaries</u> , intersections, etc?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	Go to #27	Attachment #5
				N	Stipulate - Go to #27	
	Speed Limits	27	Does proposed trail go through residential areas of particular sensitivity?	<input type="radio"/> Y	Go to #27a	
				<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Go to #28	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		27a	Has applicant established appropriate speed limits or hourly restrictions in areas of sensitivity?	Y	Go to #28	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #28	
		28	Has applicant proposed public awareness plan that includes consideration for residential and sensitive areas?	(Y)	Go to #29	Attachment #5
				N	Stipulate - Go to #29	
Issue 8 Law Enforcement		29	Has applicant provided law enforcement report from DFW&P Region Warden Captain and/or land managing agency identifying documented snowmobile trespass on private lands and/or wilderness areas caused by adjoining or nearby funded trail ^{project} and proposal for addressing such violations?	(Y)	Go to #30	Attachment #7
				N	Stipulate - Go to #30	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
Issue 10 Changes in Aesthetic Values	Litter Remediation	30	Has applicant included a trash receptacle location, placement and management strategy?	Y	Go to #30a	<i>Is only a playing contract</i>
				(N)	Stipulate - Go to #30a	
		30a	Has applicant proposed "pack-it-in pack-it-out" type signing strategy?	(Y)	Go to #30b	
				N	Stipulate - Go to #30b	
	Trail Location Strategies	30b	Has applicant satisfied questions 25-29?	(Y)	Go to #31	
				N	Go to #25	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		31	Have all appropriate boxes in right-hand column been checked?	Y	Env. considerations approved	
				N	Take appropriate actions until all boxes are checked	

ATTACHMENT #2

JAN 8 1993

Montana Department
of Transportation

2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620 1001

Marc Racicot, Governor

Kathy

(C) 40

C.R.
FILE
COPY

January 7, 1993

Marcella Sherfy
State Historic Preservation Office
225 North Roberts
Helena, MT 59620

Subject: STPP 28-2(17)45
Beartooth Pass - North
Control No. 2044

Enclosed is the cultural resource report and CRABS form for the above project. Aaberg Cultural Resource Consulting Service recorded three prehistoric and one historic Isolated Artifact Localities (IAL) within the designated project area. We are requesting your concurrence that none of IALs are eligible for the NRHP.

If you have any questions, please contact Jon Axline at 444-6258.

Edrie Vinson

Edrie L. Vinson, Chief *ML*
Environmental & Hazardous Waste Bureau

ELV:D:ENV:169.gg

Enclosure

cc: David S. Johnson, P.E., Preconstruction Bureau
w/attach.
Roy R. Ventura, Jr., P.E., Billings District Engineer
w/attach.
Lee Greer, USDA - Forest Service Region One Office
Halcyon LaPoint, Custer National Forest

CONCUR
NO PROPERTIES ON OR ELIGIBLE
FOR NRHP APPEAR LIKELY TO
EXIST WITHIN PROJECT IMPACT AREA
MONTANA S.H.P.O.
DATE *1/13/93* SIGNED *J. Suppe*

RECEIVED

JAN 14 1993

ATTACHMENT #1



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAYS DIVISION
Billings District

Memorandum

To: David S. Johnson, P.E.
Preconstruction Engineer

From: Roy R. Ventura, Jr., P.E.
District Engineer-Billings

Date: February 8, 1993

Subject: STPP 28-2(17)45 - C.N. 2044
Beartooth Pass-North

Roy R. Ventura, Jr.

Precons: 2-9-93

MAIL ROUTE

Attach

30	Preconst Engr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
31	Assistant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
32	Office Mgr	<input type="checkbox"/>
33	Safety Mgmt.	<input type="checkbox"/>
34	Road Design	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
35	Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
36	Hydraulics	<input type="checkbox"/>
37	Survey & Mapping	<input type="checkbox"/>
38	Traffic Eng.	<input type="checkbox"/>
39	Traffic Operations	<input type="checkbox"/>
40	Consultant Dsn	<input type="checkbox"/>

SCOPE OF WORK

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Location and Description

→ The project is located on U.S. Highway 212 (STPP 28) in Carbon County. It starts at M.P. 60 (Station 454+12) and extends 15.02 miles to the end of the project at M.P. 45 (Station 1262+03.69).

The route traverses scenic mountain terrain used primarily as a recreation and wilderness area. This section of U.S. Highway 212 is classified as a "Minor Arterial" by the 1985 Rural Functional Classification of Highways. This project is on a Surface Transportation Program Route. The December 4, 1992 Surface Transportation Program Design Standards categorizes this section of highway for "Maintain Existing Level of Development."

From the beginning to the end of the project, the surfacing section will be overlaid. Existing width of the roadway varies from 19 ft. to 31 ft. The intent is to stabilize and extend the life of the existing roadway.

This project encompasses three previous projects. The as-built stationing and staked roadside markers will be used for stationing this project.

2. Existing Condition

The existing highway was constructed under two different contracts and improved with binwalls, paving, and guardrails under a third contract.

Beginning at the north end of the project and proceeding southerly, the first 6.274 miles (Station 454+12 to Station 786+72) was constructed in 1965 to a 28.0 ft. top surface width. In this section, the base is 7 in. of CBC topped with 2 in. of plant mix surfacing.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Custer NF

2602 1st Avenue North
P.O. Box 2556
Billings, MT 59103

Reply To: 7700

Date: April 20, 1993

MAY 03 1993

MASTER FILE
COPY

ENVIRONMENTAL BUREAU
Edrie L. Vinson, Chief
MDT - Environmental & Hazardous Waste Bureau
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena, Mt. 59620-1001

STPP 28 - 2(17)45
Beartooth Pass - North
(P.M.S. C#2044)

Dear Edrie:

I have reviewed the documents for the above, proposed project.

With this letter I concur that this proposed project meets the criteria for classification as a Categorical Exclusion under the provisions of 23 CFR 771.117(d). The description, purpose & need, environmental impacts, locations map and related documents appear to be in order.

From my analysis as the Responsible Official of a Cooperating Agency I believe this proposed project is in accordance with the above and the Memorandum of Understanding on Procedures Related to State Highways over National Forest Lands signed by MDT, the FHWA, and the USFS in January, 1993.

Please call Carl Wolf at 406-657-6361 in my Billings office if we can be of further assistance.

CURTIS W. BATES
Forest Supervisor

cc: Beartooth RD
B. Johnston, RO
R. Snyder, RO
Roy Ventura, MDT, Billings
R. Weed, MDT, Billings



ATTACHMENT #3

SNOWMOBILE GROOMING PROGRAM

Regional Wildlife Clearance

Trail expansion (attach map highlighting expansion)

New trail system (attach map highlighting trail system)

MIDLAND EMPIRE SNOWGOERS

Snowmobile Club

Are there any wildlife concerns?

YES

NO

If yes:

Species Bighorn Sheep and Mountain Goat

(list)

1. Winter range Line Creek Plateau and between East & West Fork of Line Creek (area)

2. Travel corridor NONE

3. Other Area between Chain Creek & Mirror Lake (sheep area)

Suggested alternate route _____

Other mitigation measures (such as signing; trail restrictions, etc.)

Sign winter range boundary and keep snowmobile traffic out. SEE MAP

Approved with above-mentioned mitigation measures

Not approved as submitted

Charles D. Cuvstace 5-14-92

Regional Wildlife Biologist

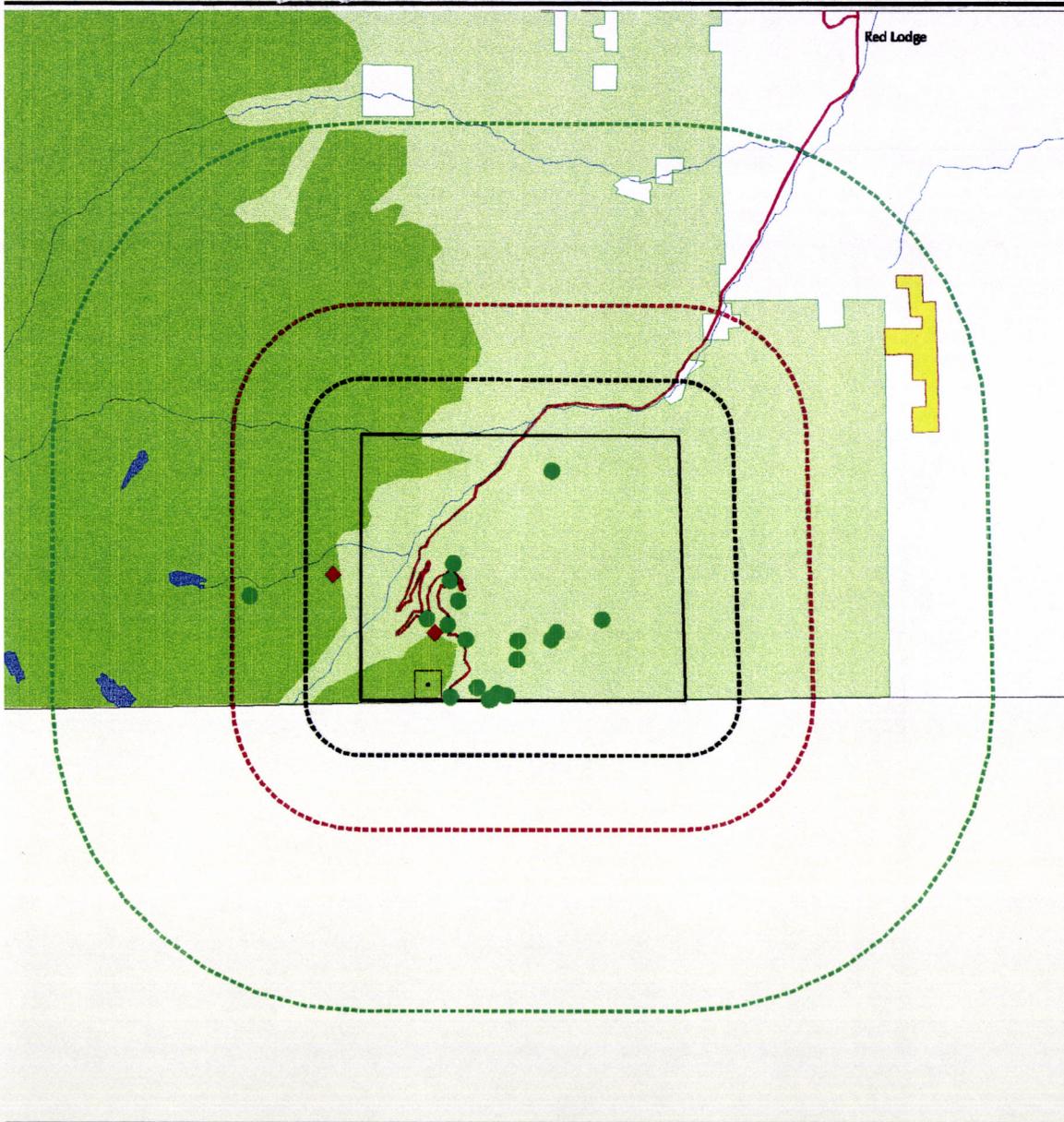
Date

Raymond V. Buntson

Regional Parks Manager

5/14/92

Date



Species of Special Concern Search Area: T9S, R19E Red Lodge Snow Plowing Project

- | Element Occurrences | Managed Areas |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ◆ Animal | ■ BLM special areas |
| ● Plant | ■ National Park Service areas |
| □ Community | ■ US Fish & Wildlife Service areas |
| ⊕ Other | ■ National Forest lands |
| — Selection Area | ■ Wilderness areas |
| - - - Selection Buffer | ■ Research Natural Areas |
| - · - · - 1.5 Mile M-precision Buffer | ■ MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks areas |
| - · - · - 5-Mile G-precision Buffer | ■ Private preserves & easements |

None identified in area of plowing grant

ATTACHMENT #4

Not all legend items may occur on map.
"Precision" buffers are designed to capture those records that, though mapped outside the selection area, may actually occur within it.

Scale of Miles



November 12, 1996

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM
Species of Special Concern: Red Lodge Snow Plowing Project

Ref.	Name/Common Name	G Rank	S Rank	USESA	USFS	Township-Range-Sec.	County(ies)
001	URSUS ARCTOS HORRIBILIS GRIZZLY BEAR	G4T3	S1S2	LT	THREATENED		Beaverhead; Carbon; Gallatin; Madison; Park; Stillwater; Sweet Grass
004	SOREX NANUS DWARF SHREW	G4	S3			009S018E 13	Carbon
002	JUNCUS TRIGLUMIS VAR TRIGLUMIS THREE-FLOWERED RUSH	G5T5	SU			009S018E 22	Carbon
001	TAMIAS UMBRINUS UINTA CHIPMUNK	G5	S3?			009S019E 20	Carbon
005	FESTUCA IDAHOENSIS-DESCHAMPSIA CESPITOSA HT IDAHO FESCUE/TUFTED HAIRGRASS HABITAT TYPE	G3G4	S3			009S019E 29	Carbon
038	AGOSERIS LACKSCHEWITZII PINK AGOSERIS	G3	S2S3		SENSITIVE	009S019E 33	Carbon
001	ERIGERON FLABELLIFOLIUS FAN-LEAVED FLEABANE	G3G4	S3			009S019E 17	Carbon
005	ERIGERON FLABELLIFOLIUS FAN-LEAVED FLEABANE	G3G4	S3			009S019E 32	Carbon
001	SENECIO AMPLECTENS VAR HOLMII CLASPING GROUNDSEL	G4T?	S1			009S019E 19	Carbon
001	DRABA PORSILDII PORSILD'S DRABA	G3	S1			009S019E 17	Carbon
003	DRABA PORSILDII PORSILD'S DRABA	G3	S1			009S019E 33	Carbon
004	DRABA PORSILDII PORSILD'S DRABA	G3	S1			009S019E 3	Carbon
001	THLASPI PARVIFLORUM SMALL-FLOWERED PENNYCRESS	G3	S2		SENSITIVE	009S019E 20	Carbon
003	THLASPI PARVIFLORUM SMALL-FLOWERED PENNYCRESS	G3	S2		SENSITIVE	009S019E 22 009S020E 18	Carbon
003	STELLARIA CRASSIFOLIA FLESHY STITCHWORT	G4	S1			009S019E 20	Carbon
007	GENTIANA PROSTRATA PYGMY GENTIAN	G5	S2			009S019E 21 009S020E 18	Carbon
001	KOENIGIA ISLANDICA ISLAND KOENIGIA	G4	S1			009S019E 33	Carbon
005	KOENIGIA ISLANDICA ISLAND KOENIGIA	G4	S1			009S019E 20	Carbon
001	SALIX BARRATTIANA BARRATT'S WILLOW	G5	S1		SENSITIVE	009S019E 33	Carbon
001	ERIOPHORUM CALLITRIX SHEATHED COTTON-GRASS	G5	S1			009S019E 27	Carbon
002	ERIOPHORUM CALLITRIX SHEATHED COTTON-GRASS	G5	S1			009S019E 28	Carbon
001	KOBRESIA MACROCARPA LARGE-FRUITED KOBRESIA	G5	S1		SENSITIVE	009S019E 33	Carbon

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM
Species of Special Concern: Red Lodge Snow Plowing Project

Ref.	Name/Common Name	G Rank	S Rank	USES A	USFS	Township-Range-Sec.	County(ies)
002	KOBRESIA MACROCARPA LARGE-FRUITED KOBRESIA	G5	S1		SENSITIVE	009S019E 28	Carbon
001	PHIPPSIA ALGIDA ICE GRASS	G5	S2			009S019E 33	Carbon
002	PHIPPSIA ALGIDA ICE GRASS	G5	S2			009S019E 23	Carbon

25 Records listed.

ATTACHMENT #5

MIDLAND EMPIRE SNOWMOBILE CLUB

RED LODGE PLOWING PROJECT

PUBLIC AWARENESS PLAN

ISSUE 2 - AIR QUALITY

Air quality is an important issue and recognized by our club. Although it is not considered a significant problem with this program above Red Lodge because of the small number of users and the dispersion of riders, the Midland Empire Snowmobile Club, on an ongoing basis, educates its club members and the public on methods of reducing emissions from snowmobiles. This includes but is not limited to negative effects of cold starts, older model engines, past due tune-ups, improper jetting and injector adjustments. We are also recommending the use of biodegradable synthetic oil in snowmobile engines to reduce emissions.

The following, as a minimum, will be accomplished to keep the public informed on a continuing basis:

- a. **SIGNS:** No unnecessary idling. Turn off your machine during rest breaks. Minimize cold starts.
- b. **WORKSHOPS:** Air quality included in club meetings, public briefings and snowmobile maintenance workshops.
- c. **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Announcements in news letters and the local paper.
- d. **MEDIA SIGNS:** Signs/displays at local snowmobile dealers.

ISSUE 3 - TOPOGRAPHY, SOILS, HYDROLOGY

Understanding the physical features of any project is important. Physical features include, among others, elevation of the terrain, loose surface materials of the earth, soils, and the science of properties, distribution, quality, and movement of water.

All of this project is on a highway and involves snow removal. State Department of Transportation traffic engineers are experienced at snow removal and will professionally manage this project to ensure the least impact on surrounding features.

There are no areas of insufficient snow cover on bare soils.

Topography is one of the most unique features of this project. Steep side-slope grades adjacent to the roadway certainly create the opportunity for avalanche exposure. Although initial plowing of the Red Lodge grade was initiated in 1992, local snowmobilers have been using the Grade for many years to access high alpine riding. Although avalanche potential has always existed, no snowmobilers have lost their lives at this location due to avalanche.

The plowing project's primary objective has been and will continue to be enhanced safety for users. The Department of Transportation (DOT) will post a 3 foot by 8 foot sign at the lower gate at the bottom of the Grade which says, "Road Not Maintained Beyond This Point." In addition, Avalanche Area signs will be posted at that location. This sign will hopefully discourage persons driving automobiles beyond this point strictly for sightseeing purposes. The DOT will plow 3.4 miles beyond this point primarily for more safe snowmobile access. At this location, concrete median barriers will be placed across the road with a gap large enough to allow snowmobiles beyond but not larger vehicles.

At the terminus location of plowing, a sign will be placed informing users of the extreme nature of the environment beyond, avalanche exposure, changing weather conditions, challenging terrain and the recommendation that inexperienced snowmobilers and/or individuals who are not familiar with the area should not snowmobile in this area.

The DOT has an emergency plan for maintenance equipment operators. This includes, among others, that plowing will only be conducted on week days during daytime hours, a high band radio is in all such equipment with communication access to sheriff's office.

ISSUE 4 - WILDLIFE

Information obtained from the Natural Resource Inventory System indicates no rare, threatened or endangered species exist in the location of the plowing project. However, there are three areas of big horn sheep and mountain goat winter range at the top of the Grade that could be minimally affected by snowmobile use. These areas are identified on the map, Attachment #1, and discussed in the Regional Wildlife Clearance, Attachment #3. Signing will be placed around the boundaries of these areas advising snowmobilers to stay out of the areas. Informational signs will also be placed at the terminus of the plowing explaining the nature of these areas and the potential impacts to such wintering ungulates.

State Fish, Wildlife & Parks staff will be invited to snowmobile club meetings in Billings and Red Lodge to discuss the biology of these species, the critical nature of the harsh winter environment and the importance of avoiding these animals on winter range.

ISSUE 5 - VEGETATION

This project is snow removal on an existing roadway surface. The project will not directly have impacts to vegetation. Indirect impacts distant from the project area on the plateau will be none to minimal because of heavy snow conditions during the snowmobile season on the plateau.

Noxious weeds are not reported as a problem in the area of the project. If in the future, through monitoring by the DOT, such problems are identified, the snowmobile club, DOT and FWP will work with the county noxious weed control program.

ISSUE 6 - SOCIOECONOMICS

The snowmobile club does not host or encourage organized events at this site. In fact it is a requirement of this project that no promotion of riding in this area will be conducted by the snowmobile club, the communities of Billings and Red Lodge or any state agency. The project purpose is to enhance safety in the area for the historic community of snowmobilers, not to increase numbers or level of use through promotional means.

ISSUE 7 - CULTURAL

This snow removal project is entirely on existing roadway. SHPO was consulted by the DOT in 1993 in relation to the roadway. Response: "Concur - no properties on or eligible for NRHP appear likely to exist within project impact area, Montana SHPO," signed and dated 1/13/93.

ISSUE 8 - SAFETY

Safety is a primary concern of the Midland Empire Snowmobile Club.

The snowmobile club has a designated safety officer who provides safety training for club members and organizes safety education classes.

The snowmobile club has organized avalanche awareness classes for area snowmobilers in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service.

The club promotes the use by winter recreationists of avalanche beacons and has provided an option for mass purchases of avalanche survival equipment.

The club has provided avalanche equipment in the form of shovels and probe poles at two locations on the Beartooth plateau.

The club has donated funds for emergency radio communications equipment.

The club has a Search & Rescue Plan for its members, works closely with the Carbon County Sheriff's Department, and is a member of the Carbon County Search & Rescue Organization.

PROJECT SIGNING FOR ENHANCED SAFETY:

The plowing project's primary objective has been and will continue to be enhanced safety for users. The Department of Transportation (DOT) will post a 3 foot by 8 foot sign at the lower gate at the bottom of the Grade which says, "Road Not Maintained Beyond This Point." In addition, Avalanche Area signs will be posted at that location. This sign will hopefully discourage persons driving automobiles beyond this point strictly for sightseeing purposes. The DOT will plow 3.8 miles beyond this point primarily for more safe snowmobile access. At this location, concrete median barriers will be placed across the road with a gap large enough to allow snowmobiles beyond but not larger vehicles.

At the terminus location of plowing, a sign will be placed informing users of the extreme nature of the environment beyond, avalanche exposure, changing weather conditions, challenging terrain and the recommendation that inexperienced snowmobilers and/or individuals who are not familiar with the area should not snowmobile in this area.

The DOT has an emergency plan for maintenance equipment operators. This includes, among others, that plowing will only be conducted on week days during daytime hours, a high band radio is in all such equipment with communication access to sheriff's office.

ISSUE 9 - WILDERNESS AREAS

Attachment #1 shows the location of the eastern border of the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness (AB). Although the project area is one mile from the AB boundary and terrain in this vicinity would make access impossible, there is the potential for such access and thus illegal encroachment by snowmobiles at the top of the pass.

At a meeting between the staff of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and the Beartooth Ranger District on September 18, 1996, enforcement personnel for that federal agency stated that currently encroachment into the AB Wilderness is minimal. In fact, the only encroachments over the wilderness boundary on the east side mentioned were snowmobile tracks that only broke the line by short distances and caused by individuals avoiding drifts and other obstacles.

The snowmobile club, in cooperation with Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), will employ the following methods in the future to continue to maintain a low level of potential wilderness encroachment.

BOUNDARY SIGNS: The USFS will post wilderness boundary signs at the AB boundary in the areas frequented by snowmobile traffic at a frequency of approximately 1 sign per 1/8 mile minimum, more frequent as necessary. Snowmobile club members, FWP and USFS staff will inspect signs on a weekly basis. Also, a sign at the terminus of snow removal will show location of wilderness boundaries.

LAW ENFORCEMENT: FWP game wardens will work cooperatively with USFS staff on law enforcement patrols. See Law Enforcement Plan, Attachment #7. Currently state game wardens cannot write citations for wilderness encroachment, but they do report such activities to USFS staff who can then followup on reports. FWP is currently working with USFS Region 1 law enforcement to provide authority to state game wardens to write citations for such violations.

ISSUE 10 - CHANGES IN AESTHETIC VALUES

"Pack It In - Pack It Out" signs will be located at the terminus of snow removal.

Snowmobile noise levels will be enforced as per state law, 23-2-634, MCA. Changes in exhaust systems from stock systems will be discouraged by articles in snowmobile newsletters, discussions at snowmobile club meetings and by enhanced noise level law enforcement.

ATTACHMENT #6

INTERAGENCY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

This interagency cooperative agreement is made this date, July 1, 1996, by and between the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), for the purpose of cooperatively maintaining a section of State Highway US 212 for snowmobile use on land shown on the attached map (Attachment A).

Either party may request modification or cancellation of the agreement during the period April 1 through June 30 of each year, or the agreement may be canceled by mutual agreement at anytime. The agreement will remain in effect unless modification or cancellation is requested. If the agreement is terminated, FWP shall pay the MDT for work actually performed under the agreement to the date of termination.

RECITALS

1. Legislation was passed by the 47th Montana Legislature earmarking a portion of gasoline taxes for snowmobile facility operation, maintenance, and development for public use, at no cost to the public;
2. Sufficient funds have accrued in the snowmobile earmarked revenue account to fund the proposal described in this agreement;
3. The Parks Division of FWP has been assigned the responsibility for administration of the program and the Parks Division desires to seek means of providing snowmobile facilities; and

4. The MDT has maintenance equipment in the vicinity of the project area of concern.

NOW THEREFORE, IN CONSIDERATION of the promises and conditions and terms set forth in this agreement, the parties agree as follows:

1. The attached map, designated as Attachment "A", is an accurate graphic depiction of the land area covered by this agreement.
2. FWP shall provide the following to the MDT:
 - a. Reimburse MDT for the maintenance of the area set forth in Attachment "A" upon receipt of proper documentation showing actual costs of said maintenance. The maximum amount of reimbursement is contained in Addendum "A". The addendum amount may be revised annually by mutual agreement. Such revision will not change any other provisions of this agreement.
3. The MDT shall perform the following activities and duties:
 - a. Snow removal will be performed from Red Lodge south to mile post 53.1, the second switch back. Plowing will be done as required, normally between December 1 and April 15 of each year.
 - b. Create a parking area for vehicles for the purpose of loading and unloading snowmobiles near that portion of highway where plowing will cease. The

area is approximately 2.7 miles below upper Quad Creek.

4. The MDT shall follow established accounting procedures and shall permit Legislative or Department auditors access to its records for the purpose of determining if this grant is administered in accordance with grant terms and conditions.
5. In the maintenance and performance of this agreement, both parties shall act in accordance with appropriate and applicable state laws.
6. It is agreed upon by both parties that plowing of this portion of Highway US 212 for the purpose of snowmobile use is of lower priority than the standard maintenance responsibilities of the MDT.

Plowing will be conducted weekly if the following conditions permit:

- a. All other public safety concerns are met;
 - b. Other responsibilities of the MDT have been completed;
 - c. Crews are available; and
 - d. Weather conditions permit.
7. The MDT reserves the right to limit access to the route in the spring during the time when crews are preparing the road for opening to the general public. This period is generally the last week in April through Memorial Day.

This document contains the entire agreement between the parties.

The MDT designates Bruce Barrett to act as liaison for this agreement. FWP designates Ray Berntsen to act as liaison for this agreement. All contacts for the purpose of fulfilling this cooperative agreement between the MDT and the FWP shall be made through the designated liaisons or their delegates.

SIGNATURES

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:

Bruce Barrett
District Administrator

6/20/96
Date

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS:

Richard J. Ellis
Regional Supervisor

6/20/96
Date

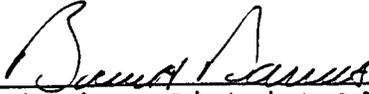
Timothy R. Beardon
Approved for legal content

June 19, 1996
Date

ADDENDUM A

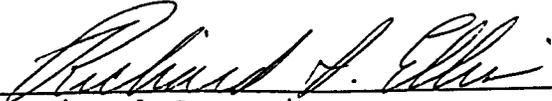
In accordance with provision 2 a, FWP will reimburse the MDT for actual work performed not to exceed \$5,000.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:

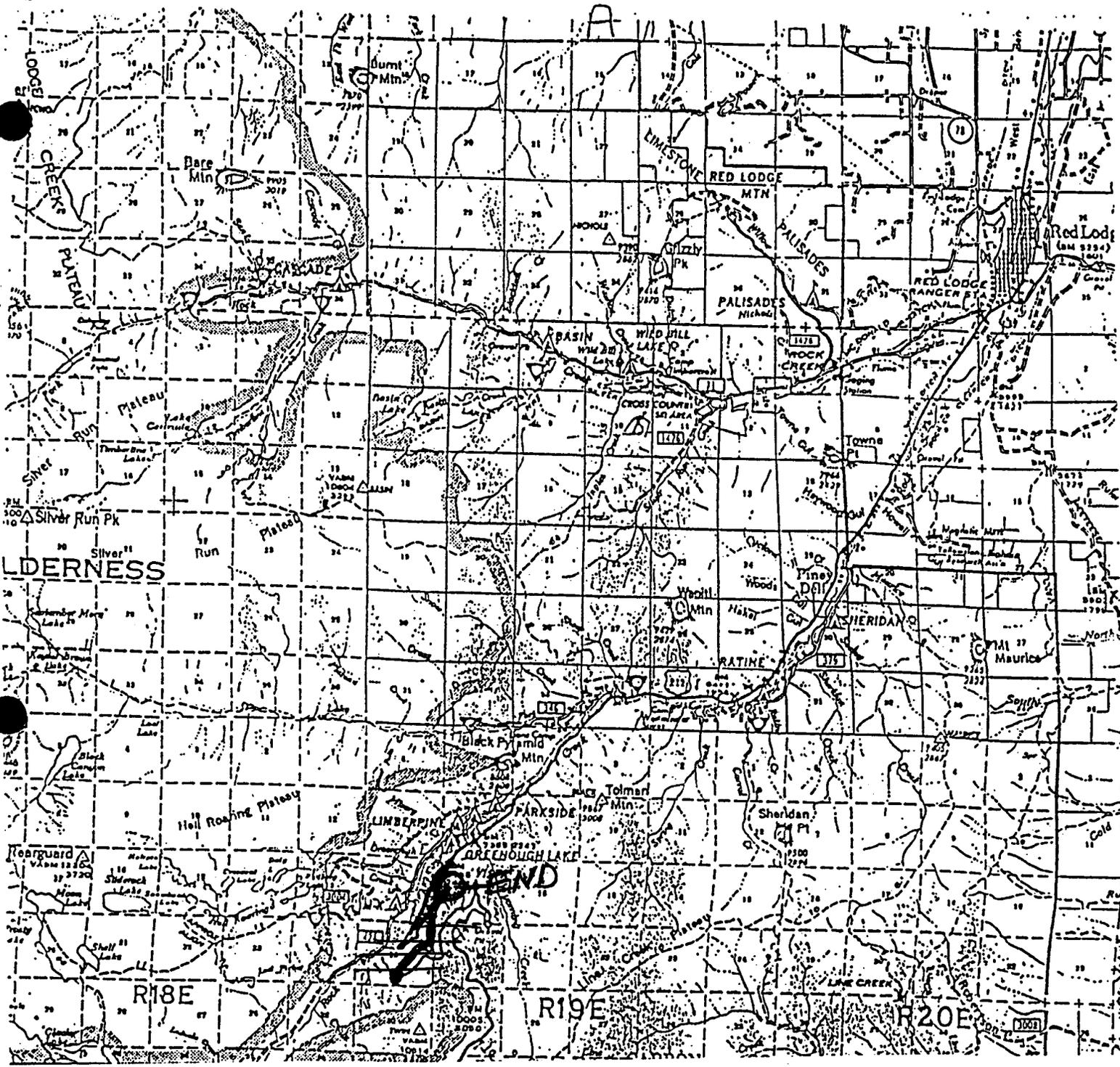

Billings District Administrator

6/20/96
Date

DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS:


Regional Supervisor

6/20/96
Date



LDERNESS

R18E

R19E

R20E

LINBERG

PARKSIDE

GREENOUGH LAKE

SHEND

SHERIDAN

RATINE

PINE DELL

RED LODGE

PALISADES

LIMESTONE

RED LODGE

MTN

PALISADES

NICHOLS

CROSS CREEK

WILD HILL

WINDMILL

LAW ENFORCEMENT PLAN

This plan integrates six enforcement strategies to generate compliance with public lands' travel restriction and state snowmobile regulations. Execution of these strategies will be a cooperative effort between enforcement agents from the U. S. Forest Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), and counties. These strategies are intended to meet each agency's enforcement mission and objectives for resource protection and public safety.

- # The initial approach for enforcing travel restrictions is the signing of trail heads. Prominently posted trail head information and maps will define travel restrictions on lands adjacent to established groomed trail systems. The trail grooming sponsor will, with the assistance from the land managing agency, post the travel restriction regulations.
- # Local motorized clubs will annually inform their membership of travel restrictions next to established and maintained trail systems. Club members will be encouraged to disseminate the information to visiting back country users.
- # To regularly ascertain the highest concentration of use; random trail patrols will occur. Trail safety will be encouraged through public contacts during patrols.
- # Enforcement efforts will target locations where there are motorized intrusions into restricted travel areas, such as tree plantations. Speed limit signing and patrols will be made.
- # Back country use will be monitored through coordination of interagency enforcement personnel. FWP and Forest Service staff will share information and combine efforts to conduct saturation enforcement activities at known high use locations and during high use periods. Normally these periods are weekends, holidays and after new snow occurrences.
- # FWP wardens will enforce the registration decal compliance law.

Trail patrols will be done on days when environmental conditions and/or budgets allow. Safety of agency personnel will also be a determining factor when patrols will occur. Rapidly changing environmental conditions and potential avalanche hazards must be considered before conducting patrols.

LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Statewide there were 20,384 snowmobiles registered for the 1995 to 1996 registration year.

FWP wardens will continue to make safety for the public a primary goal of the enforcement effort as it relates to snowmobiling. Numerous contacts by FWP wardens in the field with snowmobilers is in regards to safety issues. The safe operation of snowmobiles, proper lighting, DUI and alcohol issues, and reckless operation are major areas of emphasis. In addition, FWP wardens are equipped with portable radios and some rescue equipment along with first aid kits for back country emergencies.

Hunting, trapping and ice fishing are other areas of recreation where snowmobile use is common. Most of these activities are conducted in areas outside of the groomed trail systems, but FWP wardens still contact recreationists and check for registration, equipment and safe operation while checking for hunting, fishing and trapping regulations.

Other areas of concern by FWP wardens is the operation of snowmobiles in wilderness areas. The majority of snowmobilers operate in the areas that are open, but some venture into closed or wilderness areas. Safety is a major concern here because it seems that many of the slide areas are also in the remote locations.

Poker runs and races are events that attract numerous snowmobilers. These events themselves are usually not an enforcement problem, but the use of alcohol and the related operation in towns or on roadways by some before or after the event require additional FWP warden presence.

The primary objective of FWP wardens is the safe and enjoyable recreation of snowmobilers. This is accomplished through the enforcement and education efforts of FWP wardens in the field and through education classes and functions. Many of the snowmobile clubs are taking the lead in conducting these classes and FWP wardens will need to be available to assist them in there efforts to make snowmobiling a safe and enjoyable activity.