

QUIET RECREATION PROPONENTS SPEAK UP FOR BALANCED TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

THOUSANDS COMMENT ON DRAFT WINTER TRAVEL PLANNING RULE

Earlier this year the Forest Service released a draft of their long-anticipated Over-Snow Vehicle Management Rule (OSV Rule). This new rule will provide consistency in governing how National Forests across the country manage snowmobiles. Once the OSV Rule is finalized, National Forests that receive snow will designate routes and areas where snowmobiles and other over-snow vehicles (OSVs) are allowed. In doing so each forest has to consider how snowmobiles impact wildlife, the environment, and other uses and then prepare a winter travel management plan that minimizes these impacts.

While we were excited to finally see a draft of the new OSV Rule, it soon became clear that the proposed rule would do little to change the status-quo and that modifications were needed before the draft became law. The Forest Service gave the public 45 days to comment on the draft rule and Winter Wildlands Alliance set an ambitious goal of rallying at least 1,000 backcountry and Nordic skiers, snowboarders, snowshoers and winter mountaineers to weigh in with personal letters to the Forest Service.

With the help of our grassroots partners, members, and supporters, WWA exceeded our goal of generating 1,000 comments. Together we made our message clear – that preserving the status quo is not acceptable and the final OSV Rule must require thoughtful analysis of where snowmobiles are and are not appropriate so that winter ecosystems and opportunities for quiet recreation are protected. The Forest Service received approximately 20,000 comments on the draft rule, the vast majority of which came from quiet recreationists and conservationists who called for improving the OSV Rule so that it creates a framework for protecting winter wildlands and opportunities for human-powered recreation. While many of these comments were form letters generated by larger environmental groups, WWA members and supporters submitted over one thousand individual letters explaining why winter travel planning is important to human-powered recreationists and providing constructive criticism of the draft rule. This phenomenal outpouring of support for stronger winter travel planning and engagement in this rule-making process demonstrates the strength of our community and our potential to affect change.

We had expected to see a final rule by September 9, 2014 but the Forest Service filed a motion to extend this Court-ordered



Erickson Creative Group

deadline. They needed extra time to finish reviewing comments on the draft rule. Once the final rule is written it will go through one last Department of Agriculture approval process and should be published by January 31, 2015.

Once the OSV Rule is published the forests where you ski and ride will need to write winter travel management plans. This will be an opportunity for you to get involved and speak up for your special backcountry areas. Winter Wildlands Alliance is looking forward to working with our members and partners across the country to bring balance to the backcountry through travel management planning. Local advocates are an integral part of this process so stay tuned to find out when winter travel planning is coming to your favorite forest and to learn how you can get involved.

Hilary Eisen
Recreation Planning Coordinator
heisen@winterwildlands.org

NEWS FROM WWA

NEW AMBASSADORS: KIM HAVELL, HANS-PETER MARSHALL

Named a "preeminent female ski mountaineer of our time" by Outside Magazine, **Kim Havell** has a great passion for travel, adventure and exploration-oriented endeavors. She has skied on all seven continents, with first descents on four of those. She has climbed and skied big peaks from the Himalaya, the Karakorum to the Arctic and Antarctic. She is the first female to both ski and ski guide the Otterbody route on the Grand Teton. "The best and the most defining experiences of my life have occurred in the outdoors and, most often, in a winter playground. It is crucial for the well-being of both our environment and our passions to preserve and protect the winter wildlands," Kim says of her new role with WWA. "Joining this team, I hope to contribute to the education and collaborate on efforts that ensure the responsible stewardship of winter landscapes and protecting the quality opportunities for all types of winter recreation."



Kim Havell



Hans-Peter Marshall

Dr. Hans-Peter (HP) Marshall is a world-renowned snow scientist and professor in the Boise State University Department of Geosciences. As a scientist HP studies snowpack, glaciers and avalanches during his frequent expeditions to the Arctic, Antarctic and other areas of the Cryosphere. His most current research with NASA is focused on developing the remote sensing technology necessary to measure the water content of snow

from aircraft and satellites. HP is passionate about sharing the field of snow science with K-12 students and teachers. As WWA's SnowSchool Ambassador he has helped develop snow science curricula for middle and high school students. — *SP*

TRAVEL PLANNING STARTS IN CALIFORNIA

Even though the final Over-Snow Vehicle Rule is yet to be released, five National Forests in California – the Lassen, Modoc, Sierra, Stanislaus, and Tahoe – have announced they are moving forward with winter travel plans, becoming the first forests to initiate plans under the new Rule. After reaching a settlement agreement with Winter Wildlands Alliance and Snowlands Network concerning trail grooming, these forests have taken the initiative to undergo full winter travel planning alongside analyzing the impacts of their snowmobile trail grooming programs.

WWA and our members look forward to engaging in these planning processes, the first of many to come, and will keep you updated on opportunities to engage on your forest. — *HE*

NEW ADVOCACY TOOLS

Have you ever wondered just how much backcountry and Nordic skiing contribute to our economy? Or perhaps you've noticed more people enjoying the backcountry each year and you're curious about just how much your favorite winter activity is growing. Well, you're in luck. Winter Wildlands Alliance recently released a report summarizing the trends and economic contribution of human-powered snowsports.

We hope this report helps you get educated on where trends are headed in the backcountry, and as a tool for commenting on public lands projects and proposals that impact your favorite area. Human-powered snowsports are a

significant, and growing, part of our local economies and protecting high-quality backcountry experiences is critical to sustaining this economic engine.

The report is the latest in a suite of advocacy tools available on our website. To see the whole series, click the Resources tab under Policy & Advocacy at winterwildlands.org. — *HE*

BACKCOUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

BRENNAN LAGASSE, STATE OF THE BACKCOUNTRY



Brennan Lagasse

Winter Wildlands is honored to welcome State of the Backcountry into our Backcountry Partner program. State of the Backcountry is an on-line blog that highlights both summer and winter backcountry travels, land management issues, and shares ideas and tips on all matter of topics through epic photos and storytelling. The face behind State of the Backcountry is **Brennan Lagasse**, who has also recently taken on the role of Winter Wildlands Ambassador. Brennan says he wholeheartedly supports the WWA mission because WWA not only encourages people to get out and experience their public lands, but they do so through lenses of activism, sustainability and stewardship.

A writer, educator, photographer, athlete and ski guide, Brennan's writing and photos have appeared in academic, print and online media outlets. As an athlete Brennan has skied across the world, from the Arctic to Antarctic, including ski descents on all seven of the world's continents. Missions away from home are a major part of Brennan's experience, but he's just as content to be backcountry skiing and adventuring in his home range of the Sierra Nevada. — *SP*



Winter Wildlands Alliance is a national nonprofit organization promoting and preserving winter wildlands and a quality human-powered snowsports experience on public lands.

JOIN US
KEEP WINTER WILD

winterwildlands.org/join/

GRASSROOTS SPOTLIGHT



Slate River Valley, Crested Butte Nordic

CRESTED BUTTE NORDIC, WWA TEAM UP

Keith Bauer of Crested Butte Nordic has been involved with the organization since moving to town 20 years ago – first as pass holder, then serving on the Board of Directors – before taking the reins as Executive Director in 2005. He has seen local Nordic and backcountry use grow and has helped Crested Butte Nordic expand its offerings in stride with this growth.

Crested Butte Nordic grooms over 50 kilometers of trails, contributing to its reputation as one of the nation's premiere winter recreation destinations. The trails are enjoyed by over 500 pass-holding members, thousands of visitors, and are home to a youth program as well. CB Nordic is interested in expanding its trail system into two of the six drainages surrounding town, only one of which is currently managed as non-motorized. With comprehensive winter travel planning on the horizon, and backcountry use booming, CB Nordic reached out to Winter Wildlands Alliance for help. According to Keith, "as use in the backcountry has exploded with both motorized and

human powered, the experience for all users in those multi use drainages is either compromised or quickly becoming compromised. Protection of these two drainages would offer a tremendous economic opportunity for Crested Butte and not only for Nordic skiing. It would provide a human powered area just north of town that offers some prime backcountry skiing and hut opportunities. Folks could ski and train in some of the most spectacular winter landscapes in the country. Partnering with WWA is simply the best insurance that our voice will be heard."

Please visit cbnordic.org, click on 'about' to get a full picture of what Crested Butte Nordic has planned for the future.

Cailin O'Brien-Feeney, Policy Director
cobrienfeeney@winterwildlands.org

SNOWSCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

SNOWSCHOOL RAMPS UP FOR 30,000 THIS WINTER

Do you remember the first time you ventured out into the forest to explore the quiet wilds of winter? For some, such memories conjure up a sense of wonder at the fascinating mysteries locked in snow and ice. For others this experience is forever linked with a sense of freedom and the inherent joy in a snow-cushioned romp with friends. Snow connects kids to nature like few things can, and for thousands of students across the country SnowSchool is their first introduction to winter wildlands. In anticipation of the coming cold weather dozens of SnowSchool sites all across the country are ramping up operations to help introduce some 30,000 students to winter this year via our snowshoe-powered outdoor science field trip.

Our national surveys suggest that the majority of these students will come from underserved populations and that most will be first time snowshoers. Providing

these students and their teachers with the necessary snowshoes, science curricula, clothing/equipment, educators and wild winter places to explore is a challenge every year. That's why during the non-winter months we've been hard at work planning for the next great season of SnowSchool. Here are a few highlights of what we've been up to:

Establishing new SnowSchool sites.

We work with non-profits, the US Forest Service and other local organizations year-round to bring our proven program to new communities across the country. We added six new SnowSchool sites to our network last year and have already made similar strides moving into the fall. Recently Cottowood Canyons Foundation near Salt Lake City UT joined the national SnowSchool program. WWA welcomes aboard CCF, director Jessie Walthers and her team of innovative educators!

Integrating snow science: WWA brought Dr. Hans-Peter Marshall aboard as a SnowSchool Ambassador. Working with Dr. Marshall and other scientists across the country, WWA is working to establish SnowSchool as a bridge between K-12 students and the world of snow science.

Expanding the SnowSchool curriculum.

We improve SnowSchool every year by designing new learning experiences for diverse groups of students. For example, to augment the snowshoe field trip we've recently created an experimental component of SnowSchool at the National Flagship Site (near Boise) through which students work with their teachers to monitor online their local snowpack through the entire winter season. The hoped-for result is kids with a strong knowledge of and connection to their local ecosystem. Look for more information on this as the year unfolds!

Kerry McClay, National SnowSchool Director, kmcclay@winterwildlands.org

Trail Break is published three times a year by Winter Wildlands Alliance.

Winter Wildlands Alliance
910 Main Street, Suite 235
Boise, ID 83702

208.336.4203
208.336.0648 (fax)

info@winterwildlands.org
www.winterwildlands.org



[instagram.com/winterwildlandsalliance](https://www.instagram.com/winterwildlandsalliance)
www.facebook.com/WinterWildlands
twitter.com/winterwildlands



910 Main Street, Suite 235
Boise, ID 83702

NONPROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Boise, ID
Permit No. 100

SHARE YOUR ADVENTURE PHOTOS WITH CLIFBAR'S MEET THE MOMENT

CLIF Bar was built on the spirit of adventure. It's what drives us and inspires each new journey. Meet the Moment is a call to get out there, get moving and celebrate all the awesome moments we experience along the way.

Show us your photo adventures by tagging your adventures **#MeetTheMoment**. Every time you do, CLIF Bar will donate \$1 to Winter Wildlands during the month of November. To post your Meet the Moment photo to Twitter use **#MeetTheMoment** and **@Clifbar**. Posting to Instagram use **#MeetTheMoment** and **@Clifbarcompany**. For each photo you upload and tag **#MeetTheMoment** this month, @Clifbar will donate \$1 to WWA. So go adventure and share your moments! — *SP*

CORPORATE PARTNERS



Product Partners:

Yak Trax, Ambler, Goal 0, Elemental Herbs, Point 6, Stanley, Keen, Odell

JOIN US

Join WWA's efforts and become a member today! You can do your part to help protect the places we play. Visit winterwildlands.org/join or call Brittany Jones at 1.208.336.4203 ext. 2.

BACKCOUNTRY FILM FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF SNOW LESS TRAVELED

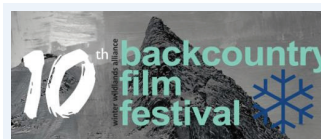
The Winter Wildlands Alliance Backcountry Film Festival celebrates its 10th Anniversary with nine unique films aimed to inspire winter adventurers to seek the snow less traveled. The Backcountry Film Festival premieres November 7 at the Egyptian Theatre in Boise before touring to more than 100 showings around the world.

The festival was created in 2004 to highlight Winter Wildlands Alliance's efforts to preserve and promote winter landscapes for human-powered users. From a single showing in Boise that first year, the festival has grown to include showings in locations throughout the United States and Canada and now in Antarctica, Europe, Australia and Asia.

Funds raised stay in local communities to support like-minded, human-powered recreation and conservation efforts and to raise awareness of winter management issues, avalanche training/safety and winter education programs.

To find a tour stop in your community and to check out this year's film lineup go to backcountryfilmfestival.org

Shelley Pursell
Outreach and Events Coordinator
spursell@winterwildlands.org



BACKCOUNTRY FILM FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING THE HUMAN POWERED EXPERIENCE
winterwildlands.org/what-we-do/backcountry-film-festival/