



# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 So. 19th  
Bozeman, MT 59718

December 6, 2000

TO: Governor's Office, Glenn Marx, Room 204, State Capitol, P.O.200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801  
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, P.O Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620  
Dept. Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Director's Office  
Parks Division  
Fisheries Division  
Wildlife Division  
Lands Section  
Design & Construction Bureau  
Legal Unit  
FWP Commissioners

MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, POB 201202 Helena, MT 59620-1202  
MT State Parks Association, P.O. Box 699, Billings, MT 59103  
MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., POB 201800, Helena, MT 59620  
James Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, POB 1184, Helena, MT 59624  
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, POB 595, Helena, MT 59624  
George Ochenski, POB 689, Helena, MT 59624  
Beaverhead County Commissioners, Courthouse, Dillon, MT 59725  
Jerry DiMarco, P.O. Box 1571, Bozeman, MT 59771  
Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624  
Wayne Hurst, P.O. Box 728, Libby, MT 59923  
Glen Hockett, 745 Doane Road, Bozeman, MT 59715

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the Dillon Beaverhead Sno-Riders Snowmobile Club. This is a proposal for groomed snowmobile trails route changes.

Questions and comments will be accepted from December 6, 2000 through 5 p.m., January 5, 2001. Written comments should be sent to Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 1400 S. 19th Avenue, Bozeman, MT 59718. You may send comments via e-mail to: [rheagney@montana.edu](mailto:rheagney@montana.edu).

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Flowers  
Regional Supervisor

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

## Pioneer Mountains Groomed Snowmobile Trail System -Route Changes-

Beaverhead Sno-Riders Snowmobile Club  
and  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

December 6, 2000

# INTRODUCTION

The Pioneer Mountains Groomed Snowmobile Trail System maintained by the Beaverhead Sno-Riders is located in the Grasshopper drainage of the West Pioneers Mountain range. This system encompasses both closed roadways during the winter season, summertime trails used by hikers, horseback riders, hunters, and a few miles of dedicated snow machine trails. The system totals about 210 miles of trails that are groomed on a regular or occasional basis depending on snow conditions, usage and funding availability.

Private landowners, who have signed agreements with the club, have requested that approximately three miles of groomed trail in two locations be rerouted. This Environmental Review has been prepared to assess the environmental impact of the proposed route changes. This review is required by the Montana Environmental Protection Act, the Montana Snowmobile Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) of 1993, and the Montana Snowmobile Grant Program administered by the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has maintained a trail grooming agreement with the Beaverhead Sno-riders Snowmobile Club for several years for the current trails now groomed and utilized by the snowmobiling public. The club previously completed a Beaverhead Sno-Riders Snowmobile Trail System Environmental Review in January 1997. This Environmental Assessment (EA) assessed the existing groomed trails and grooming program under the Montana Snowmobile Grant Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) of September 1993. A decision notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on the environment was signed January 14, 1997.

This review will use the standard environmental assessment checklist prepared by the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. This checklist is utilized to assure that all applicable requirements are addressed by this EA.

# MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

## PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed State Action** To change the route of approximately three miles of the Pioneer Mountains Groomed Snowmobile Trail System on private lands in two locations in Beaverhead County in Southwestern Montana.
2. **Agency Authority for the Proposed Action** State of Montana statutes that relate to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Chapter 2, Part 1 statutes relating to Recreation: MCA 23-2-101, and Part 6 statutes relating to snowmobiling: MCA 23-2-106 to 23-2-656. State of Montana statutes that relate to Montana Environmental Policy Act: MCA 75-1-101 to 75-1-1112.
3. **Name of Project** Pioneer Mountains Snowmobile Trail System Route Changes.
4. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)**  
Beaverhead Sno-riders, P.O. Box 867, Dillon, MT 59725
5. **If Applicable:**

**Estimated Construction/Commencement Date** The grooming of trails is initiated annually, starting December 1.

**Estimated Completion Date** Grooming is terminated March 31 each year.

**Current Status of Project Design (% complete)** Ongoing

6. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)**  
Beaverhead County – Erb and Circle S Ranches, Sections 9, 10, Township 6 South, Range 13 West, M.P.M.  
  
Beaverhead County – Hairpin Ranch, Section 36, Township 6 South, Range 14 West; and Section 1, Township 7 South, Range 14 West, M.P.M.

7. **Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

<u>Acres</u>	<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:	(d) Floodplain..... <u>0</u>
Residential..... <u>0</u>	
Industrial..... <u>0</u>	(e) Productive:
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation <u>0</u>	Irrigated cropland..... <u>0</u>
	Dry cropland..... <u>0</u>
	Forestry..... <u>0</u>
© Wetlands/Riparian Areas..... <u>0</u>	Rangeland..... <u>*8.18</u>
	Other..... <u>0</u>

\* Approximately 15,840 lineal feet of groomed 8-foot wide snowmobile trail.

8. **Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.**

See Figure 1 -- Proposed Route Changes; Figure 2 -- Proposed Circle S & Erb Ranches Reroute; and Figure 3 -- Proposed Hairpin Ranch Reroute.

9. **Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.**

The proposed action is to change the route of approximately three miles of the Pioneer Mountains Groomed Snowmobile Trail System on private lands in two locations in Beaverhead County in Southwestern Montana, as identified on the attached maps.

This environmental assessment addresses only the snowmobile trails located on private and state school trust lands on the Erb, Circle S, and Hairpin Ranches in Beaverhead County.

By rerouting approximately three miles of the 210-mile trail system in two locations (See maps in Figure 1 -- Proposed Route Changes; Figure 2 -- Proposed Circle S & Erb Ranches Reroute; and Figure 3 -- Proposed Hairpin Ranch Reroute), changes would resolve a number of problems that include snowmobile trespass on private property, avoidance of ungroomed steep sidehills and difficult creek crossings, groomer breakdowns. The Divide Creek crossing will be upstream from the current crossing. It will be above springs and wet meadows. There is a good ford here and little water in the creek, allowing for building a much better snow bridge. The Fox Creek tributary will be snow bridged at a much better ford also, which is not in a steep canyon.

This document is tiered to the Montana Snowmobile Grant Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), of which Alternative Three was selected which included the continuation of the current program with modifications. Any further modifications require the sponsor for each change prepare an environmental review document.

Multi-Party Agreements were signed in 1998, 1996, and 1999 respectively for the existing snowmobile trails across these properties. The agreements are affective until one party calls for the termination of the agreement or there is a change in the current situation. (See Appendix D -- Required Licenses, Leases, and Permits).

By completing the Snowmobile Grant Program PEIS in 1993, FWP complied with its statutory responsibility for the action of: Administration of state funds, as grants to grooming project sponsors for the maintenance of designated trail routes.

New snowmobile trails and trail route changes require additional site-specific analyses which are the responsibility of the sponsoring organizations.

Figure 1—Proposed Route Changes.

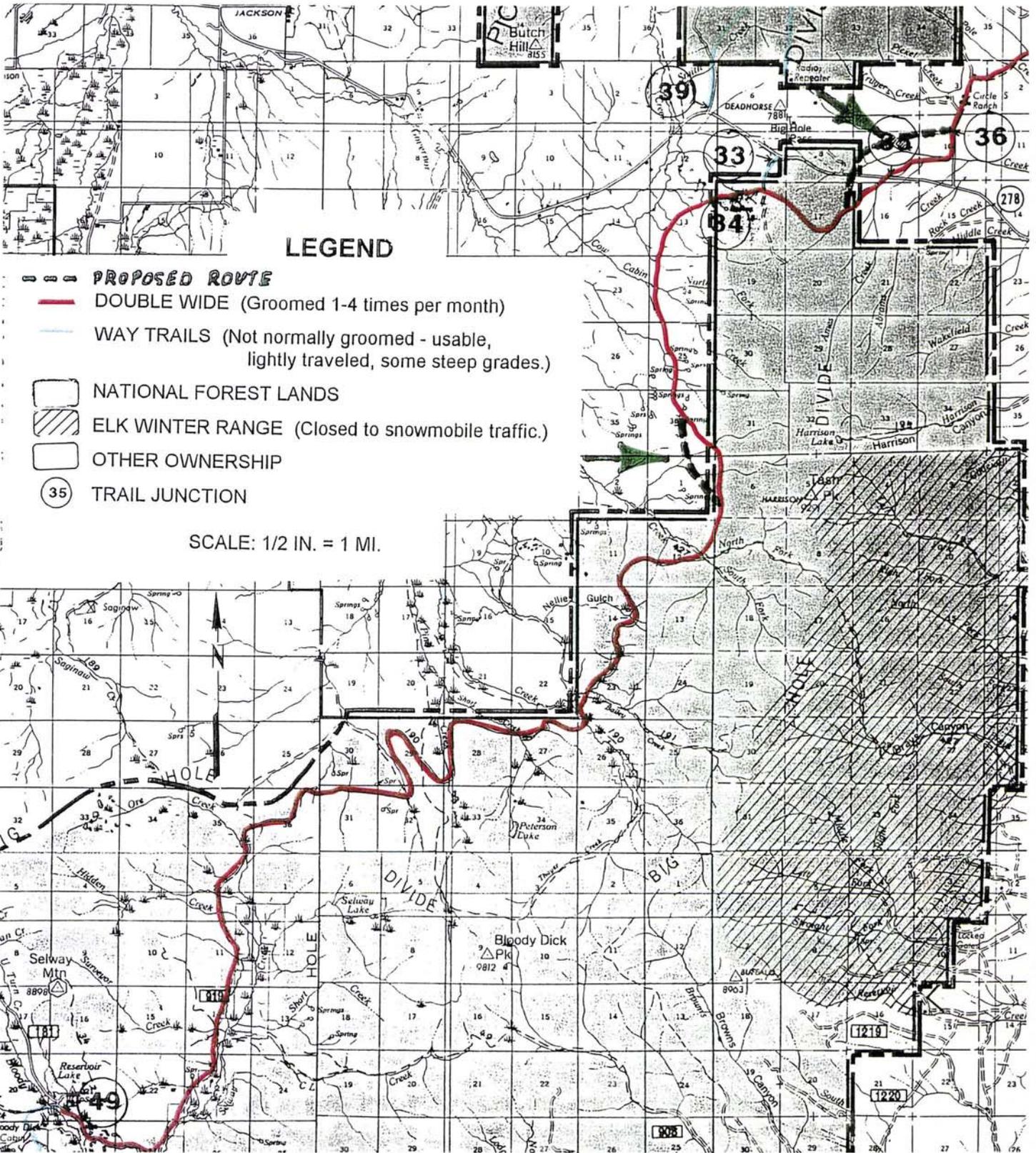


Figure 2 – Proposed Circle S & Erb Ranches Reroute.

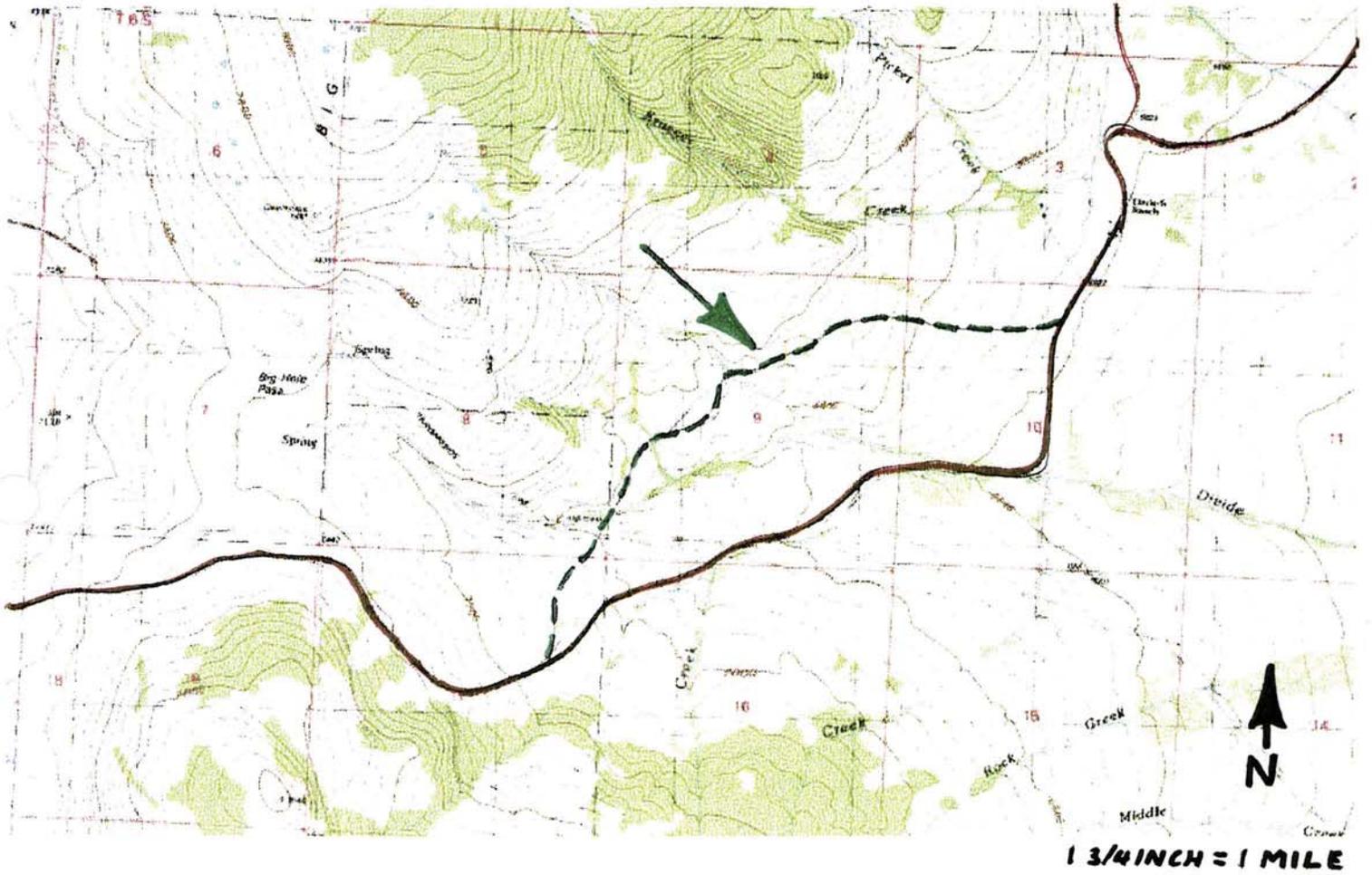
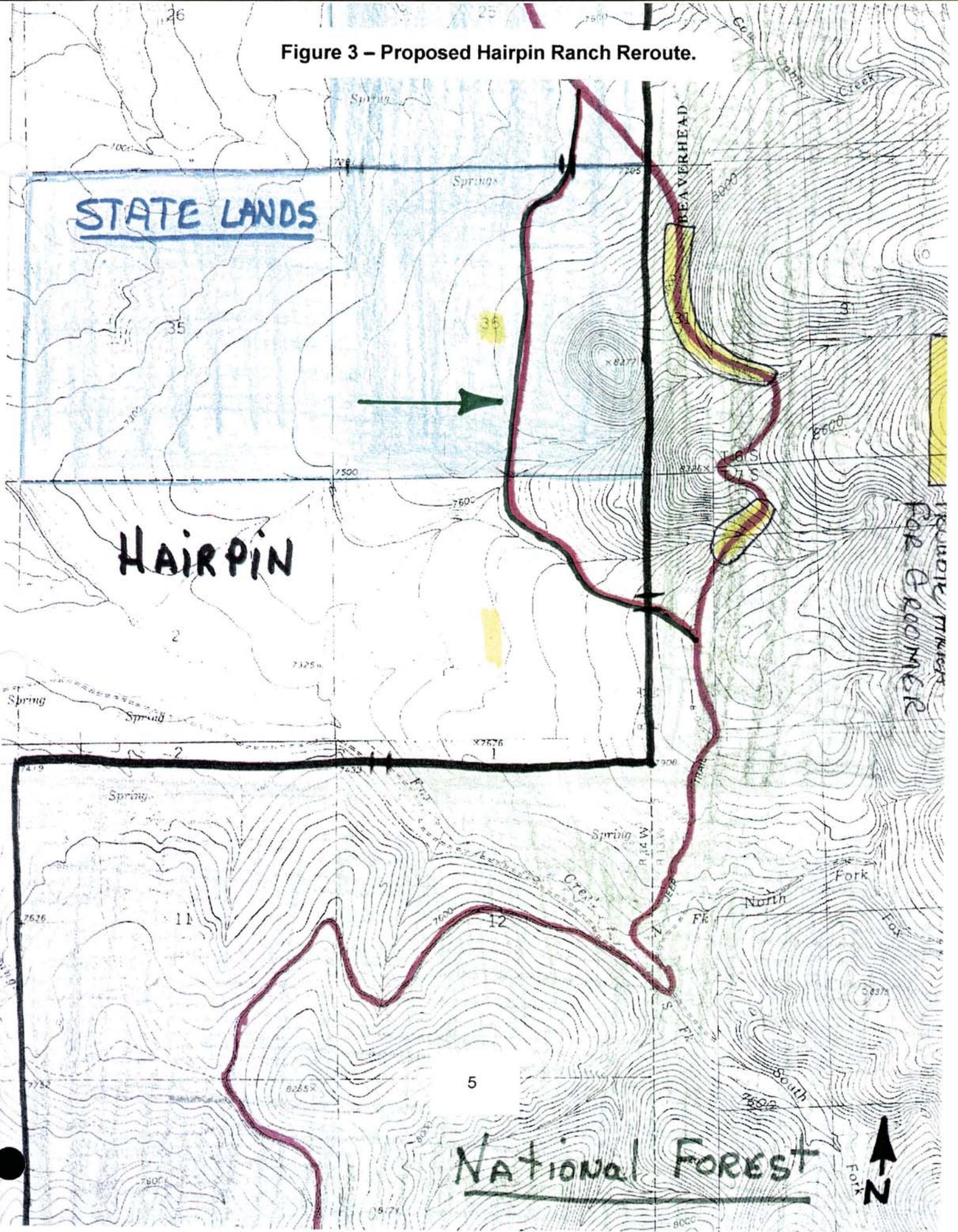


Figure 3 - Proposed Hairpin Ranch Reroute.



2 1/2 INCHES = 1 MILE

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Multi-Party Agreement	1993
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Annual Project Agreement	2000

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region Three 1400 S. 19th Bozeman, MT 59718	\$ 12,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Grant Management

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)  
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)  
Beaverhead National Forest, Dillon Ranger District (USFS)  
Montana Natural Resource Information System (NRIS)  
Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

## PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW -- Pioneer Mountains Trail Route Changes

### 1. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

#### A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
> a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
> c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other (list)						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
> a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))			X		NO	2.a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			X		NO	2.b.
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ♦For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		X				
f. Other (list)						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2.a.b. Snowmobile use currently exists in the area. Expectations for snowmobile use levels are to stay comparably the same to previous years, with the same net effect for emissions of air pollutant. Emissions of pollutants and odors will continue until such time when the snowmobile industry improves engine technology reducing emissions. Until such time, snowmobile owners can reduce emissions by keeping their machines tuned to the maker's specifications. The governor has asked that an effort be made to produce cleaner fuels (See Appendix C – Public Awareness Plan).

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>			Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>			
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?			X		YES	3.h.
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		X				
m. ♦For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		X				
n. Other: <u>Yes</u>						3 n.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3.h. There is the chance of a small amount of fuel spillage when filling gasoline tanks, however, the amount is very small and chances of reaching surface or ground water before evaporation are slim. It is anticipated that the net effect will remain unchanged to the current situation and use levels. Users should take care that fuel tanks are not filled near stream crossings or other waterways. Fueling almost always takes place in designated parking areas or at gas stations in the local community. Fueling in the backcountry is rarely done and usually only for long distance travel.

3 n. Changes to groomed trail locations will direct traffic away from wetlands and riparian zones.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u>	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		YES	4.e.
f. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4.e. The majority of the spread of weed seed is due to motorized vehicles during the summer and fall months. There is the chance that some weed seed may be brought onto the trail by vehicles in the winter, but the spread of seed by snowmobiles over deep snow is minimal. The Montana Snowmobile program assists with weed control by providing funding for county weed control efforts. In addition, snowmobilers are encouraged to wash their vehicles and trailers to rid them of the collection of weed seed over the summer months.

> 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u>	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		X				5.h.
i. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		X				
j. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

5.h. See Appendix I – Wildlife Clearance which includes a Wildlife Biologist report, and an April 28, 2000 U.S. Forest Service District Biologist memorandum.

## B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X		NO	6.a.
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6.a. Snowmobiling itself causes some increase in winter noise levels, mainly at the access points. However it will not have a significant impact on the human element. Noise levels decrease as the distance increases from access points. Cross-country skiers use the groomed trails in some locations of their own choosing.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ♦For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		X				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?		X				
> e. Define projected revenue sources		X				
> f. Define projected maintenance costs.		X				
g. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

> 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
>c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)		X				
d. ♦For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		X				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)		X				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

### SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	IMPACT <sup>o</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>o</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>o</sup>	None	Minor <sup>o</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)			X		NO	13.a.
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ♦For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		X				
g. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.			X			13.g.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

13.a. Six minor impacts are listed in the EA checklist, of these, two have mitigative measures that can be taken to reduce specified impacts. Considered together, all six minor impacts reflect no increase in the net effects from the current snowmobiling use in the area. The minor impacts recorded in this EA are individually limited in overall significance. The cumulative effects of these impacts do not create secondary adverse stress on existing resources.

13.g. See Appendix D.



**Pioneer Snowmobile Trail Route Changes**

**14. 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	YES See Appendix B
				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	YES
				N	Go to #3	
		2a	Did the land mgmnt agency prepare an env. Document?	Y	Go to #2b	YES
				N	Go to #3	
		2b	Was the decision memo supplied with application?	Y	Go to #4	YES
				N	Request Submittal	
	Internal environmental review document	3	Does the proposal include operation and maintenance projects?	Y	Go to #3b	N/A
				N	Go to #3a	

14. 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	YES
				N	Go to #4	
		3b	Has checklist EA been prepared	Y	Go to #3c	YES
				N	Request Submittal	
		3c	Does the checklist EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	YES
				N	Go to #3d	
		3d	Has an EA been prepared?	Y	Go to #3e	N/A
				N	Request EA	
		3e	Did the EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	N/A
				N	Go to #3f	
		3f	Has an EIS been prepared?	Y	Go to #3g	N/A
				N	Request EIS	
		3g	Did EIS satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	N/A
				N	Request Proposal	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		3h	Did applicant supply decision notice?	Y	Go to #4	YES
				N	Request Submittal	
	Licenses, Leases, permits, clearances, etc.	4	Has applicant supplied appropriate copies required by other agencies?	Y	Go to #6	YES See Appendix D
				N	Request Submittal	
Issue 2 Air Quality	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	6	Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #6a	YES See Figures 1, 2, 3
				N	Request Submittal	
		6a	Does proposal include expansion of existing or construction of new trails?	Y	Go to #6b	YES
				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?	Y	Go to #7	NO
				N	Go to #7	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
	Public awareness plan	7	Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?	Y	Go to #9	YES See Appendix C
				N	Request Submittal	
Issue 3 Topography, Soils, Hydrology	Map identifying proposed trail or facilities	9	Does the map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #9a	YES
				N	Request Submittal	
		9a	Are there areas of known insufficient snowcover along proposed trails?	Y	Go to #9b	NO
				N	Go to #9c	
		9b	Are areas of known insufficient snowcover identified on the maps?	Y	Go to #9c	N/A
				N	Request Submittal	
		9c	Are there areas characterized by summer wet meadows?	Y	Go to #9d	NO
				N	Go to #10	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		9d	Are areas of known wet meadows identified on the map?	Y	Go to #9e	N/A
				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/A
				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	YES
				N	Request Plan	
		10a	Does the plan identify specific measures for each area identified on the map?	Y	Go to #11	YES
				N	Request Specifics	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	 YES
	Seasonal Restrictions	11	Does the proposal include stream crossings?	Y	Go to #11a	YES
				N	Go to #12	
		11a	Does the proposed stream crossing utilize an existing structure?	Y	Go to #12	NO
				N	Go to #11b	
		11b	Are there viable alternatives to crossing the stream that would utilize existing structures?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #12	NO
				N	Go to #11c	
		11c	Is construction of temporary crossing structures viable in the proposed crossing location?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #12	YES See Appendix F
				N	Reject	
	Public Awareness Plan	12	Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?	Y	Go to #13	YES Appendix C
				N	Request Submittal	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
Issue 4 Wildlife	Map identifying proposed activities	13	Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #13a	YES
				N	Request Submittal	
		13a	Are there known ungulate wintering areas in the vicinity of proposed trails?	Y	Go to #13b	NO
				N	Go to #14	
		13b	Are there ungulate wintering areas identified on the map?	Y	Go to #13c	N/A
				N	Request Submittal	
		13c	Do proposed trails remain on the periphery of winter ranges?	Y	Go to #13f	N/A
				N	Go to #14	
		13d	Does proposed trail pass through wintering areas?	Y	Go to #13e	N/A
				N	Go to #13h	
		13e	Is there a viable alternate route available for use?	Y	Go to #13f	N/A
				N	Reject	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
	Avoidance	13f	Is the trail length along the periphery of the wintering area the least possible?	Y	Go to #13g	N/A
				N	Revise Plan	
		13g	Was vegetative screening used whenever possible?	Y	Go to #13h	N/A
				N	Revise to utilize veg screen	
		13h	Has signing plan been proposed to keep snowmobilers from disturbing wintering ungulates?	Y	Go to #14	N/A
				N	Request Plan	
	Seasonal Restrictions	14	Are there ungulate wintering areas in grizzly bear habitat?	Y	Go to #14a	NO
				N	Go to #15	
		14a	Are there proposed trails near these areas?	Y		N/A
				N		
	Idle Zones	15	Are there known bald eagle nests or grizzly hibernation areas?	Y	Go to #15a	NO
				N	Go to #15d	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		15a	Are trails proposed near any of these sites?	Y	Go to #15b	N/A
				N	Go to #15d	
		15b	Are viable alternatives identified that avoid these areas?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #15d	N/A
				N	Go to #15c	
		15c	Have idle zones been proposed for these areas?	Y	Go to #15d	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #15d	
		15d	Has the Natural Heritage wildlife list for the proposed region been submitted (NRIS - State library)?	Y	Go to #15e	YES See Appendix G
				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	YES See Appendix C
				N	Go to #16	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		15f	Has applicant submitted an avoidance or seasonal restriction plan or other appropriate mitigative measures for these areas?	Y	Go to #16	YES
				N	Request Submittal	
	Signing	16	Have signing strategies been proposed to identify idle zones?	Y	Go to #17	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #17	
	Public awareness plan	17	Has a public awareness plan been established?	Y	Go to #18	YES See Appendix C
				N	Stipulate - Go to #18	
	Clearance Oversight	18	Did applicant supply info and wildlife clearance with application?	Y	Go to #19	YES See Appendix I
				N	Request	
Issue 5 Vegetation	Maps identifying proposed trails and facilities	19	Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #19a	YES
				N	Request	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		19a	Is the proposed trail/facility located entirely on an existing road or trail?	Y	Go to #20	NO
				N	Go to #19b	
		19b	Have existing roads been used whenever possible?	Y	Go to #19c	YES
				N	Stipulate - Go to #19c	
		19c	Does all or a portion of trails occur on a vegetated road or trail?	Y	Go to #19e	NO
				N	Go to #19d	
		19d	Does all or a portion of proposed activity occur on undeveloped land?	Y	Go to #19e	YES
				N	Go to #20	
		19e	Has the Natural Heritage vegetation list for the proposed region been submitted (NRIS - State Library)?	Y	Go to #19f	YES See Appendix G
				N	Stipulate - Go to 19f	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		19f	Does the Natural Heritage list identify any rare or endangered plant species?	Y	Go to #19g	YES See Appendix G
				N	Go to #20	
		19g	Are any species on the list common in alpine tundra?	Y	Go to #19h	NO
				N	Go to #19j	
		19h	Do any proposed trails that are not on existing roads cross alpine tundra?	Y	Go to #19i	NO
				N	go to #19j	
		19i	Are there alternatives to crossing the alpine tundra?	Y	Go to #19j	N/A
				N	Reject	
		19j	Do any proposed activities involve areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	Y	Go to #19k	NO
				N	Go to #20	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	 N/A
		19k	Are there viable alternatives to avoid areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #20	N/A
				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/A
				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	NO
				N	Go to #21	
		20a	Has noxious weed plan been proposed in application?	Y	Go to #20b	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #20b	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		20b	Has monitoring plan been proposed to survey vegetation damage and spread of noxious weeds?	Y	Go to #21	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #21	
	Public Awareness	21	Has a public awareness strategy been proposed?	Y	Go to #22	YES Appendix C
				N	Stipulate - Go to #22	
Issue 6 Socio-economics	Planning	22	Does the application include organized events or promotional activities that would utilize funded trails?	Y	Go to #22a	NO
				N	Go to #23	
		22a	Does application include projected number of trail users generated by the events?	Y	Go to #22b	N/A
				N	Request - Go to #22b	
		22b	Does application include a public safety plan for the events?	Y	Go to #22c	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #22c	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		22c	Has applicant identified additional employment requirements during event?	Y	Go to #23	N/A
				N	Request - Go to #23	
Issue 7 Cultural	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	23	Has map identifying proposed trails or facilities been submitted?	Y	Go to #23a	YES See Figures 1, 2, 3'
				N	Request - Go to #23a	
		23a	Is entire proposed trail/facility located within an existing road or trail?	Y	Go to #24	NO
				N	Go to #23b	
		23b	Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on a historic road or trail?	Y	Go to #23d	NO
				N	Go to #23c	
		23c	Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on undeveloped land?	Y	Go to #23d	YES
				N	Go to #24	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		23d	Do viable alternative routes exist that could utilize existing roads or trails?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #24	NO
				N	Go to #23e	
	Site specific treatment	23e	Was SHPO consulted for determination of need for cultural resource investigation?	Y	Go to #23f	YES See Appendix C
				N	Stipulate - Go to #23f	
		23f	Was a cultural resource investigation conducted?	Y	Go to #23g	YES
				N	Inquire as to why	
		23g	Were significant sites found?	Y	Go to #23h	NO
				N	Go to #24	
		23h	Were adequate mitigations applied (i.e. reroute, etc.)?	Y	Go to #23i	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #23i	
	Public awareness plan	23i	Is a public awareness strategy proposed?	Y	Go to #24	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #24	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
Issue 8 Safety/Private Property	Maps identifying proposed trails and facilities	24	Does map clearly identify proposed activities	Y	Go to #24a	YES See Figures 1, 2, 3
				N	Request - Go to #24a	
		24a	Does application include proposal for signing strategy identifying locations for warning signs?	Y	Go to #24b	YES See Appendix C
				N	Stipulate - Go to #24b	
		24b	Have private properties along proposed trails been identified?	Y	Go to #24c	YES
				N	Request - Go to #24c	
	Avoidance	24c	Do viable alternatives exist that avoid private property?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25	NO
				N	Go to #24d	
	Signing and public awareness	24d	Has applicant included a strategy for signing and public awareness re: private property?	Y	Go to #25	YES See Appendix C
				N	Stipulate - Go to #25	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
Issue 9 Wilderness Areas	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	25	Do maps identify proposed trail locations?	Y	Go to #25a	YES
				N	Request - Go to #25a	
		25a	Are proposed trails located near wilderness boundary or designated non-motorized area?	Y	Go to #25b	NO
				N	Go to #25e	
	Trail location strategies	25b	Is there heavy vegetative cover or topographic features between proposed trail and wilderness boundary /designated non-motorized area?	Y	Go to #25e	N/A
				N	Go to #25c	
		25c	Do viable alternatives exist that would utilize vegetative screening between wilderness boundary or designated non-motorized area?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25e	N/A
				N	Go to #25d	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	 N/A
		25d	Do viable alternatives exist that would situate topographic features between proposed trail and wilderness area or designated non-motorized area?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25e	N/A
				N	Go to #25e	
		25e	Does proposal include trails on or adjacent to established cc ski trails?	Y	Go to #25f	NO
				N	Go to #26	
		25f	Are there viable alts. that would avoid placement of proposed trails on or adjacent to cc ski trails?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #26	N/A
				N	Go to #26	
	Signing	26	Has signing program been established that would warn snowmobilers of shared use areas, wilderness boundaries, intersections, etc?	Y	Go to #27	YES See Appendix C
				N	Stipulate - Go to #27	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
	Speed Limits	27	Does proposed trail go through residential areas of particular sensitivity?	Y	Go to #27a	NO
				N	Go to #28	
		27a	Has applicant established appropriate speed limits or hourly restrictions in areas of sensitivity?	Y	Go to #28	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #28	
		28	Has applicant proposed public awareness plan that includes consideration for residential and sensitive areas?	Y	Go to #29	YES See Appendix C
				N	Stipulate - Go to #29	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
Issue 10 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 and proposal for addressing such violations?	Y	Go to #30	YES See Appendix E
				N	Stipulate - Go to #30	
Issue 11 Changes in Aesthetic Values	Litter Remediation	30	Has applicant included a trash receptacle location, placement and management strategy?	Y	Go to #30a	YES See Appendix H
				N	Stipulate - Go to #30a	

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA --  
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
		30a	Has applicant proposed A pack-it-in pack-it-out type signing strategy?	Y	Go to #30b	YES See Appendix H
				N	Stipulate - Go to #30b	
	Trail Location Strategies	30b	Has applicant satisfied questions 25-29?	Y	Go to #31	YES
				N	Go to #25	
		31	Have all appropriate boxes in right-hand column been checked?	Y	Env. considerations approved	YES
				N	Take appropriate actions until all boxes are checked	

## **PART III. ALTERNATIVES**

- 1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:**

### **Alternative #1 -- NO CHANGE**

Under this alternative, trail grooming would continue to be done in the existing locations. The environmental, social and economic conditions that currently exist as a result of the trail locations would not change. The Circle S and Erb Ranch trail segment crosses Divide Creek nearer to spring-fed wet meadow areas. The snow bridge is not dependable and the potential for damage to the creek exists. The lack of snow in the vicinity of Montana Highway 278 will continue to make the vegetation, as well as groomer and snowmobile track cleats, vulnerable to damage. Sight distances along Highway 278 are limited. The Hairpin Ranch trail segment crosses steep sidehills and a tributary to Fox Creek on national forest lands where the potential for damage to the creek exists. The resulting damage to the groomer from grooming these sidehills, results in this segment not being groomed much of the time. Snowmobilers then bypass the trail onto private Hairpin Ranch property in order to access the remainder of the trail.

#### **Environmental consequences of this alternative:**

- Snowmobiles would continue to trespass on private property.
- The landowners will cancel trail maintenance agreements with the club.
- Trail hazards will continue to cause groomer and snowmobile breakdowns.
- The potential for environmental damage to wetlands and creeks will increase.

### **Alternative #2 -- REROUTE TRAIL THROUGH HAIRPIN RANCH ONLY**

Under this alternative only the worst two-mile trail section, which is on the Hairpin Ranch would be rerouted. This would solve the immediate problem of snowmobile trespass, groomer breakdowns, and encourage the landowner not to cancel the maintenance agreement and close the access to this portion of the trail.

#### **Environmental consequences of this alternative:**

- Snowmobiles would continue to be able to access the entire trail.
- A safe, designated route through the Hairpin Ranch will reduce snowmobiler trespass and equipment and environmental damage.
- The landowners will continue with trail maintenance agreements with the club.
- Trail hazards will continue to cause groomer and snowmobile breakdowns on the Circle S and Erb Ranch portions of the trail.
- The potential for environmental damage to wetlands and creeks will continue on the Circle S and Erb Ranch portions of the trail.

### **Alternative #3 -- REROUTE TRAIL THROUGH CIRCLE S, ERB, AND HAIRPIN RANCHES (Preferred Alternative)**

Under this alternative, the Beaverhead Sno-Riders would reroute approximately three miles of the 210-mile trail system in two locations based on several years of experience grooming the snowmobile trail, using the snowmobile trail, and talking with other users of the trail, as well as the private landowners along the trail. Based on this research, the Beaverhead Sno-Riders have identified two locations for trail route changes (See maps in Figure 1 -- Proposed Route Changes; Figure 2 -- Proposed Circle S & Erb Ranches Reroute; and Figure 3 -- Proposed Hairpin Ranch Reroute). This would solve the problem of snowmobile trespass to avoid ungroomed steep sidehills and difficult creek crossings, groomer breakdowns, and eliminate the threat of landowners to cancel their maintenance agreements and close the access to this portion of the trail. The Divide Creek crossing will be upstream from the current crossing. It will be above springs and wet meadows. There is a good ford here and little water in the creek, allowing for building a much better snow bridge. The Fox Creek tributary will be snow bridged at a much better ford also, which is not in a steep canyon.

#### **Environmental consequences of this alternative:**

- Snowmobiles would continue to be able to access the entire trail.
- A safe, designated route through the Hairpin Ranch will reduce snowmobiler trespass and equipment and environmental damage.
- The landowners will continue with trail maintenance agreements with the club.
- Trail hazards including steep sidehills, difficult creek crossings, lack of snow, and limited visibility along Mt Hwy 278 will be eliminated.
- The potential for environmental damage to wetlands and creeks will be greatly reduced.

#### **2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

If at the end of five years a trend shows a decrease in observed off-trail snowmobile use in these areas and a significant decrease in groomer breakdowns, the mitigation measures are assessed as effective, the grooming will continue on these new trail segments. Conversely, if at the end of five years a trend shows an increase in observed off-trail snowmobile use in these areas and no decrease in groomer breakdowns, these trail route changes as mitigation measures will be assessed as ineffective, and new routes as mitigative measures will be developed, implemented, and reviewed to determine their effectiveness.

#### **3. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? YES / NO. If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:**

Based on review criteria in this EA, an EIS is not required. It is not anticipated that this trail route change will generate any controversy. All issues were identified and

mitigated prior to selecting the proposed alternative, and have been addressed in this EA.

**4. Describe the level of public involvement for this project ?**

A legal notice was printed in the Dillon Tribune, Montana Standard and Helena Independent Record. It can also be viewed on the State of Montana Electronic Bulletin Board.

**5. Duration of comment period if any:**

The Duration of the public comment period on the Draft EA is from December 6, 2000 to January 5, 2001. Written comments can be made to Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), 1400 S. 19<sup>th</sup>, Bozeman, MT 59718. Phone Comments can be made to FWP at 994-6934 or e-mailed to: [rheagney@montana.edu](mailto:rheagney@montana.edu)

**6. Name, title, address and phone number of the Person(s) Responsible for Preparing the EA:**

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## **PART IV.      SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

**Appendix A - Trail Maintenance and Grooming Operations Plan**

**Appendix B - Groomed Trail Map**

**Appendix C - Public Awareness Plan**

**Appendix D - Required Licenses, Leases, and Permits**

**Appendix E - Law Enforcement Plan**

**Appendix F - Stream Crossings**

**Appendix G - Natural and Cultural Resources**

**Appendix H - Litter remediation**

**Appendix I - Wildlife clearance**

## Appendix A

# Trail Maintenance and Grooming Operations Plan

The Beaverhead Snow-Riders Snowmobile Club provides groomed trails in the areas listed below on the schedule below. The schedule is subject to change based on budget, weather, and equipment breakdowns.

Dates: December 1, 2000 to March 30, 2001

Trails: All Trails in Grasshopper area

Length: 210 miles

When & How Often Groomed: Every other day

Priority: on a rotation basis

### Assurances:

The Beaverhead Sno-Riders will remove, lessen, or sign known and potential hazards in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and affected landowners. Directional and informational signs will also be provided according to need and budget availability. The Beaverhead Sno-Riders will have a safety plan detailing education efforts, search and rescue, accident reporting and follow-up procedures developed prior to any trail grooming.

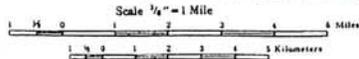
## **Appendix B**

### **Groomed Trail Map**

The following map shows the trails that the Beaverhead Sno-Riders groom (the wide red lines). The base for this map is a portion of the Interagency Visitor Map of Southwest Montana (1990, 1996), available from the U.S. Forest Service.

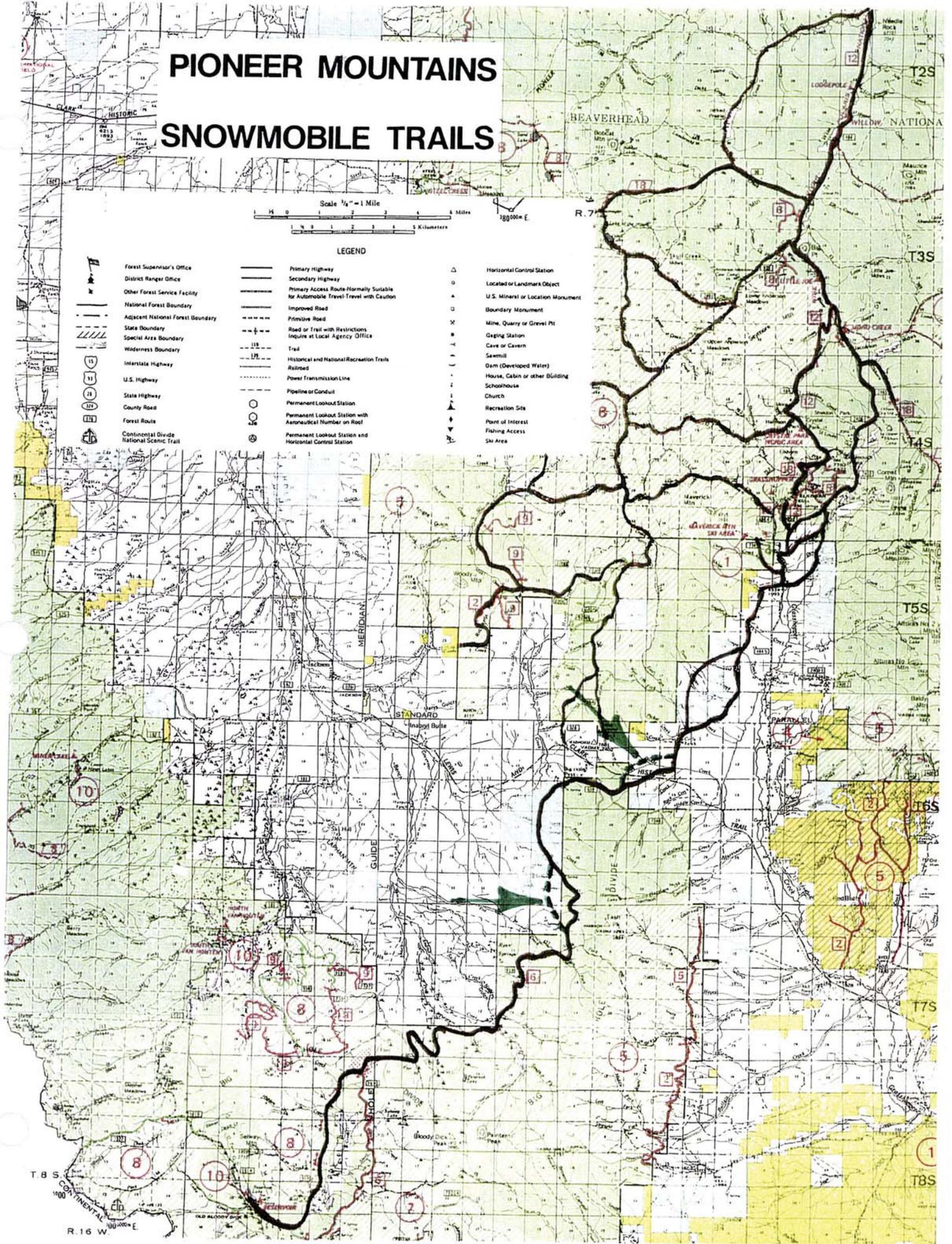
Trails groomed by the Beaverhead Sno-Riders are also shown on the Pioneer Mountains Snowmobile Trails map. It is produced by and available from the Club, USFS, FWP, Travel Montana, Department of Commerce and Gold West Country. Three different intermingled snowmobile clubs groom this trail system. This map provides public information on the entire trail system. It is scheduled to be revised and reprinted in 2001 and will include all approved trail route changes.

# PIONEER MOUNTAINS SNOWMOBILE TRAILS



## LEGEND

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forest Supervisor's Office</li> <li>District Ranger Office</li> <li>Other Forest Service Facility</li> <li>National Forest Boundary</li> <li>Adjacent National Forest Boundary</li> <li>State Boundary</li> <li>Special Area Boundary</li> <li>Wilderness Boundary</li> <li>Interstate Highway</li> <li>U.S. Highway</li> <li>State Highway</li> <li>County Road</li> <li>Forest Road</li> <li>Continental Divide</li> <li>National Scenic Trail</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary Highway</li> <li>Secondary Highway</li> <li>Primary Access Route Normally Suitable for Automobile Travel - Travel with Caution</li> <li>Improved Road</li> <li>Primitive Road</li> <li>Road or Trail with Restrictions Inquire at Local Agency Office</li> <li>Trail</li> <li>Historical and National Recreation Trails</li> <li>Railroad</li> <li>Power Transmission Line</li> <li>Pipeline or Conduit</li> <li>Permanent Lookout Station</li> <li>Permanent Lookout Station with Aeronautical Number on Roof</li> <li>Permanent Lookout Station and Horizontal Control Station</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horizontal Control Station</li> <li>Located or Landmark Object</li> <li>U.S. Mineral or Location Monument</li> <li>Boundary Monument</li> <li>Mine, Quarry or Gravel Pit</li> <li>Caving Station</li> <li>Cave or Cavern</li> <li>Sawmill</li> <li>Dam (Developed Water)</li> <li>House, Cabin or other Building</li> <li>Schoolhouse</li> <li>Church</li> <li>Recreation Site</li> <li>Point of Interest</li> <li>Fishing Access</li> <li>Ski Area</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|



T. 8 S  
R. 16 W

## Appendix C

# Public Awareness Plan

### **Environmental Review Criteria Issue / Item #:**

#### **Issue Two: Air Quality -- Item 7**

In order to avoid potential air degradation we will place signs at trail heads and parking areas which will warn snowmobilers about the negative impacts of cold starts, past due tune-ups and poor oil-gas mixtures have on the pristine mountain air. Every year as a member awareness service one meeting's "Good of The Order" topic shall be proper maintenance of two-stroke engines.

We further believe that industry reforms will contribute greatly to the cleaner environment and assign the club's safety officer to be our representative to the Industry and Legislative reform committee.

#### **Issue Three: Topography, Soils, and Hydrology -- Item 12**

Signs will be placed in sensitive locations as well as comments on the trail map. Informational signing "Please stay on Groomed Snowmobile Trail" in this area and "Please Use Bridge" signs in proper locations. Additionally appropriate safe play areas will be described on the map. Should unusual snow cover require routing changes these changes shall be made and signed during the duration of their use until snowcover returns to normal (See Appendix F – Stream Crossings).

Alternative trailheads will be advertised on an as needed basis in order to avoid conflicts.

#### **Issue Four: Wildlife -- Item 17**

Responsible snowmobiling requires that animals be left as undisturbed as possible during the wintering season when their resources and even their ultimate survival may require the least amount of energy expenditure as possible; snowmobilers will be encouraged to look from a distance at all wildlife. Interpretive signing in ungulate wintering areas will reflect this sediment as well as map markings and potentially future trail hosts. It is widely recognized that any ungulate-snowmobile confrontation which occurs on a groomed trail is usually very detrimental to the snowmobiler and is to be avoided whenever possible. A duplication of the harassment laws will also appear on the trail map. For more information see also Appendix I – Wildlife Clearance.

### **Issue Five: Vegetation -- Item 21**

Noxious weeds (as addressed in Appendix 11) need to be monitored in order to protect the rangeland for all species of animals. Snowmobilers may assist in this by washing snowmachines and trailers regularly throughout the season and especially before the season begins. As virtually all of our trails are on existing roadbeds with native vegetation it should take only a minimal amount of care to protect the resource.

Should an area of negative vegetative impact occur as a direct result of the grooming program; trail rerouting and detailing will occur at least until the area is refreshed.

### **Issue Seven: Cultural -- Item 23e**

In all cultural sites previously identified or newly found, snowmobilers will be admonished to take only pictures and memories with them and leave only tracks in the snow cover behind them. The removal of items (souvenirs) or desecration of any archaeological sites found will be strongly discouraged. Interpretive signing and trail rerouting will occur as needed to protect valuable resources.

### **Issue Eight: Safety/Private Property -- Item 24d**

### **Issue Nine: Wilderness Areas -- Items 26, 28**

Private property is identified on our trail maps and trailhead signing encouraging snowmobilers to respect private property rights will be included. In sensitive areas additional signing that identifies the trail as being on private property will also be included. This will include state school land right-of-way leases, private property and summer wetlands or areas of poor snowcover where a sled might cause damage to flora or create off season erosion. These signs will be posted at both ends of the trail section and maintained during normal grooming operations. Most of the trail system is on roadbeds that avoid private property, summer wetlands, and other sensitive areas. No trail route changes are in or near wilderness or proposed wilderness areas.

## Appendix D

### **Required Licenses, Leases, and Permits**

On the following pages are copies of the documents that allow grooming on public, county and private property. The Beaverhead Sno-Riders gives the land controller a copy of the agreement, a copy of the Montana Snowmobilers Responsibility Code and a copy of the Limited Liability Law enacted by the Montana State Legislature.

Beaverhead Sno-Riders  
P.O. Box 867  
Dillon, MT 59725

Index number 05

\*\*\* CLUB COPY \*\*\*

Date 1/1/96

I/WE do hereby allow the Beaverhead Sno-Riders to maintain a snowmobile trail across my/our property. This permission to groom does not violate any NEPA/MEPA or travel restrictions that I/we know of at present.

Description of the area to be groomed: Circle S Ranch Area  
T6S, R13W Sec. 2, 3, 9, 10; T5S R13W Sec. 25, 35, 36;  
T5S, R12W Sec. 7, 18, 19, 30

It is understood that the trail will open to all without bias as the Beaverhead Sno-Riders do not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, or marital status, physical or mental handicap, or national origin.

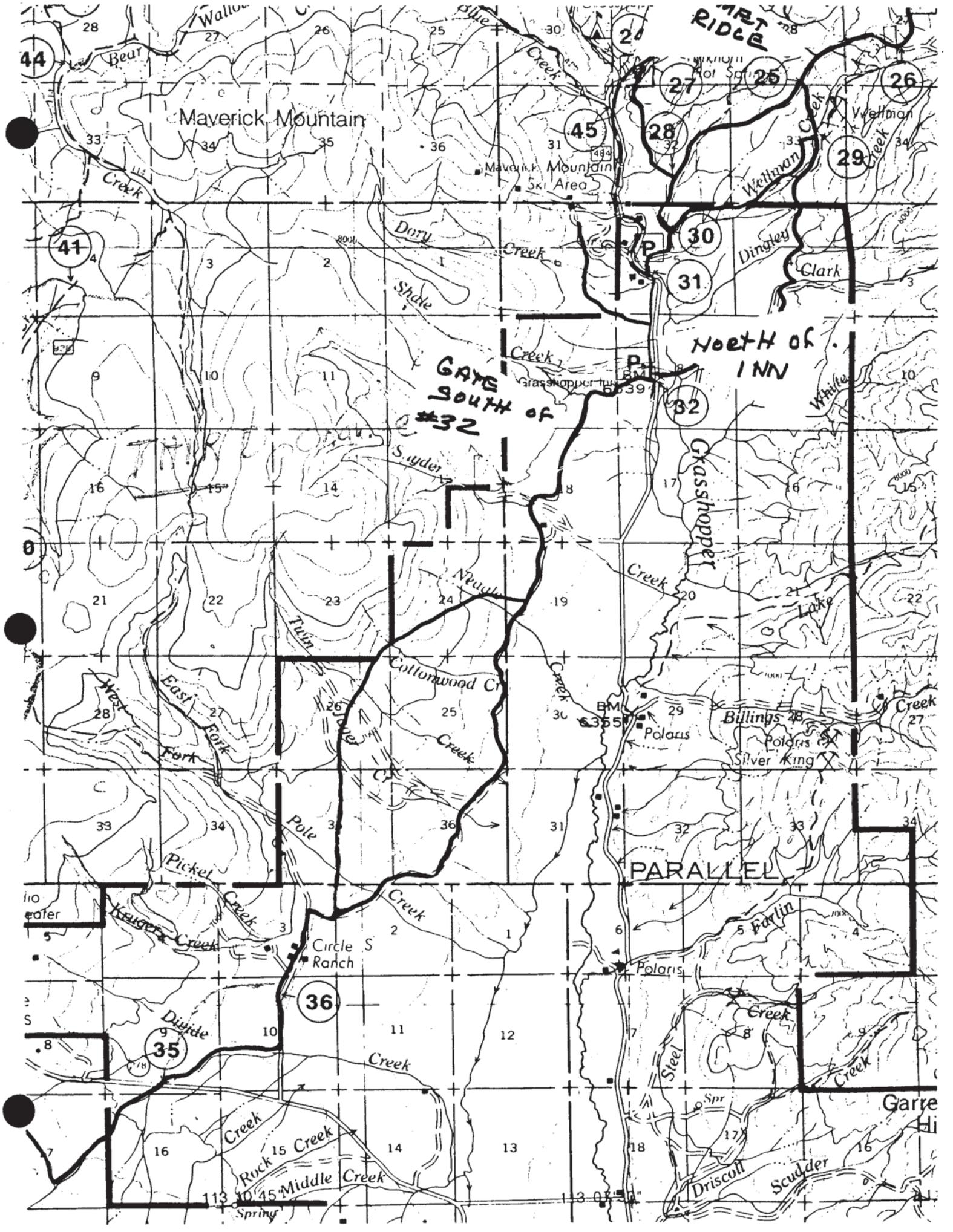
As a property owner you are protected by the Montana Code Annotated; section 70-16-302, and the 1987 Snowmobilers Responsibility and Liability Law (23-2-651 through 23-2-656 of the Montana Codes Annotated). Copies of these laws are located in the attachments.

This agreement will be in effect until such a time as the landowner cancels this agreement by written notification to the Beaverhead Sno-Riders at the above address.

  
Landowner

  
Beaverhead Sno-Riders

Attachments:  
Map of area to be groomed  
MCA 23-2-651 thru 23-2-656  
MCA 70-16-302



Beaverhead Sno-Riders  
P.O. Box 867  
Dillon, MT 59725

Index number \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\* CLUB COPY \*\*\***

Date DEC 31 1998

I/WE do hereby allow the Beaverhead Sno-Riders to maintain a snowmobile trail across my/our property.

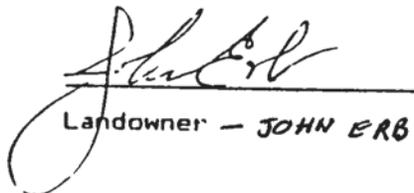
Description of the area to be groomed: \*

SECTION 9 T-6-S R-13-W

It is understood that the trail will open to all without bias as the Beaverhead Sno-Riders do not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, or marital status, physical or mental handicap, or national origin.

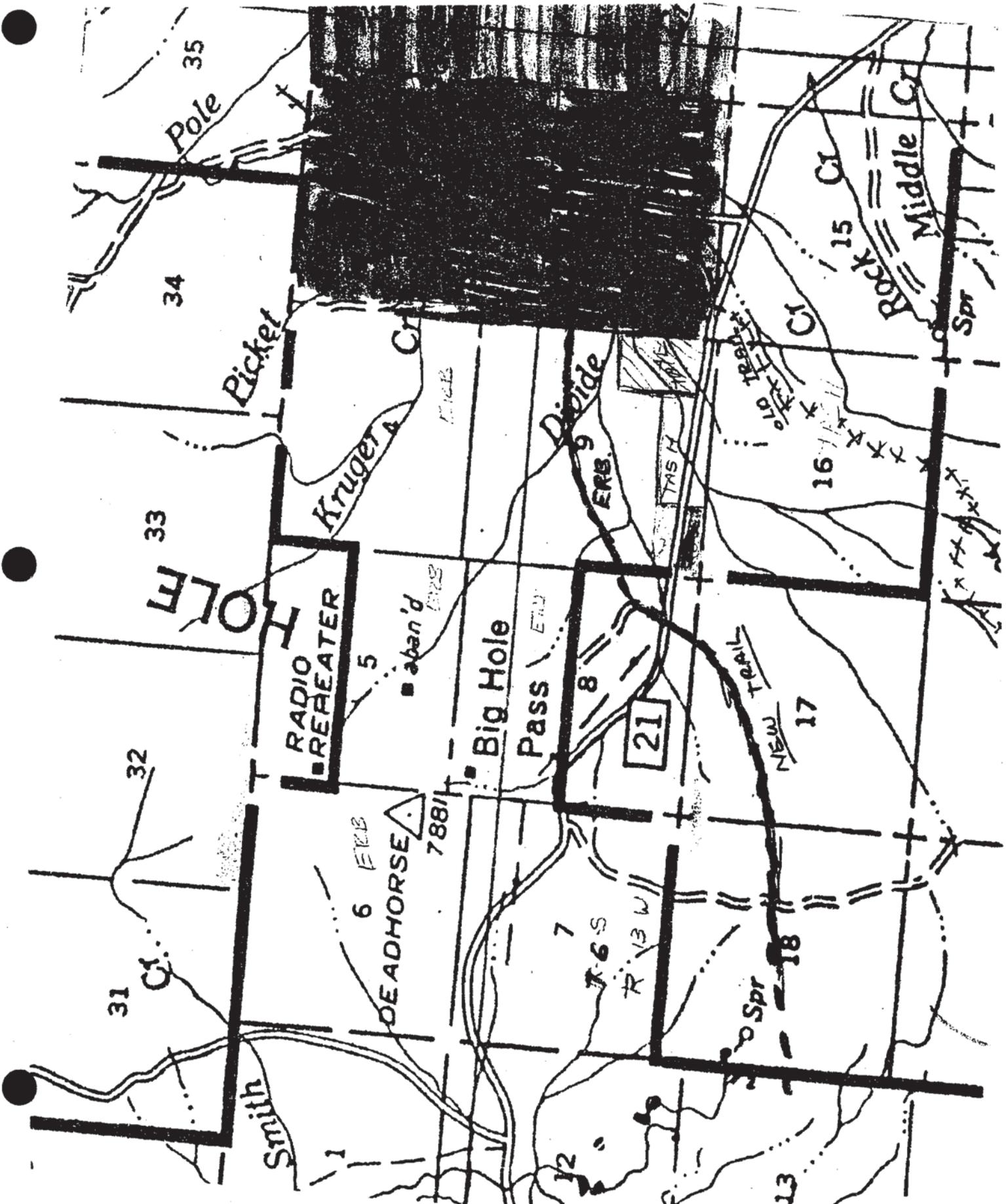
As a property owner you are protected by the Montana Code Annotated; section 70-16-302, and the 1987 Snowmobilers Responsibility and Liability Law (23-2-651 through 23-2-656 of the Montana Codes Annotated). Copies of these laws are located in the attachments.

This agreement will be in effect until such a time as the landowner cancels this agreement by written notification to the Beaverhead Sno-Riders at the above address.

  
Landowner - JOHN ERB

  
Beaverhead Sno-Riders

Attachments:  
Map of area to be groomed  
MCA 23-2-651 thru 23-2-656  
MCA 70-16-302



Beaverhead Sno-Riders  
PO Box 867  
Dillon, MT 59725

Index number \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 10/10/00

I/WE do hereby allow the Beaverhead Sno-Riders to maintain a snowmobile trail across my/our property. This permission to groom does not violate any NEPA/MEPA or travel restrictions that I/WE know of at present.

Description of the area to be groomed: HAIRPIN RANCH

T7S, R14W Section 1

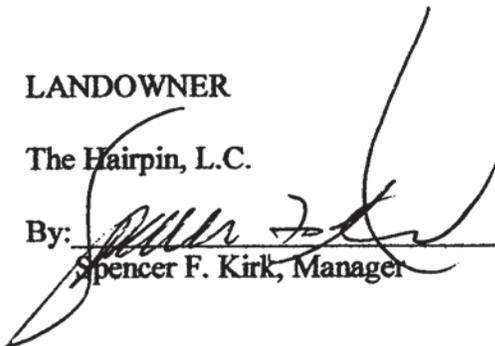
It is understood that the trail will open to all without bias as the Beaverhead Sno-Riders do not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age or marital status, physical or mental handicap or national origin.

As a property owner you are protected by the Montana Code Annotated: section 70-16-302 and the 1987 Snowmobile Responsibility and Liability Law (23-2-656 of the Montana Codes Annotated). Copies of these laws are located in the attachments.

This agreement will be in effect until such time as the landowner cancels this agreement by written notification to the Beaverhead Sno-Riders at the above address.

LANDOWNER

The Hairpin, L.C.

By: 

Spencer F. Kirk, Manager

BEAVERHEAD SNO-RIDERS

By: Russ Kipp 10/15/00

Title: Pres.

Russ Kipp

Attachments:

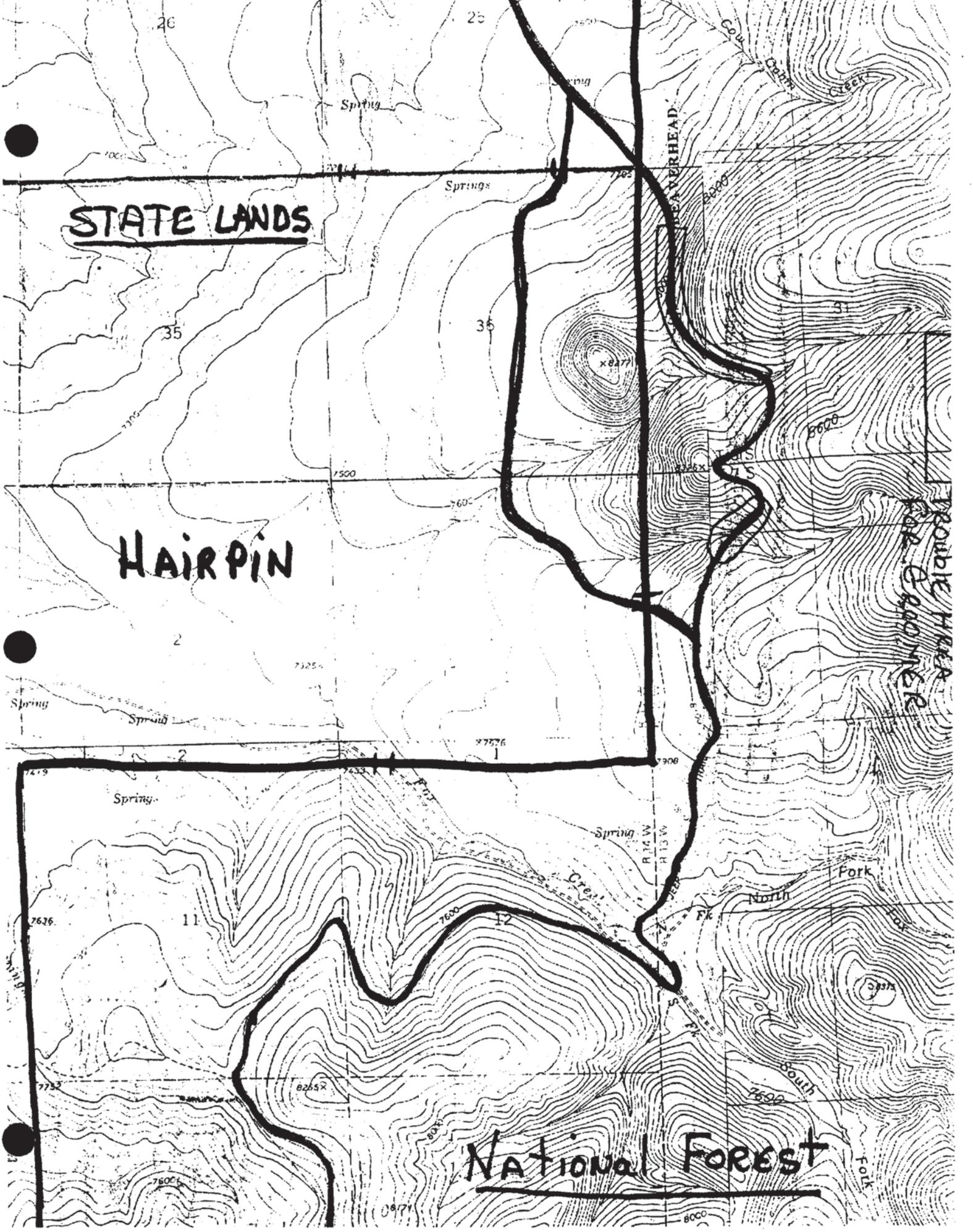
Map of area to be groomed  
MCA 23-2-651 thru 23-2-656  
MCA 70-16-302

STATE LANDS

HAIRPIN

National Forest

TROUBLE AREA FOR GROUNDWATER



Land Use License No. 8319  
Page 1

LAND USE LICENSE NO. 8319

The STATE OF MONTANA, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION, herein grants Beaverhead Sno-Riders, P.O. Box 867, Dillon, Montana, 59725, herein called Licensee, a LAND USE LICENSE to occupy and use lands administered by the DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION, subject to all of the terms and conditions hereof.

1. DESCRIPTION

A tract or strip of land described as follows:

All, Sections 35 & 36, T5S-R13W, Beaverhead County

All, Sections 13,14,23,24, & 25, T6S-R14W, Beaverhead County

2. FILING FEE

A fee of Twenty-five and No/100 Dollars (\$25.00) has been paid to the Licensor prior to issuance of this Land Use License.

3. RENTAL

Beginning upon acceptance of this License, and for the term of this License, the Licensee agrees to pay, in advance, an annual rate of \$100.00 per year due on 11/1.

4. DURATION

This License shall take effect upon signature of the Area Manager, Central Land Office and remain in full force and effect up to and including April 15, 2003, unless terminated in accordance with Section 13 of this license.

5. LICENSED ACTIVITY

The purpose of this Land Use License is to groom and use an established snowmobile trail.

6. RECLAMATION OF THE LAND

The Licensee shall take all reasonable precautions to prevent or minimize damage to natural (i.e., vegetation, soil, water, wildlife), and cultural resources within the areas of the Land Use License. Upon cancellation of this License by either party to this agreement, or upon final expiration of agreement, the Licensee shall reclaim the area to the specifications of the Licensor. ~~Such reclamation shall include, but not be limited~~ to the elimination of all trace of disturbances, compaction, and movement of construction equipment. Licensee shall be required to reseed all disturbed areas with native species of grasses, unless other arrangements are agreed upon between the Licensor and the Licensee in writing. When any action requires disturbance, all soil materials shall be salvaged, safeguarded from loss due to wind or water erosion or machinery activity, and shall be replaced on all disturbed areas.

Land Use License No. 8319  
Page 2

7. MONITORING SITES

The Licensee will maintain the area within the Land Use License in a neat and orderly manner and will allow no waste or debris to accumulate thereon.

8. WEATHER CONDITIONS

The Licensor reserves the right to restrict or preclude any surface activity during periods of adverse weather and other conditions which may contribute to accelerated erosion, fire hazard, disruption of seasonal wildlife, or any other condition which in the opinion of the Department may have an adverse effect on Trust land. Prior to commencing permitted activities, the Licensee will contact the appropriate Area Office.

9. NOXIOUS WEEDS

The Licensee shall be responsible for controlling any noxious weeds introduced by Licensee's activity on state-owned land. The Licensee's methods of control must be reviewed by the Department of State Lands Area Field Office that has jurisdiction for that locale. The Licensee shall comply with the Montana County Noxious Weed Management Act, Section 7-22-2101 et.seq., as follows:

The Licensee shall notify the local weed board that is responsible for that geographical area in which the project is located. If the Licensee disturbs vegetation for any reason, Licensee shall be required to revegetate the disturbed area. The Licensee shall submit to the local weed board a written plan specifying the methods to be used to accomplish revegetation. The plan must describe the time and method of seeding; fertilization, recommended plant species, use of weed-free seed, and the weed management procedures to be used. This plan is subject to approval by the local weed board, and therefore must be signed by the chairman of the board.

Failure to abide by these provisions may result in the cancellation of the License.

10. LIABILITIES

The Licensee agrees to assume responsibility for fires that may result from use of the authority given here and shall defend and save the Licensor and Licensor's Surface Lessee(s), Donald Lucas, Lease #'s 209 & 1337; Roger Peters, Lease #6518; and ~~Trans Mountain Land & Livestock~~, Lease #2879, harmless from all claims and lawsuits that may result from any and all damages, injury or death to persons and/or property that occur upon or about said land caused by or arising out of Licensee's use of the subject area hereunder. The Licensee further agrees that they will be responsible for any damages to the surface lessee's property or leasehold interests that may be caused when entering, crossing, or leaving state-owned subject land.

Land Use License No. 8319  
Page 3

11. LIMITATION OF AUTHORITY

Other than for the purposes specifically described in this agreement, the Licensee agrees that it does not, and shall not claim at any time any interests or estate of any kind or extent whatsoever in the premise by virtue of this License or their occupancy or use hereunder.

12. SPECIAL STIPULATIONS

\*Trail users must travel within the boundaries of the designated route.

13. TERMINATION OF LAND USE LICENSE

The Licensor reserves the right to terminate the permission hereby granted at any time by giving the Licensee no less than ten (10) days written notice of such termination, except that the Licensor may terminate the permission forthwith at any time, if Licensee fails to comply with, or abide by, each and all of the provisions hereof, or ceases to use the permission hereby granted.

Dated this 29 day of October, 2000

BY: Robert [Signature] Treasurer  
(Licensee/Authorized Agent)

BEAVERHEAD SNO-RIDERS  
P.O. Box 867  
Dillon, MT 59725

.....  
(Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Use Only)

APPROVAL OF LICENSE

BY: Mark [Signature]  
Area Manager, Central Land Office

November 2, 2000

Date Approved

Beaverhead Sno-Riders  
P.O. Box 867  
Dillon, MT 59725

Index number 10

\*\*\* CLUB COPY \*\*\*

November 25, 1995

Beaverhead County does hereby allow the Beaverhead Sno-Riders to maintain a snowmobile trail on the county property described below. This permission to groom does not violate any NEPA/MEPA or travel restrictions that are known of at this time. This is the same as has been groomed in the past as was authorized by resolution in about 1988.

Description of the area to be groomed:

In the right-of-way along the side the Wise River-Polaris road in the vicinity of the Grasshopper Inn and Dick McCracken's home in the Grasshopper Valley.

It is understood that the trail will open to all without bias as the Beaverhead Sno-Riders do not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, or marital status, physical or mental handicap, or national origin.

As a property owner you are protected by the Montana Code Annotated; section 70-16-302, and the 1987 Snowmobilers Responsibility and Liability Law (23-2-651 through 23-2-656 of the Montana Codes Annotated). Copies of these laws are located in the attachments.

This agreement will be in effect until such a time as the landowner cancels this agreement by written notification to the Beaverhead Sno-Riders at the above address.

Randall A. Tommenup  
County Commissioner

Les Heubling  
Beaverhead Sno-Riders

Attachments:  
Map of area to be groomed  
MCA 23-2-651 thru 23-2-656  
MCA 70-16-302

23-2-651. Purpose. The legislature recognizes that there are inherent risks in the sport of snowmobiling that are essentially impossible for a snowmobile area operator to eliminate but that should be known by a reasonable and prudent snowmobiler. The purpose of 23-2-651 through 23-2-656 is to define those areas of responsibility and the acts for which a snowmobile area operator is liable for death or injury to any person or property and those risks for which a snowmobiler expressly assumes or must be considered to have voluntarily assumed the risk of death or injury and for which there can be no recovery.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 440, L. 1987.

23-2-652. Definitions. As used in 23-2-651 through 23-2-656, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Snowmobile" means a vehicle defined in 23-2-601(10).  
 (2) "Snowmobile area" means those areas designated as snowmobile trails or areas open to the operation of snowmobiles.  
 (3) "Snowmobile area operators" means those persons responsible for the maintenance of snowmobile trails and open areas or those persons providing rental snowmobile equipment. Operators may include but are not limited to the United States forest service, the Montana department of fish, wildlife, and parks, the Montana snowmobile association, individual snowmobile clubs, landowners or their tenants, persons who offer snowmobile equipment for rent, and private trail grooming contractors.

(4) "Snowmobiler" means any person operating or riding a snowmobile.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 440, L. 1987.

23-2-653. Snowmobile area operators -- duties -- restriction on liability. (1) The person responsible for the maintenance of or operation of a snowmobile area shall mark all trail maintenance vehicles and furnish the vehicles with flashing or rotating lights that must be in operation whenever the vehicles are working or are in movement in the snowmobile area.

(2) A snowmobile area operator is liable for death or injury to a snowmobiler or other person or property only for an act or omission that constitutes gross negligence.

(3) Except as provided in this section, a snowmobile area operator has no duty to eliminate, alter, control, or lessen the risk inherent in the sport of snowmobiling. A snowmobile area operator who attempts to eliminate, alter, control, or lessen the risk inherent in the sport of snowmobiling is liable only for an act or omission that constitutes gross negligence.

History: En. Sec. 3, Ch. 440, L. 1987.

23-2-654. Snowmobiler's assumption of responsibility -- duties.

(1) A snowmobiler assumes the risk and all legal responsibility for death or injury to himself or other persons or property that results from the risks inherent in the sport of snowmobiling. The assumption of risk includes but is not limited to death or injury caused by the following: variations in terrain, surface or subsurface snow or ice conditions, cornices, avalanches, poor visibility, bare spots, rocks, trees, other forms of forest growth or debris, and plainly marked trail maintenance equipment.

(2) A snowmobiler is responsible for:

(a) knowing the range of his own ability to snowmobile any slope, trail, or area and for snowmobiling within the limits of his ability considering the conditions;  
 (b) maintaining control of his speed and course at all times while snowmobiling;

(c) heeding all posted warnings; and

(d) refraining from acting in a manner that may cause or contribute to the injury of anyone.

(3) The provisions of this section do not affect a products liability cause of action based upon the design or manufacture of snowmobile equipment or products or safety equipment used incidental to the operation of a snowmobile.

History: En. Sec. 4, Ch. 440, L. 1987.

23-2-655. Maintenance of rental snowmobiles. A person who engages in the business of renting snowmobiles to another shall:

(1) maintain rental snowmobiles in a safe condition; and  
 (2) offer each renter instructions in the mechanical operation of the rental snowmobile.

History: En. Sec. 5, Ch. 440, L. 1987.

23-2-656. Effect of comparative negligence. Notwithstanding any comparative negligence law in this state, a person is barred from recovery from a snowmobile area operator for death or injury to person or property resulting from any risk inherent in the sport of snowmobiling as described in 23-2-654.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 440, L. 1987.

70-16-302. Restriction on liability of landowner or his agent or tenant. (1) A person who makes recreational use of any property in the possession or under the control of another, with or without permission and without giving a valuable consideration therefor, does so without any assurance from the landowner, his agent, or his tenant that the property is safe for any purpose. The landowner, his agent, or his tenant owes the person no duty of care with respect to the condition of the property, except that the landowner, his agent or his tenant is liable to such person for any injury to person or property for an act or omission that constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

(2) The department of fish, wildlife and parks, when operating under an agreement with a landowner or tenant to provide recreational snowmobiling opportunities, including but limited to a snowmobile area, subject to the provisions of subsection (1), on the landowner's property and when not also acting as a snowmobile area operator on the property, does not extend any assurance that such property is safe for any purpose, and the department, the landowner, or the landowner's tenant may not be liable to any person for any injury to person or property resulting from any act or omission of the department unless such act or omission constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

## Appendix E

# Law Enforcement Plan

This plan is reprinted from the original Beaverhead Sno-Riders Snowmobile Trail System Environmental Review, January, 1997. It is still current and integrates six enforcement strategies to generate compliance with public lands travel restrictions 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 trailheads. Prominently posted trailhead 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 backcountry 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.
- Backcountry 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.

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.

## Appendix F

### **Stream Crossings**

Future maps when printed will identify stream crossings. Trails use existing bridges, culverts, and snow covered temporary-use log bridges when present. Snow bridges on these trail route changes will be used to cross the small running streams of upper Divide Creek on the Erb Ranch, and a tributary of Fox Creek on the Hairpin Ranch. Grooming of this portion of the trail is delayed until the snow depth is sufficient to allow crossing on snow without effect on stream flow.

## Appendix G

# Natural and Cultural Resources

### Natural Resources

The Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) library in Helena was contacted for information on plant and animal species of special concern in the vicinity of the proposed trail route changes. The response is included in the following pages along with a map of the area showing general element occurrences, and a table of species and features of special interest in the area.

The affected flora and fauna in the immediate area of the trail route changes are limited to five species. Of these species two are flora and three are fauna.

#### **Flora (Idaho Sedge, Lemhi Beardtongue):**

During the snowmobiling season the snowpack in the area is of sufficient depth (usually 2+ feet) to protect the species. None of the flora mentioned are listed as endangered or threatened, but are vulnerable due to the species rarity in Montana. All are easily protected by signing (Stay on Trail) during the winter season and by visual inspection during the summer maintenance season.

#### **Fauna (Lynx, Boreal Owl, Ferruginous Hawk):**

None of the three occurrences that are mentioned are listed as endangered or threatened, but are vulnerable due to the species rarity in Montana. All three species range over large areas, and the Boreal Owl is a rare seasonal migrant. There are no reported nesting areas near the trail. It is unlikely that the trail route changes will affect any of these species, including the Lynx (See also the discussion in Appendix I – Wildlife Clearance).

### Cultural Resources

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in Helena was contacted by phone (Joseph Vorhag, Compliance Officer; Terry Godin, Cultural Records Manager, 10/17/00) for information on historic and archaeological resources in the vicinity of the proposed trail route changes. The response indicated that no cultural sites have been previously identified or newly found. Nevertheless, the removal of items (souvenirs) or desecration of any archaeological sites found will be strongly discouraged. Interpretive signing and trail rerouting will occur as needed to protect valuable resources.



MONTANA  
**Natural Heritage  
Program**

*A program of the*  
NATURAL RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEM

P.O. Box 201800 • 1515 East Sixth Avenue • Helena, Montana 59620-1800 • Fax: 406-444-0581 • Phone: 406-444-3009

---

October 18, 2000

Dave Conklin  
965 Ranch Lane  
Kalispell, Montana 59901

Dear Dave,

I am writing in response to your request for information on plant species of special concern in the vicinity of T06S, R13-14W; and, T07S, R14W. Enclosed is a map of the area showing general element occurrence locations and a table, organized by township, range and section, listing the species and features of special concern encompassed by this map. A 1-mile buffer was used around the requested townships to provide a more inclusive list of species in the vicinity.

Attached is an explanation of the codes used in the table, as printed from our website. Also, high-quality photos of both species and habitat are available on the web for most of the plant species ([www.nris.state.gov/mtnhp](http://www.nris.state.gov/mtnhp)).

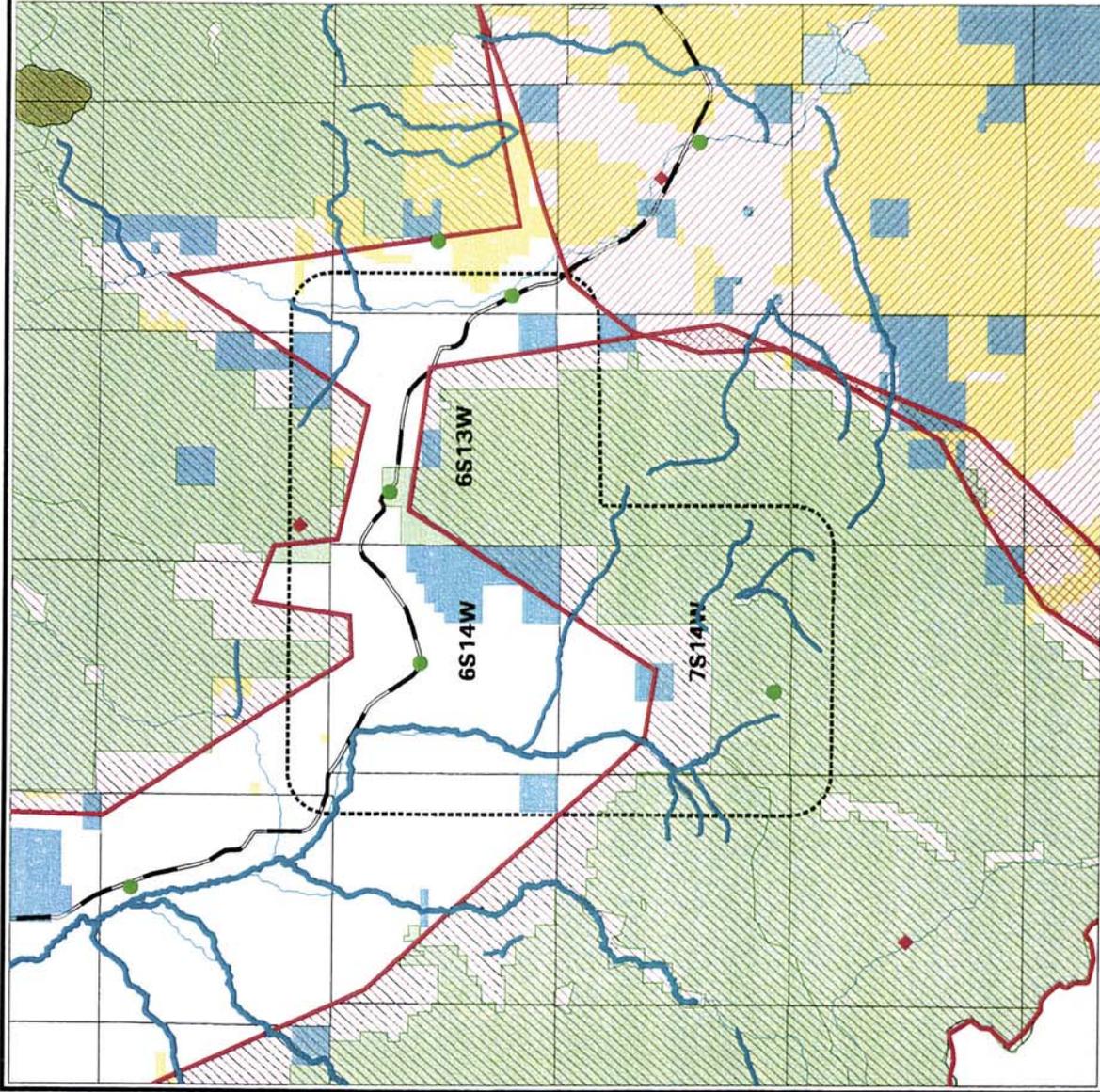
We have extensive information on file for all these sites and species. If there is a more specific area for which you would like additional data, give me a call and we'll provide you with further details.

I hope the enclosed information is helpful to you. Please feel free to contact me at (406)-444-2817 or via my e-mail address, below, should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Martin P. Miller, Data Assistant  
Montana Natural Heritage Program  
([martinm@state.mt.us](mailto:martinm@state.mt.us))

# Montana Species of Special Concern T06S, R13-14W; and, T07S, R14W Beaverhead Snow-Goers



**Species Data**

- Point Locations:
  - Animal: Red diamond
  - Plant: Green circle
  - Community: White square with black border
  - Other: White square with black cross
- Populations covering large areas:
  - Birds: Red hatched box
  - Mammals: Blue hatched box
  - Fluvial Occurrences (Fish, Birds, &/or Herps): Blue hatched box
  - Bull &/or Westslope Cutthroat Trout: Blue hatched box

**Managed Areas**

- Tribal Lands: Orange box
- BLM special areas: Yellow box
- Other BLM Lands: Light yellow box
- National Park Service: White box with black border
- US Fish & Wildlife Service: Light blue box
- National Forests: Green box
- Wilderness areas: Dark green box
- Research Natural Areas: Light green box
- State Trust Lands: Blue box
- MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks: White box with black border
- Private preserves & conservation easements: Red box

..... Search Area

- Species locations depicted outside the search area have imprecisely-known locations and may actually occur within the search area.
- Not all legend items may occur on map.
- This map displays management status, which may differ from ownership.
- Features shown on this map do not imply public access to any lands.
- Refer to accompanying documentation for full explanation of map features.



Request nhp5454  
October 18, 2000

18-Oct-00

## Montana Natural Heritage Program

Species of Special Concern: T06S, R13-14W; and, T07S, R14W  
Beaverhead Snow-Goers

EO #	Scientific Name	Common Name	GRANK	SRANK	ESA Status	USFS Status	BLM Status	Township/ Range	SECTION	SURVEY_SITE
005	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI	WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3		SENSITIVE	SPECIAL STATUS			
003	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI	WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3		SENSITIVE	SPECIAL STATUS			
001	LYNX CANADENSIS POP 1	LYNX (US LOWER 48 POPULATION)	G5T7Q	S2	LT	LISTED THREATENED	SPECIAL STATUS			
004	THYMALLUS ARCTICUS MONTANUS	MONTANA ARCTIC GRAYLING	G5T2Q	S1	C	SENSITIVE	SPECIAL STATUS			
034	AEGOLIUS FUNEREUS	BOREAL OWL	G5	S4			SPECIAL STATUS			
017	CAREX PARRYANA SSP IDAHOA	IDAHO SEDGE	G4T2	S2		SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE			
003	CRYPTANTHA HUMILIS	ROUND-HEADED CRYPTANTHA	G4T	SH			WATCH			
016	CAREX PARRYANA SSP IDAHOA	IDAHO SEDGE	G4T2	S2		SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE			
066	PENSTEMON LEMHIENSIS	LEMHI BEARDTONGUE	G3	S2		SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE			
042	PENSTEMON LEMHIENSIS	LEMHI BEARDTONGUE	G3	S2		SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE			
003	PEROGNATHUS PARVUS	GREAT BASIN POCKET MOUSE	G5	S2S4						
015	THELYPODIUM SAGITTATUM SSP SAGITTATUM	SLENDER THELYPODY	G4T?	S2						
006	MIMULUS PRIMULOIDES	PRIMROSE MONKEYFLOWER	G4	S2		SENSITIVE				
005	AEGOLIUS FUNEREUS	BOREAL OWL	G5	S4			SPECIAL STATUS			
019	BUTEO REGALIS	FERRUGINOUS HAWK	G4	S3B,SZN			SPECIAL STATUS			

## Appendix H

### **Litter Remediation**

Litter control is emphasized on trail maps with a **"Pack it In Pack it Out"** logo and a strategy to encourage snowmobilers to clean up after others who are not so courteous. Every snowmobiler is encouraged to carry a trash bag and use it properly so that trash related problems would be mitigated.

Appendix I

**Wildlife Clearance**

All new trail and trail expansion projects must be reviewed and cleared by the responsible Regional Wildlife Manager or area biologist. The Regional Parks Manager is responsible for providing the Regional Wildlife Manager with a wildlife clearance form And a map of the proposed project as soon as possible. To adequately evaluate the impacts of the proposal the Wildlife Manager may have a meeting with the club, other agencies, the Regional Parks Manager and other affected parties. The clearance or denial of the project should be made prior to the Snowmobile Advisory Committee meeting in late May of each year.

The local FWP biologist, Gary Hammond, has provided the following wildlife clearance. This document covers only the route changes requested by the Beaverhead Sno-Riders. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service District Wildlife Biologist, Ben Conard, who provided the comments on the following page, reviewed the project for wildlife impacts.

SNOWMOBILE GROOMING PROGRAM

**Regional Wildlife Clearance**

Snowmobile Trail System: Pioneer Mountains Trail System Re-routing

Snowmobile Club - Beaverhead Sno-Riders

Are there any wildlife concerns? Yes  No

If yes, which species?

Winter Range:

Travel Corridor:

Other:

Suggested Alternate Route:

Other mitigative measures are to be employed (such as signing; trail restrictions, etc.)

\_\_\_ Approved with above-mentioned mitigative measures.

\_\_\_ Not approved as submitted.

Gary Hammond      5/2/2000      Serald Walker      9/28/00  
Regional Wildlife Biologist      Date      Regional Parks Manager      Date



File Code: 2670/2634  
Route To: Elizabeth Brann

Date: April 28, 2000

Subject: B.E. for Sno-riders re-route

To: Dave Fallis, District Ranger

I met with Bob Sawyer of the Beaverhead Snow Riders this morning to discuss a 'wildlife clearance' for a proposed trail re-route. The snowmobile club wants to formalize the re-routing of an existing trail (#34) off of National Forest and on to state and private land near Cow Cabin Creek in the vicinity of Big Hole Divide. The 'wildlife clearance' form that Bob had is a state form that needs approval by the area Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks biologist. I directed Bob to Gary Hammond for signature on that form.

However, there was still the question of whether any Forest Service wildlife review would be needed. The proposal does involve National Forest Systems lands and a snowmobile trail system that is under review in lieu of the recent listing of the lynx as a threatened species. The Forest Service determined that this route is *not likely to adversely affect* the lynx. That determination will soon be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for concurrence. In my opinion, the proposed re-route would not have any additional effects not already considered and so does not warrant additional analysis on the part of the Forest Service.

Of course the re-route involves private and state land, so I am not providing clearance or endorsement of behalf of those affected parties. This letter simply documents that, as far as Forest Service wildlife review, the proposal was considered and I've identified no significant issues.

BEN CONARD,  
District Wildlife Biologist



Beaverhead Sno-Riders  
PO Box 867  
Dillon, MT 59725

Index number \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 10/10/00

I/WE do hereby allow the Beaverhead Sno-Riders to maintain a snowmobile trail across my/our property. This permission to groom does not violate any NEPA/MEPA or travel restrictions that I/WE know of at present.

Description of the area to be groomed: HAIRPIN RANCH

T7S, R14W Section 1

It is understood that the trail will open to all without bias as the Beaverhead Sno-Riders do not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age or marital status, physical or mental handicap or national origin.

As a property owner you are **protected by the Montana Code Annotated: section 70-16-302 and the 1987 Snowmobile Responsibility and Liability Law (23-2-656 of the Montana Codes Annotated)**. Copies of these laws are located in the attachments.

This agreement will be in effect until such time as the landowner cancels this agreement by written notification to the Beaverhead Sno-Riders at the above address.

LANDOWNER

The Hairpin, L.C.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Spencer F. Kirk, Manager

BEAVERHEAD SNO-RIDERS

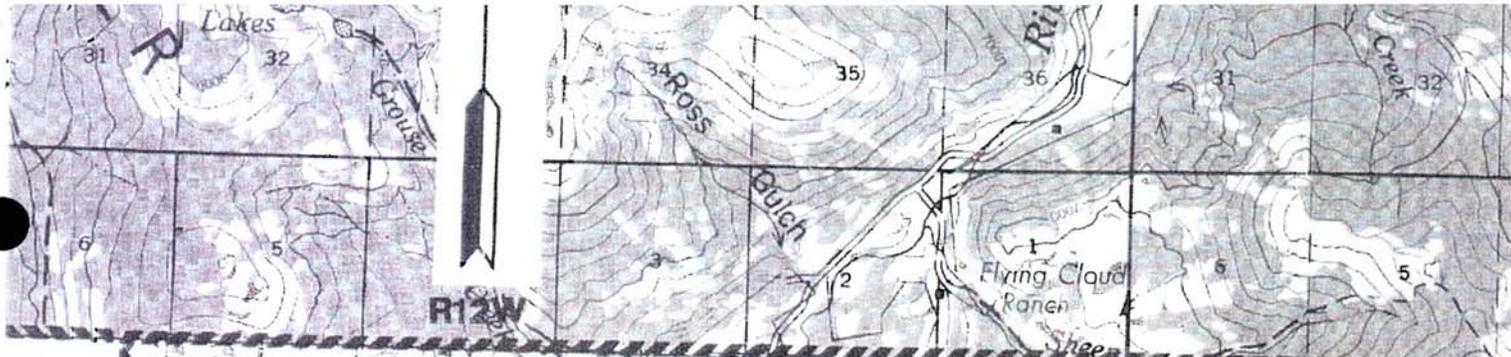
By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Russ Kipp

Attachments:

Map of area to be groomed  
MCA 23-2-651 thru 23-2-656  
MCA 70-16-302



**LEGEND**

-  DOUBLE WIDE (Groomed 1-4 times per month)
-  WAY TRAILS (Not normally groomed - usable, lightly traveled, some steep grades.)
-  NATIONAL FOREST LANDS
-  ELK WINTER RANGE (Closed to snowmobile traffic.)
-  OTHER OWNERSHIP
-  TRAIL JUNCTION

**NEW TRAIL**  
**HARPIN RANCH**

SCALE: 1/2 IN. = 1 MI.



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