



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

March 10, 2008

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Snowmobile Monitoring Continues on Flathead National Forest

Managers of the Flathead National Forest believe that continued monitoring of snowmobile activity and educational efforts on the forest have helped to increase compliance regarding over-snow travel regulations.

In mid-February, six individuals were issued citations for riding snowmobiles in a closed area on the Swan Lake District of the forest. A Forest Service patrol in the Soup Creek area along the Swan Crest encountered the snowmobilers exiting the closed area. Prior to this incident, a total of 17 citations were issued to individuals snowmobiling in areas closed to motorized use this winter season.

Swan Lake District Ranger Steve Brady said, “We take enforcement of our snowmobile closures seriously and are actively patrolling the boundaries.” Brady added, “We hope that snowmobilers continue to respect public lands and the regulations that govern those lands.”

Ground and air patrols will be used to continue monitoring snowmobile use on the forest through the remainder of the snowmobile season.

Free maps of areas open and closed to snowmobiling on the Flathead National Forest are available at all forest offices, as well

as on the forest website, www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead. Information and maps are also posted at several parking areas and trail heads across the forest. Snow rangers and other forest personnel patrol the forest and are available to discuss over-snow opportunities with the public.

The Flathead National Forest offers almost 800,000 acres open to snowmobiling. Designated wilderness, such as the Bob Marshall, Great Bear and Mission Mountains Wildernesses, and the Jewel Basin Hiking Area are not open to snowmobiling, or any motorized use. These areas have been closed to motorized use, including snowmobiles, from their inception in the mid-1960s to the 1980s.

It is the rider's responsibility to know where the open snowmobile terrain is on the ground. Anyone with information regarding illegal snowmobile activity is encouraged to contact Forest Service law enforcement at 758-5277 or 387- 3839.

All winter recreationists are reminded to be prepared for backcountry conditions, and always stay current with the local weather conditions and avalanche danger. Updated avalanche danger and information are available at www.glacieravalanche.org.

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