



## Flathead National Forest

## Media Release

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### Winter Recreationists Reminded to Use Caution

Winter recreationists are reminded to use caution and good common sense when recreating on the Flathead National Forest. Early snow conditions include exposed rocks and stumps. Some reminders include:

- Plan and prepare for weather conditions,
- Make timely and site-specific weather and avalanche hazard evaluations,
- Have proper equipment and know how to use equipment, including appropriate map,
- Communicate where you plan to go and when you plan to return, and
- Drive with caution in winter driving conditions.

Snowmobilers are encouraged to obtain an over-snow-vehicle-use map from any Flathead National Forest Office to identify areas open to snowmobile travel and some information about groomed trails in the area. Maps are also available from the forest's website at [www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead).

The Canyon Creek Groomed Snowmobile System north of Columbia Falls will be groomed as conditions allow. The Flathead Snowmobile Association grooms this system in partnership with the Flathead National Forest. There is a detour in the Kimmerly Creek area on the Depuy Creek Connector Road, Forest Road #5271, due to a severe washout from earlier in the year. Riders should use caution in this area.

All snowmobiles traveling on public lands must be properly registered and include appropriate safety equipment. State law also requires that over-snow machines are prohibited on plowed roads or any road being used by other motor vehicles. Designated wilderness, such as the Bob Marshall, Great Bear and Mission Mountains Wildernesses, and the Jewel Basin Hiking Area are not open to snowmobiling.

Cross-country skiers may visit Round Meadows Trails northwest of Whitefish or Blacktail cross-country ski trails located off of the Blacktail Road west of Lakeside. Both the trails systems are on the Flathead National Forest. Please check with local Forest Service Offices for updated information regarding trail conditions and other opportunities for cross-country skiing.

Anyone recreating on the national forest during the winter is encouraged to attend an avalanche awareness class. Several free classes are sponsored by the Flathead National Forest and Glacier Country Avalanche Center. Please visit [www.glacieravalanche.org](http://www.glacieravalanche.org) for more information about these classes and additional avalanche information.

Enjoy your national forest this winter!

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