

Fortine Ranger District
Fortine, MT 59918

2310

March 23, 1983

Tom Hay
Regional Supervisor
Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
P.O. Box 67
Kalispell, MT 59901

The Fortine Ranger District has greatly appreciated your organization's effort in snowgrooming the Grave Creek/Wigwam trail and a short segment of the Stahl/Clarence Creek trails. Grooming of these trails greatly enhances the winter recreation users enjoyment for local people, as well as those snowmobile enthusiasts in Libby, Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls areas. In an effort to maintain use of the trail, a counter and a trail visitor register were installed and checked weekly. This monitor program has shown that a weekly average of 23 snowmobilers have utilized the trail, so far this season. The majority of these came following the grooming of the trail in February.

The district has been in the process to enhance established snowmobile use on the trail. This past year the district completed graveling of the Birch Creek Recreation site and snowmobile trailhead. In addition, we installed a pit toilet and a trail registration box at the site. This coming season we are planning to complete an area recreation information map/bulletin board. This map (approximately scale of 2"/mile) and bulletin board will assist the winter recreation users to obtain approximate location and distances between various points, plus timely notices. The map will also tie in with the Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG) handout (see attachment).

In addition, this past year the district worked out an agreement with Lincoln County to snowplow and sand/gravel the Grave Creek Road up to the trailhead (Birch Creek). This plowing assisted the winter recreation user getting to the site plus allowing them additional room for turning around and parking.

I would at this time request that you place the Grave/Wigwam trail on the approved snowmobile grooming route during the winter of 1983-84. This request can be considered permission or authorization to utilize the State's equipment on the trail.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Ron Williams or Eric Heyn at 882-4451,


for JOHN W. PRITCHARD
District Ranger

Attachment

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