



## Flathead National Forest

## Media Release

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### Winter Motorized Recreation Plan Implemented on Flathead National Forest

The Flathead National Forest is implementing the recently completed Winter Motorized Recreation Plan following the denial of six administrative appeals filed concerning the plan. The plan continues to allow 91% of the terrain that has been historically used for snowmobile use to remain open on the forest. Approximately 787,000 acres of the forest will be available for over-snow vehicles from December 1 through March 31. Of this area, 52,400 acres will offer an extended spring season within four areas of the forest:

- Groomed routes in Canyon Creek of the lower North Fork area open through April 15,
- 3,100 acres on the Swan Range east of Swan Lake at Sixmile open through April 30,
- 17, 500 acres south of Marias Pass in the Challenge/Skyland open through May 15, and
- 31,800 acres in the Lost Johnny area west of Hungry Horse Reservoir open through May 31.

**Four new over snow motor vehicle use maps are available that display areas open for winter motorized recreation on the forest. Maps are posted at trailheads, local forest service offices and on the forest's website, [www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead). The new maps replace the previous pink and white forest snowmobile maps released in January 2002.** Snowmobilers are urged to carefully review the new over snow motor vehicle use maps for the timing and location of areas open for winter motorized recreation activities on the Flathead National Forest. It is the individual operator's responsibility to know where they are on the forest and to abide by the latest motorized/non-motorized designations on the forest, regardless of the presence or absence of signs.

Six appeals on the Winter Motorized Recreation Plan were received. These appeals were filed by Flathead Snowmobile Association, Montanans for Multiple Use, Montana Snowmobile Association, Swan View Coalition/Winter Wildlands Alliance, Friends of the Wild Swan, and Bill Yunck. A regional appeal panel considered the appeals and determined that the Forest Supervisor

made a reasoned decision and complied with all laws, regulations, and policy. The six appeals were denied.

For more information regarding winter motorized recreation on the Flathead National Forest, please contact any local Forest Service Office or Forest Recreation Program Leader Bruce Johnson at 758-5204.

**Snowmobilers are reminded that the Great Bear, Bob Marshall and Mission Mountains Wilderness areas and the Jewel Basin Hiking Area are non-motorized areas. Snowmobile travel in these areas is not permitted.**

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