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# Official Public Comment

MODA Active Management Project #301821

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Dear Crescent Ranger District Project Team,

On behalf of the Oregon State Snowmobile Association (OSSA), we would like to submit our comments regarding the MODA Active Management Project and its potential impacts on the Walker Rim Riders snowmobile trail system.

After reviewing the proposed commercial treatments, non-commercial treatments, prescribed fire treatments, and project vicinity maps alongside the Walker Rim Riders snowmobile trail map, we have identified several areas of concern.

First, we want to make it clear that OSSA supports this project. This area is heavily overgrown and is in desperate need of forest management. We believe the proposed work will provide tremendous long-term benefits for forest health, wildfire mitigation, trail maintenance, and winter recreation.

Our volunteer grooming clubs spend countless hours maintaining trails, removing downed trees, and clearing brush to keep these routes open. Reducing excessive vegetation and wildfire risks will help protect this trail system for years to come.

However, the proposed project area raises concerns about maintaining access to several critical portions of the Walker Rim Riders trail system.

## Upper and Lower Moore Creek Trails

Both the Upper and Lower Moore Creek Trails are important routes within the Walker Rim Riders system. Based on the proposed treatments and the location of these trails, we are concerned that logging operations, hauling activities, prescribed burning, and temporary road closures could significantly affect grooming operations.

We would like to better understand which treatment units and access roads may affect these trails and what steps will be taken to maintain access during the winter season.

#### Grooming Access Toward Waldo

We are particularly concerned about maintaining access to the roads used by our grooming equipment to reach the Waldo area.

If access is restricted or eliminated, it could prevent the Walker Rim Riders from grooming a substantial portion of their trail system.

We would appreciate clarification on whether any of the proposed operations will affect this access and how the Forest Service intends to accommodate grooming activities.

#### Connections with Moon Country Snowbusters

Another major concern is maintaining the connections between the Walker Rim Riders and Moon Country Snowbusters trail systems.

These include the Border-to-Border Trail and the connection along Cascade Lakes Highway.

These connections are important to winter recreation in Central Oregon. We want to ensure that project operations do not result in the loss of these routes or prevent our grooming equipment from maintaining them.

#### Project Timeline, Access, and Operations

We have several questions regarding implementation:

1. When does the Forest Service anticipate beginning work, and what is the anticipated timeline for completing the project?
2. Which roads will contractors use to enter and exit the project area, particularly for access to and from the highway?
3. Will logging trucks or equipment use any roads that are part of the designated snowmobile trail system?
4. Are any road or trail closures anticipated, and will work affecting snowmobile routes be scheduled outside the winter grooming season?
5. How will access to Upper and Lower Moore Creek, the Waldo grooming routes, and the connections with Moon Country be maintained?
6. Will slash piles, logging debris, and other obstacles be cleared from groomed trails before the winter season?
7. Will roads and trails affected by heavy equipment be restored to conditions suitable for grooming operations?

We would also appreciate the opportunity to review a map showing the proposed treatment units, hauling routes, and temporary closures overlaid with the existing Walker Rim Riders snowmobile trail system.

#### Working Together

Our goal is not to delay or prevent this project. We recognize just how badly this work is needed and believe it will provide significant benefits to our trail system in the long run.

Wildfire is one of the greatest threats to snowmobile recreation. A major fire can destroy years of volunteer trail maintenance and eliminate access to important recreational areas for multiple seasons.

We believe the proposed forest treatments will help reduce that risk while also making it easier for our volunteers to maintain and clear trails.

We simply want to ensure that the project is planned and implemented in a way that protects the existing trail system and allows our grooming operations to continue.

We respectfully request that the Forest Service coordinate directly with OSSA and the Walker Rim Riders before work begins, provide advance notice of planned activities and closures, and consider the winter grooming season when scheduling operations affecting our trails.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and look forward to working together to make this project successful for both forest management and winter recreation.

Sincerely,

Lisa Mahoney  
Executive Director  
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Bend, Oregon