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**From:** USDA Forest Service <[forests@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:forests@public.govdelivery.com)>

**To:**

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2022 at 09:06:01 AM PST

**Subject:** Update for LTBMU Winter Recreation and Over Snow Vehicle Travel Management Project



Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

December 2022

## Winter Recreation and Over Snow Vehicle Travel Management Project

### Where are We Now?

The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is busy working on the Winter Recreation and Over Snow Vehicle (OSV) Travel Management Project (Winter Rec Project). We wanted to update you on where we are in the process and what the next steps are.

#### THE MAIN POINTS

- Public scoping for the Winter Rec Project occurred in 2019 and over 1,000 comment letters were received
- The Forest Service is analyzing the comments and developing alternatives to the proposed action
- The alternatives will be analyzed in the Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA)
- The Draft EA is planned for release next winter (estimated end of 2023) to the public for the 30-day comment period
- The public will have a chance to see all the alternatives and provide comments during that comment period
- **The existing OSV Use Map is still in effect, no changes to the OSV map have occurred**

#### SCOPING SUMMARY

The Winter Rec Project proposed action was shared with the public in 2019 and we received over 1,000 comment letters during the public scoping period. Based on the list of issues that were received during scoping the Forest Service will develop alternatives to the proposed action. Major issues that are driving the development of alternatives include:

- Snow depth requirements and Season of Use for Over Snow Vehicles
- High use conflict areas
- Impact to sensitive areas and species of concern
- Impact of OSV use on neighborhoods
- Access points for OSV use

- Separation of uses
- Suggestions for additional areas for grooming

For almost each letter received by the Forest Service supporting one approach, there were also comments supporting the alternate viewpoint to the issues raised. The Forest Service will be developing alternatives that include balanced approaches. Alternatives that globally favor one user group over another are not being considered. This will ensure that any alternative available for the Forest Supervisor to choose from could be truly implementable, provides high quality opportunities for all members of the public, and conserves natural resources.

Some of you may have heard that there was an additional comment period in October of 2022, but that is not the case. No additional comment periods have occurred since the scoping period in 2019.

## **PARKING LOTS**

Some issues were received that are outside of the scope of the Winter Rec Project. Many of the existing winter snow parking areas along the highways and roads are not on Forest Service land and are not within our jurisdiction. The Winter Rec project will not address these parking areas. There is, however, a comprehensive winter parking planning project in development with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency recreation working group to address winter parking in Lake Tahoe. The Winter Rec project does propose new parking areas on Forest Service lands, however, and some of the alternatives will include additional winter parking areas that the public has helped us identify.

## **MAP ERRORS**

An error on the original proposed action maps around the Glenbrook area led to some confusion about the proposal for OSV use in that area. Although the proposal was correct on the map, the wrong background color was used, which incorrectly implied that OSV use would extend up to the neighborhood. The corrected map was added to the website. In addition, this area received substantive comments during scoping that warrant the analysis of an alternative to the proposed action in that area.

## **WHERE CAN OSV's CURRENTLY OPERATE?**

There was some confusion about whether there has been a change to where OSVs can operate currently. No changes to the [existing OSV use map](#) have occurred yet. The areas open to OSV use will not change until after a decision has been signed by the Forest Supervisor for the Winter Rec Project.

## **COMMENTING ON THE PROJECT**

We are not currently in a public comment period. While the public can provide input on a project at any stage, it is important to note that only commenters who provide comments during an official comment period will have standing to object to the project during the pre-decisional administrative review period. If you have received this email then you are on the official mailing list for the project and you will be informed when the next official comment period will be (estimated end of 2023). For anyone else who did not receive this email and would like to be added to the mailing list, instructions can be found below.

## **NEXT STEPS**

We recognize that some time has passed since the last opportunity for public comment. The Forest Service plans to provide additional information to the public this winter about the comments that were received, as well as the general suite of alternatives that are being considered. Information on the format and time/date of this information will be distributed to this email list once it has been confirmed.

#### **ADDING NAMES TO THE MAILING LIST**

If you received this email directly, then you are already on the project mailing list. Anyone else wanting to be added to the list should go to the [project webpage](#), under the green heading GET CONNECTED on the right-hand side, click on *Subscribe to Email Updates*. You will then be asked to enter your email address.

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