

Stanislaus National Forest Over-Snow Vehicle Use Designation

USDA Forest Service

Stanislaus National Forest

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Introduction

The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposal to designate over-snow vehicle (OSV) use on National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System (NFS) lands within the Stanislaus National Forest; and to identify snow trails for grooming within the Stanislaus National Forest. This proposal would be implemented on all of the Stanislaus National Forest as shown on the Proposed Action Map.

Background

The following summarizes how the Forest Service currently manages OSV use on the 900,106 acres of NFS lands within the Stanislaus National Forest:

- Approximately 58 miles of National Forest System groomed OSV trails exist (historically the Forest has groomed Highland Lakes Road 5.0 miles, an Alpine County road on the Calaveras Ranger District, these 5.0 miles are not included in this summary);
- The remainder of the Forest is open for cross country snowmobile use except Congressionally designated Wilderness and other special areas. During the development of the 1991 Stanislaus National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, areas designated as Near Natural were intended to be managed as semi-primitive non-motorized; however they were never formally closed to OSV use. As a result, some of these areas have been used historically by OSV riders either due to proximity to other areas of use or the type of experience they offer. In some cases user groups have worked through conflict and agreed to subsequent adjustments in locations available for OSV including Round Valley on the Calaveras Ranger District and the Crabtree area near Dodge Ridge on the Summit Ranger District. Thus, approximately 532,696 acres of NFS lands are open to off-trail, cross-country OSV use. Some areas still remain unresolved including the Pacific Valley and portions of the Eagle/Night Near Natural Areas;
- Approximately 367,410 acres of NFS lands are closed to OSV use;
- There are two designated crossings of the Pacific Crest Trail from the Bridgeport Winter Sports Area south of Sonora Pass on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

Travel Management Rule Subpart C

The Forest Service issued a final OSV rule governing OSV management (Subpart C of the Travel Management Rule, 36 CFR (part 212)) in the Federal Register on January 18, 2015, and this rule went into effect on February 27, 2015 (80 FR 4500, Jan. 28, 2015). Subpart C of the Travel Management Rule states,

“Over-snow vehicle use on National Forest System roads, on National Forest System trails, and in areas on National Forest System lands shall be designated by the Responsible Official on administrative units or Ranger Districts, or parts of administrative units or Ranger Districts, of the National Forest System where snowfall is adequate for that use to occur, and, if appropriate, shall be designated by class of vehicle and time of year, provided that the following uses are exempted from these decisions:

1. Limited administrative use by the Forest Service;
2. Use of any fire, military, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle for emergency purposes;
3. Authorized use of any combat or combat support vehicle for national defense purposes;
4. Law enforcement response to violations of law, including pursuit; and
5. Over-snow vehicle use that is specifically authorized under a written authorization issued under Federal law or regulations” (36 CFR §212.81(a)).

The designations resulting from this analysis would only apply to the use of OSVs. An OSV is defined in the Forest Service’s Travel Management Rule as “a motor vehicle that is designed for use over snow and that runs on a track or tracks and/or a ski or skis, while in use over snow” (36 CFR §212.1). OSV use designations made as a result of the analysis in this environmental impact statement would conform to subpart C of the Travel Management Rule. OSV use that is inconsistent with the OSV use designations made under this decision would be prohibited under 36 CFR §261.14.

These designations would not affect valid existing rights held by federally recognized tribes, counties, or private individuals, including treaty rights, other statutory rights, or private rights-of-way.

Snow Trail Grooming Program

For over 30 years, the Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, in cooperation with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (California State Parks) Off-highway Motor Vehicle Division has enhanced winter recreation, and more specifically, snowmobiling recreation by maintaining National Forest System trails (snow trails) by grooming snow for snowmobile use. Most groomed snow trails are co-located on underlying National Forest System roads and trails. Some grooming occurs on County roads and closed snow-covered highways, and some routes are designated cross-country over snow. Grooming activities are funded by the state off-highway vehicle trust fund.

In 2013, the Forest Service entered into a Settlement Agreement with Snowlands Network, et al., to “complete appropriate NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] analysis (es) to identify snow trails for grooming” on the Stanislaus National Forest and four other national forests in California. The Forest Service will comply with the terms of the Settlement Agreement for the Stanislaus National Forest by completing this analysis.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is twofold: first, to effectively manage OSV use on the Stanislaus National Forest by providing access, ensuring that OSV use occurs when there is adequate snow, promoting the safety of all users, enhancing public enjoyment, minimizing impacts to natural and cultural resources, and minimizing conflicts among the various uses.

Secondly, the project identifies OSV trails where the Forest Service or its contractors would conduct grooming for OSV use. Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement between the Forest Service and Snowlands Network, et al., the Forest Service is required to complete the appropriate NEPA analysis to identify snow trails for grooming on the Stanislaus National Forest.

There is a need to provide a manageable, designated OSV system of trails and areas within the Stanislaus National Forest that is consistent with and achieves the purposes of the Forest Service Travel Management Rule at 36 CFR part 212. This action responds to direction provided by the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule.

The existing system of available OSV trails and areas on the Stanislaus National Forest is the culmination of multiple agency decisions over recent decades. Public OSV use of the majority of this available system continues to be manageable and consistent with current travel management regulations. Exceptions have been identified, based on internal and public input and the criteria for designating roads, trails, and areas listed at 36 CFR §212.55. These include needs to provide improved access for OSV users and enact prohibitions required by the 1991 Stanislaus National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and other management direction. These exceptions represent additional needs for change, and in these cases, changes are proposed to meet the overall objectives. Adopting some changes would require an amendment to the Forest Plan as identified in the Proposed Action.

The Forest Service has identified areas where OSV use should be prohibited based on management direction in the Forest Plan. The proposed action will prohibit OSV use in these trails and areas to be consistent with the Forest Plan and implemented through Forest Orders.

The snow trail grooming analysis will address the need to provide a high-quality snowmobile trail system that is smooth and stable for the rider. Groomed trails are designed so that the novice rider can use them without difficulty.

In addition to identifying snow trails for grooming, the Settlement Agreement requires the Forest Service to:

1. Analyze ancillary activities such as the plowing of related parking lots and trailheads as part of the effects analysis;
2. Consider a range of alternative actions that would result in varying levels of snowmobile use; and,
3. Consider an alternative submitted by Plaintiffs and/or Interveners during the scoping period in the NEPA analysis so long as the alternative meets the purpose and need, and is feasible and within the scope of the NEPA analysis.

Proposed Action

During November 2014, a public meeting was held in Sonora, California and in March 2015, a series of public meetings were held in communities surrounding the Stanislaus National Forest including Sonora, Pinecrest, Hathaway Pines and Bear Valley. The meetings were held to inform members of the public about the Stanislaus National Forest Over-Snow Vehicle Use Designation Project and for the Forest to hear from the public about their interests and concerns. This information was used to help craft the proposed action.

The Stanislaus National Forest is proposing several actions as follows:

1. To designate OSV use on National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands within the Stanislaus National Forest where snowfall depth is adequate for that use to occur;
2. To identify 58 miles of designated OSV trails that would be groomed on the Stanislaus National Forest. Trail mileages are estimates only;
3. To work with Tuolumne and Alpine Counties for authority to groom Clark's Fork Road (9 miles) and Highland Lakes Road (5 miles) as part of this Proposed Action. These actions will require agreements between the Stanislaus National Forest, Tuolumne and Alpine Counties. (Historically the Forest has groomed Highland Lakes Road 5.0 miles, an Alpine County road, on the Calaveras Ranger District.) Mileage is not included in the Proposed Action;
4. To designate 98 miles of ungroomed OSV routes;
5. To designate 141,073 acres for open OSV riding;
6. To groom trails when there is 12-18 inches of snow, following California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division snow depth grooming standards;
7. To implement a Forest-wide snow depth requirement for OSV use that would provide for public safety and natural and cultural resource protection by allowing off-trail, cross-country OSV use in designated areas when there is a minimum of 12 inches of continuous and supportable snow covering the landscape at 5,000 feet in elevation and above. When the snow-depth requirement is not met, OSV use would be prohibited. Stanislaus Meadow on the Calaveras RD will require a minimum depth of 24 inches, measured at the meadow.
8. To amend the Forest Plan to allow winter OSV use in the Pacific Valley and portions of the Eagle Night Near Natural areas.¹ Historical OSV use was identified during public meetings.

Pacific Valley Near Natural Area. The area is located in the northeast part of the Forest on the Calaveras Ranger District. The area is characterized by mountain-peaks, glaciated valleys, scattered timber and considerable granite rock. It borders the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness. Pacific Valley Near Natural Area encompasses 8,578 acres.

Eagle/Night Near Natural Area. This area is located in the east central part of the Forest on the Summit Ranger District. The area is characterized by bare volcanic ridges and rock outcrops, scattered timber, and small sub-alpine meadows. It borders the Emigrant Wilderness. Portions of Eagle/Night Near Natural are proposed for over snow use, including Long Valley, Eagle Meadow and Sonora Pass. The portion of the area proposed for over snow vehicle use in the Eagle/Night Near Natural Area is 5,045 acres.

¹ Near Natural Management is described in the Forest Plan as: Emphasis is placed on providing a natural landscape in a non-motorized setting. Public motorized use is not normally allowed and no timber harvest is scheduled. Wildlife habitat management, watershed protection, dispersed, non-motorized recreation, livestock grazing and minerals uses are allowed. The area is characterized by a high quality visual setting where changes are rarely evident. Land altering practices are limited in scope and duration. It meets the Forest Service criteria for the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum class of Semi-primitive Non-motorized.

Near Natural Over-Snow Forest Plan Amendment

Practice	Existing S&G	Amendment	Area	acres
Forestwide S&Gs				
ROS Semi-primitive Non-motorized [10-B-2] (USDA 2010, p. 53)	Motorized use is normally prohibited, except for: 4N80Y; 5N02R (NMFPA).	Motorized use is normally prohibited, except for: 4N80Y; 5N02R (NMFPA); and, the Pacific Valley and Eagle/Night over-snow use areas.	Pacific Valley Eagle/Night	8,578 5,045
Closed Motor Vehicle Travel Management [10-G-1a] (USDA 2010, p. 53)	Closed to motorized use except for: 4N80Y; 5N02R (NMFPA).	Closed to motorized use except for: 4N80Y; 5N02R (NMFPA); and, the Pacific Valley and Eagle/Night over-snow use areas.		
Restricted Motor Vehicle Management [10-G-2, C1a] (USDA 2010, p. 58)	Prohibit motorized use and close motorized routes in non-motorized areas, except for: 4N80Y; 5N02R (NMFPA).	Prohibit motorized use and close motorized routes in non-motorized areas, except for: 4N80Y; 5N02R (NMFPA); and, the Pacific Valley and Eagle/Night over-snow use areas.		
Near Natural				
ROS Semi-primitive Non-motorized [10-B-2] (USDA 2010, p. 121)	Manage to the ROS Class of Semi-primitive Non-motorized.	Manage to the ROS Class of Semi-primitive Non-motorized, except for the Pacific Valley and Eagle/Night over-snow use areas.		
Closed Motor Vehicle Travel Management [10-G-1] (USDA 2010, p. 121)	Manage to Forestwide S&Gs for Closed Motor Vehicle Travel Management.	Manage to Forestwide S&Gs for Closed Motor Vehicle Travel Management, except for the Pacific Valley and Eagle/Night over-snow use areas.		
			total	13,623

NMFPA=Non-Motorized Forest Plan Amendment (USDA 2009. Motorized Travel Management Record of Decision. Stanislaus National Forest, Sonora, CA. November 2009)

USDA 2010. Forest Plan Direction. Forest Service, Stanislaus National Forest, Sonora, CA. April 2010

The proposed actions are summarized in table 1 and displayed on the Proposed Action Map.

Table 1. Summary comparing current OSV management with the proposed action for the management of OSV use on the Stanislaus National Forest

OSV Management	Current OSV Management	Proposed Action
NFS Lands within the Stanislaus National Forest	900,106 acres	
NFS Lands within the Stanislaus National Forest where OSV Use Designations would Apply	900,106 acres**	900,106 acres
Allowed OSV Use:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated Areas* Designated Trails 	532,696 acres** 58 miles (Groomed)	141,073 acres 156 miles (Groomed and Ungroomed)
Prohibited OSV Use:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas Trails 	367,410 acres 0	592,810 acres*** 0
Minimum Snow Depth for OSV Use on Designated Trails	N/A	12 inches
Minimum Snow Depth for Off-trail, Cross-country OSV Use	12	12 inches on designated areas and trails except for Stanislaus Meadow where 24 inches is required. This is measured at the meadow.

All area size and trail distance estimates are approximate.

*These areas include a connector to the non-Wilderness corridor through the Mokelumne Wilderness where OSV use is allowed.

** These acres include Near Natural, Developed Recreation sites, SIAs, WSRs, Winter Sports areas, Experimental Forest where no forest order was done to implement the Forest Plan prohibiting OSV use in these areas. These areas are prohibited for motorized use by wheeled vehicles under the Stanislaus Motorized Travel Management Decision, November 2009.

*** 221,896 acres of this prohibition are acres not suitable for snowmobiling, generally under 5,000 feet elevation or terrain too steep to travel. These acres are called "General Forest" in the Forest Plan. The remaining acres include implementing the Forest Plan direction for proposed and designated wilderness, Near Natural, Developed Recreation sites, SIAs, WSRs, and special use permits for winter sports areas.

Table 2. Summary comparing current groomed OSV trails with proposed action for the grooming of OSV trails on the Stanislaus National Forest

OSV Management	Current OSV Management	Proposed Action
Total Groomed Trail System*	58 Miles	58 Miles
Minimum Snow Depth for Snow Trail Grooming to Occur	Follow OHMVR snow depth standards of 12-18 inches.	Follow OHMVR snow depth standards of 12-18 inches.

*Included in the miles of trail over which OSV use is allowed in table 1.
Distance estimates are approximate.

Other types of motor vehicles that may operate over snow, but do not meet the definition of an OSV, are regulated under Subpart B of the Travel Management Rule. Routes and Areas for these types of vehicles were previously designated and published on a motor vehicle use map as the result of a separate environmental analysis and decision.

National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands where OSV use is designated would be shown on an OSV use map (OSVUM). This map would show the trails and areas where OSV use is allowed. It also would show trailheads and other ancillary recreational facilities.

Designation (Allowed) OSV Use Areas

The subpart C regulations define an area as, "a discrete, specifically delineated space that is smaller, and, except for OSV use, in most cases much smaller, than a Ranger District." The proposed action would designate areas on the Stanislaus National Forest where off-trail, cross-country OSV uses would be allowed when there are 12 or more inches of snow on the ground. These areas total approximately 141,073 acres. These areas are located in any part of the Stanislaus National Forest where OSVs are not otherwise prohibited.

OSV use would be designated on 156 miles of trails on the Stanislaus National Forest. All designated OSV use would be subject to snow-depth restrictions. All OSV use would be prohibited on the Stanislaus National Forest unless there is adequate snow depth that meets the following conditions:

Allowed OSV Use	Minimum Snow Depth
OSV use on designated NFS snow trails:	12 inches
Off-trail, cross-country OSV use:	12 inches unless otherwise designated 24 inches in Stanislaus Meadow

Current management requires a minimum snow depth of 12 inches for OSV use. The change of 24 inches of snow depth in Stanislaus Meadow represents a change from current management.

OSV Use on Groomed Trails

The proposed action would identify 58 miles of National Forest System trails that would be groomed for OSV use on the Stanislaus National Forest, see Proposed Action Map. This would represent no change from current management.

Table 3 compares the number of miles of snow trails that have historically been groomed and are currently managed with the miles of snow trails under the proposed action that are identified to be groomed. OSV use would be allowed on these trails when there are 12 inches or more of snow covering these trails. Snow trail grooming for OSV use would occur on all of these trails only when there are 12 to 18 inches of snow on the ground, following OHMVR grooming standards. Groomed trail systems would be located in the following locations:

Table 3. Comparison of miles of groomed trail under current management and proposed action (miles)

OSV Trail System	Current OSV Management	Proposed Action
<p>Lake Alpine: 17.3 miles (Lake Alpine Sno-Park to Highland Lakes Highland Lakes Road (8N01) from Highway 4 to Highland Lakes 5.0 miles*.</p> <p>*(Historically the Forest has groomed Highland Lakes Road 5.0 miles, an Alpine County road, on the Calaveras Ranger District. The County and the Forest are working on agreements to allow the Forest to continue to groom this road. This mileage is not included in the Proposed Action).</p>	17.3 Miles	17.3 Miles
<p>Spicer: 7N01 from the Spicer Reservoir Sno-Park to Spicer Reservoir (10.3); 7N01G(0.1 miles); 6N65Y (0.4 miles); 7N17 from 7N75 to Duck Creek (2.3 miles); 7N75 from 7N01 to Union Reservoir (1.8 miles).</p>	14.9 miles	14.9 miles
<p>Highway 108: Highway 108 from the Highway 108 Sno-Park to the Kennedy Meadows gate closure.</p>	18.5 miles	18.5 miles
<p>Highway 108: Eagle Meadow Road (5N01) from Highway 108 to Eagle Creek</p>	7.0	7.0 miles

The grooming season generally begins in mid-December and continues through March. Start and stop times vary per trail location and are dependent upon the presence and depth of snow. Snow trails are prioritized for grooming based on visitor use. Grooming historically occurs several times per week. As part of this proposal, the grooming frequency on priority trails would occur several times per week and after major storms, typically between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The approximate total hours of trail grooming that would occur at each site for an average season are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Summary of grooming operations on the Stanislaus National Forest*

Grooming Location	Annual Groomed Miles	Annual Snowcat Hours	Max Day Hours
<p>Lake Alpine: 15.5 miles (Lake Alpine Sno-Park to Highland Lakes).</p> <p>Highland Lakes Road (8N01) from Highway 4 to Highland Lakes 5.0 miles.</p> <p>Spicer: 7N01 from the Spicer Reservoir Sno-Park to 7N01G (9.5 miles); 7N01G (0.1 miles); 6N65Y (0.4 miles); 7N75 from 7N01 to 7N17 (0.7 miles); and, 7N17 from 7N01 to Duck Creek (2.3 miles).</p>	356	59	12
<p>Highway 108: Highway 108 from the Highway 108 Sno-Park to the Kennedy Meadows gate closure.</p> <p>Highway 108: Eagle Meadow Road (5N01) from Highway 108 to Eagle Creek.</p>	910	175	12

*Based on 2008/2009 or 2007/2008 winter season grooming data submitted to OHMVR Division. Maximum Day assumed to be 12 hours unless otherwise specified.

Trails would be groomed to a minimum width of 10 feet and typically up to 14 feet wide. Trails would be groomed up to 30 feet wide in the more heavily used areas such as near trailheads. Groomed trail width is determined by a variety of factors such as width of the underlying road bed, width of the grooming tractor, heavy two-way traffic on the trail, and trail corners. Where the terrain allows, main ingress and egress trails that connect to the trailhead would be groomed to 18 feet wide or greater to facilitate the added traffic.

Snowcats are operated at speeds in the range of three to seven miles per hour. The vehicle is operated with warning lights on at all times. The maximum hours of equipment operation is generally a 12-hour day during peak season (table 4).

Trail grooming would be conducted in accordance with the 1997 Snowmobile Trail Grooming Standards set by the California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division, as follows:

- Operators shall be trained and directed by a grooming coordinator.
- Identify hazards in advance of grooming, preferably in autumn before snow falls.
- Typical grooming season is from December to March. Operate the snow tractor on approved designated trails and designated cross-country routes only. Maintain a 10-foot vertical clearance from potential obstructions.
- Limit grooming speeds to between three to seven miles per hour.

- Groom trails to a minimum of 10 feet wide with a typical width of 10 to 14 feet.
- Maintain a 10 feet vertical clearance from potential obstructions (OHMVR EIR)

The California OHMVR Division's snowcat fleet is subject to emission regulation by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as off road equipment. The CARB sets an emission limit for the vehicle fleet as a whole rather than for individual pieces of equipment. Based on the total horsepower of the vehicle fleet, and the model and year of the individual equipment within the fleet, CARB determines how much horsepower per year must be repowered, retrofitted, or retired. The California OHMVR Division then determines what modifications to make to its fleet in order to satisfy CARB requirements.

Prohibited OSV Use

The proposed action would continue existing prohibitions on OSV use on 367,410 acres of NFS land. Existing OSV prohibitions in Wilderness areas and in areas designated in the Forest Plan as Recommended Wilderness, Semi-primitive Non-motorized, and Research Natural Areas that currently have the force of law, regulation or policy would continue to exist, except for areas covered by the Forest Plan Amendment.

Table 5. Areas where OSV use would be prohibited by the Proposed Action in comparison to current prohibitions (acres*)

OSV-Prohibited Area	Current Management	Proposed Action
Emigrant Wilderness	112,857	112,857
Carson-Iceberg Wilderness	80,328	80,328
Mokelumne Wilderness	22,712	22,712
Pacific Madrone Groves Botanical Special Interest Area (SIA)	0	7
Bourland Creek Trestle Cultural SIA	0	2
Bower Cave Geological SIA	0	1,747
Windeler Cave Geological SIA	0	11
Bull Run Geological SIA	0	370
Niagara Creek Geological SIA	0	586
Column of the Giants Geological SIA	0	110
Trumbull Peak Historic and Botanic SIA	0	303
Jawbone Falls Historic SIA	0	52
Sonora-Mono Toll Road Historic SIA	0	11
Big Trees-Carson Valley Road Historic SIA	3	3
Emigrant Road Historic SIA	10	10
General Forest (In areas not suitable for snowmobiling)	0	221,663
Near Natural Areas	100,654	87,031
Wild Segments of Wild and Scenic Rivers	25,579	25,579
Developed Recreation, Developed Non-Recreation and, Winter Sports Sites	0	8,136
Experimental Forest	0	1,708
Recommended Wilderness	23,107	23,107
Research Natural Areas	2,160	2,160

OSV-Prohibited Area	Current Management	Proposed Action
Special Use Permit	4,317	4,317
Total OSV-Prohibited Area	367,410	592,810

*Acreages are approximate.

Table 6. NFS trails where OSV use would be prohibited by the Proposed Action (miles on the Stanislaus National Forest)

OSV-Prohibited Trail/Trail System	Current Management	Proposed Action
Pacific Crest Trail	17.7	17.7
Total OSV-Prohibited Trail		17.7

Currently there are two designated crossing of the Pacific Crest Trail from the Bridgeport Winter Sports Area south of Sonora Pass on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

Trails listed are those accessible from areas where OSV use is otherwise allowed.

Design Features

The proposed action includes the following design features:

- All fuel and other chemicals shall be stored at the groomer storage facilities or outside riparian areas.
- All equipment maintenance and refueling shall occur at the storage facilities or outside the Riparian Conservation Area.
- Spill containment equipment shall be kept at the storage facilities.
- The Forest Service may temporarily prohibit OSV use of trails for other types of management activities such as contracted timber or vegetation management or other resource concerns.
- Use of wheeled vehicles is prohibited on groomed trails from December 15 through April 15.
- The Forest Service has an obligation to monitor the effects of OSV use as required by the Travel Management Rule. Furthermore, as an ongoing part of our State-funded OSV program, California State Parks provides funding to the Forest Service to monitor our trail systems for evidence of OSV trespass into closed areas, OSV use near or damage of sensitive plant and wildlife sites, and low snow areas subject to erosion concerns.

Other design features and monitoring measures would be added to this list throughout the scoping and analysis processes.

Management Sideboards

The Stanislaus National Forest Over-Snow Vehicle Use Designation is not intended to be a comprehensive, holistic winter recreation planning effort. This decision would apply only to the use of OSVs on the Stanislaus National Forest. No designation of non-motorized trails or areas would result. Non-motorized winter recreational opportunities and uses will be considered in the analysis in terms of the effects designating OSV trails and areas may have on non-motorized recreational opportunities.

Further, with respect to the grooming action, there are financial limitations on the miles and frequency of snow trail grooming within the forest’s snow trail grooming program. This is because the forest’s current snow trail grooming program is funded by California State Parks. These funds are not likely to substantially increase in future years.

The Stanislaus National Forest Over-Snow Vehicle Use Designation is an activity implementing the land management plan. It is not an activity authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (Pub. L. 108-148). Therefore, this activity is subject to pre-decisional administrative review consistent with the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 (Pub. L. 112-74) as implemented by subparts A and B of 36 CFR part 218.

Map of Proposed Forest System Action – 36 CFR 212 Subpart C Designations

