

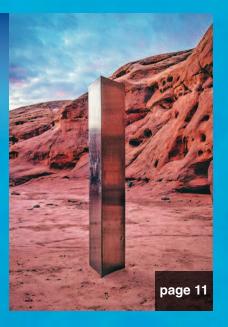
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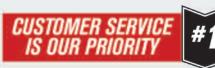






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Riding a trail in a US National Forest; Feb 2020 Galatin National Forest

Photo courtesy of the International Snowmobile Manufacturer's Association. (www.snowmobile.org)

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy New Year!

2020 WAS A DIFFICULT YEAR for so many. Now that we're past a very contentious election, it's time to look forward to the next two and four years.

The incoming administration recently released its nominations for Interior, EPA, and other high-ranking posts. It's clear that natural resource and outdoor policy will take a front row seat for the next four years. Senator Heinrich of New Mexico has pushed for a national outdoor recreation bill for several years, and the addition of New Mexico Representative Haaland to Interior is a sign that we may be looking at the most important outdoor legislation since RTP.

We will need to work increasingly closely with local and national regulators to ensure our voices are heard. How we organize our efforts will be increasingly important. Financially, many groups are struggling, and with the cancellation of events, revenue to fund legislative and legal efforts will

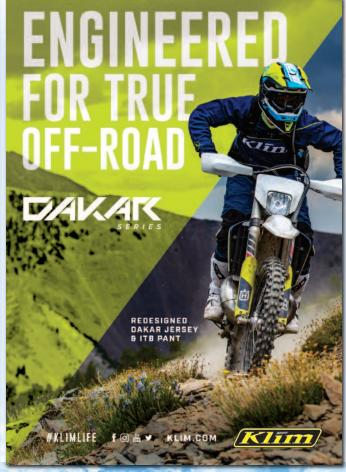
by SPENCER GILBERT

be diminished. Instead, every member of every organization needs to find a way to contribute to this in a meaningful way. We need your help.



We believe that regulations facing the snowmobile community under subpart c will become increasingly important. BRC's growth came directly from our legal fights in Yellowstone. Though we were successful then, we cannot guarantee the fight won't be back soon. We have long supported the Clean Snowmobile Challenge; similar efforts for all modalities may improve the public's perception of who we are and what we want. What we do know is that the market for OHV vehicles is growing exponentially and yet our political clout wanes. Let's get organized. Let's show how significant we can be. For outdoor recreation special interests, there has never been a better time than now. Off-road





recreation is important economically and politicos need to know it.

BRC is involved in a number of national policy dialogue groups, and we participated in the memos that were presented to Biden's incoming White House advisors. We will continue to be as engaged as possible. We won't miss any opportunity to do something of significance for you, but when we ask

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Supporters like these allow Sharetrails/BRC to continue with its vital mission to protect YOUR recreation access!

for your rally cry -- be there for us! Your participation and support will make all the difference!

We had our best membership meeting in years in December, with involvement from several members and BRC's new board members along with our current board of directors. We talked about the things we did and do well (Happy to report a clean audit and we're solvent! And we manage the policy arena well.), and the things we need to do better (Expand media, marketing and outreach, etc.).

New Years is my favorite holiday. My family knows it; my kids are annoyed by it. A new year represents new beginnings, old behaviors take a backseat to rejuvenation and we have a new opportunity to move forward.

Let's make 2021 the best ever.

6 Ways to Support Sharetrails / BRC

- 1. Join and renew your membership
- **2.** Sign up for alerts and use the info to contact the agency mentioned
- **3.** Contact your representatives, let them know you support trails
- **4.** Thank the National Forests and BLM agencies in your riding area for keeping trails open
- **5.** Contact BRC if you find changes or closures on your favorite trails (see page 4 for contact information)
- **6.** Add BRC as your charity of choice when shopping on Amazon.Com (For details, see: http://bit.ly/smileBRC)



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THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

WINDS OF CHANGE

AS THE YEAR 2020 reaches its endpoint, we are seeing many signs of change. Good? Bad? Depends on your perspective and how you handle change.

Fires, drought, storms, and endangered species are starting to take their toll on trails. Now, add "pandemic" to the list of change drivers. And the biggest 'change' has yet to be felt - Route Designation or Travel Management.

In 2006, Forest Service Route Designation changed your wheeling opportunities. For a quick refresher, the Forest Service has a basic 5-step planning process. In Step 1, a proposed action is released for public review and comment. In Step 2, the Forest will use public comment and develop a range of alternatives and identify a preferred alternative. In Step 3, the Forest will release the Draft Plan for public review and comment. In Step 4, the Forest will use public comment to produce the Final Plan. Step 5 is the release of the Final Plan and Record of Decision.

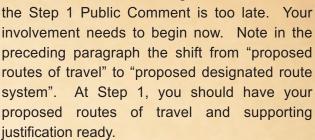
The Forest Service Route Designation process used this basic planning process. The public had an opportunity to review and comment on proposed routes of travel. The Forest used public comments to develop the proposed designated route system. The public had another chance to review and comment on the proposed designated route system. The Forest issued their final designated route system plan. Some routes were left open, others closed. Was your route Open?

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by JOHN STEWART

Or, Closed?

Waiting for the Step 3 Public Comment is too late. Waiting for



So, you who only frequent BLM lands believe this does not affect you? Well, BLM has a comparable process - Travel Management. BLM follows the same basic 5-step process to conduct Travel Management.

So, you say you don't wheel on public lands and this does not affect you? You think this is just for those pesky OHVs? Well, it does affect EVERY person that ventures off the paved roads. Fishing, hunting, rock collecting, firewood collecting, morels (mushroom) picking, antler collecting, and the list continues.

In 1972, then President Nixon signed Executive Order 11644 which contained a definition of an OHV (or off-road vehicle):

"...(3) "off-road vehicle" means any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of crosscountry travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain; except that such term excludes (A) any registered motorboat, (B) any fire, military, emergency or law enforcement vehicle when used emergency purposes, and any combat or combat support vehicle when used for national defense purposes, and (C) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the respective agency head under a permit, lease, license, or contract..."

Note the key phrase "...any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on



or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain".

The current focus is on the federal agencies and their management of public lands for recreation opportunity. The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) are federal agencies covered by EO 11644 and are in the process of updating management plans -including transportation plans - with their version of designated routes.

The Forest Service has stated they will not consider all types of recreation opportunity to be provided on public lands. Some will be considered "niche market recreation" opportunities. They will take into consideration where private opportunities can provide for the "niche market". This statement bears close review. Does that mean the challenging trails will no longer be available as that "niche market" can be provided through private OHV parks?

Yes, the winds of change are gaining strength. Now, consider another statement pushed by the Forest Service. The route designation process will define a sustainable routes of travel system. Just what is a "sustainable routes of travel system"? According to Executive Order 11644, agencies are required to designate routes

Winching PROLINK ACTOR55.COM

to reduce or minimize resource damage. According to former USFS Chief Bosworth's in his "Four Threats to the Forests" speech, sustainable is equated to maintenance funding.

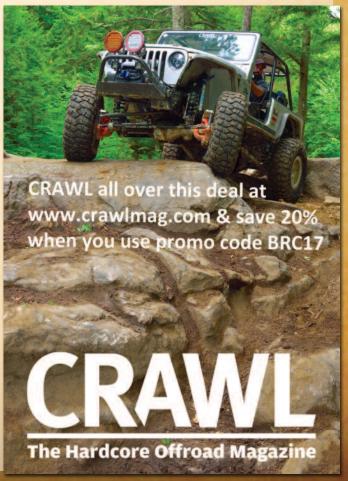
Early returns from the route designation/travel management process point to a tendency on the part of the agencies to lean on the financial side of sustainable. In other words, if they do not have funding to maintain a route as part of the designated route system, it will not be included on the final designated route system map.

Yes, the winds of change are creating challenges.

What does that mean to the recreation opportunity? Simply, if the agency does not have sufficient funding to maintain a route system, there will be no route system.

What can you - the recreation-seeking individual - do? Simple, become involved and work with your local land manager to keep your recreation routes open.

Yes, the winds of change are creating challenges.



Our challenge is to create solutions. We have a number of options - all have a price tag involved. Is the "price" your labor? Your time? Your money? Is the future private parks? Pay-toplay? Buy land to create private parks?

These are questions with a range of answers. Do the answers provide solutions? Good? Bad? Depends on your perspective and how you handle change.

winds of change." The winds of change are about demographics -- increasing population, increasing popularity of OHV, increasing participation, and increasing economic impact.

And, more important, the winds of change are subject to politics. With each change of elected officials (every two years), politics becomes the winds of change.

The winds of change are about planning and management -- demand and issue changes drive regulation and legislation.

The winds of change are about involvement – you must participate to be part of the solutions.

BlueRibbon Coalition is committed to protecting and promoting motorized recreation financial support, is needed on public lands. BRC is also to help us guide those committed to protecting and promoting motorized recreation in private parks.

> BRC is committed to assisting members achieve their desire for motorized recreation opportunity.

> As BRC enters the new year, the political winds of change are increasing in strength. Your support, including financial support, is needed to help us guide those winds of change.

The Most Important Miles Are Yet To Come!

Donate Your Unwanted Vehicles & Support Recreation Access!

You can now help protect recreational access by turning your unwanted but usable vehicles into valuable contributions. Vehicles can be donated to Vehicles For Charity at any time, with proceeds of each donation benefiting the BlueRibbon Coalition/Sharetrails. The process is simple (see below).

- Donate cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, RVs, snowmobiles, campers, trailers and more!
- Free pickup from your house or office, usually within 3-5 days
- Get an Income Tax Deduction

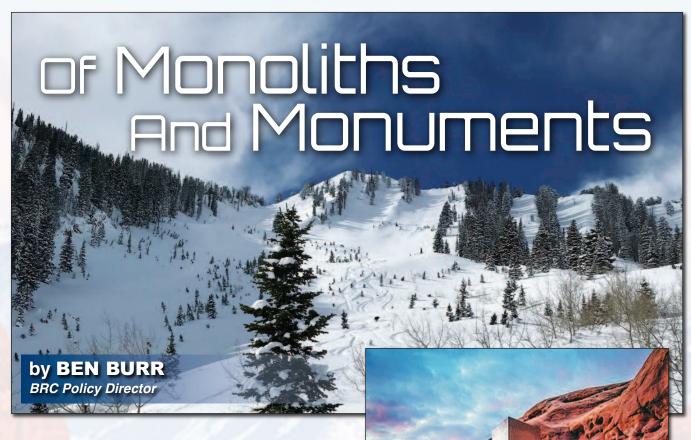
Call 1-866-628-2277 for more information or visit www.vehiclesforcharity.org/charities (BE SURE TO LIST "BLUERIBBON COALITION" AS YOUR CHARITY)





"Your support, including





WHEN ALL IS SAID and done, the most viral story about public lands in 2020 will most likely be the discovery of a strange metal object in the deserts of Utah, the subsequent mass pilgrimage to this site, and the eventual removal of the object by vigilante slackliners to protect the area from the unplanned impact. The story made international headlines, and at the time of this writing it has managed to dominate two weeks of news cycles.

On the surface the story is kind of silly. The story's popularity probably tells us more about our tendency to be distracted by shiny things than it tells us about the actual shiny thing. But, when you deconstruct the story, there might not be a better story that encompasses the vast array of challenges looming for those of us who advocate for recreation access on public lands.

For starters, this isn't the first time this has happened. In 2014, a group of advocates "discovered" an inspiring landscape formation in southeastern Utah. They spent years mythologizing the formation with narratives of mystique and adventure. In the waning days of his presidency, President Obama officially recognized the efforts of these dogged activists and declared their inspiring

The "Monolith" landscape formation (and the surrounding 1.3 million acres) a national monument. They called it Bears

Ears.

In the meantime, this corner of Utah has seen a surge in visitors and the predictable impacts that occur when you popularize somewhere that was previously remote and obscure. Consider these meeting notes posted on Facebook by Ryan Benally - one of the tribal representatives of the Bears Ears National Monument Advisory Committee:



As you can see here, "DOLL HOUSE RUINS" is a very beautiful location, but it's starting to see negative impacts from Visitors such as people Climbing all over it, disturbing the ancient rock structure behind the ruins, and increase erosion from people making their own trails (illegally)...

Future Suggestions by the Manti-La Sal Forest Management Team:

- placing a fence across this Alcove and restrict access
- begin requiring permits to the area; should we?

One thing that is clear with both the monument and the monolith is that there is no protection like obscurity. In age where everyone has a GPS and HD camera in their pocket, obscurity is becoming obsolete and impossible.

It is tempting to want to replace the ironclad protection that comes from obscurity with the protection of law, but this is both a weak substitute and a blunt instrument.

In the case of the monolith, the law was ineffective at preventing the illegal construction of the sculpture

in the first place. Laws and regulations couldn't stop the hordes of monolith-seekers from flocking to the site by plane, off-road vehicles, and foot. In this case the most resource damage in the area was caused by those who crossed the final stretch of land from the existing road to the monolith by foot. Foot travel is the most permissive form of recreation on public land, but as we can see, with the right context, it can create impacts that rival any other form of recreation.

The same agency that mounted a multi-agency paramilitary attack on some rancher's cows couldn't find the regulatory authority to remove the monolith. Regulations exist to require those who want to commercialize photography and film on public land to get a permit. I have read nothing of the BLM prosecuting the legions of photographers, videographers, and social influencers who descended on the site to exploit the resource and promote their craft. To imagine a scenario where

NEPA was followed and litigated for 10 years in order to create official trail access to the site is an exercise in farce.

Because of the First Amendment, no rules exist to prevent popularizing special places on public land. Nor should they.

There are some who have confronted the challenges that arise from popular access to public land and concluded that the only solution is to completely ban certain people from public land (I'm looking at you, Moab and Oceano Dunes). I believe the only reason we tolerate the mess that is our public land management system, is because the goodwill and popular support that come from access to the public land sustains the system and allows it to plod along despite its glaring flaws. Removing the public from public land would fundamentally compromise a system that has enough challenges.

As recreation use on public land continues to explode and become the dominant use on public land, the only tool that is actually going to work is the slow and difficult work of education and the creation of culture of responsible stewardship.

What the shiny found-art object in the desert is to the distractible Tik-Tok and Instagram influencers, a fresh, steep chute of untouched powder is to the backcountry snowboarder. Two winters ago, the stars aligned, and I was able to secure a seat in a helicopter for a day of backcountry snowboarding in the Wasatch Mountains.

Before take-off we spent an hour learning to use avalanche survival gear and the basics of helicopter safety. We were led by a guide who spends his winters teaching novices how to safely and responsibly enjoy the backcountry. Throughout the day he would take measurements of snow depth. He would use a small backpacking shovel to compact the snow, slice away the face of the drift and read the snow for avalanche danger like a geologist reading stratigraphic layers of rock. He was an expert, who I was trusting with my life and who the USFS trusted with the landscape.

With his guidance I enjoyed one of the best days I've ever spent in the backcountry. Each run was its own treasure. It wasn't lost on me that the primary allure that draws so many of us to snow sports is that the ephemeral conditions of winter sports means that no two experiences in the backcountry will ever be the same. Unlike an obelisk in the desert, these experiences defy mass consumption and create their own reward. This is the kind of access that is worth fighting for.

I've seen the same level of shared expertise and education happen in every organized off-road event I've attended. I've also seen people change from having these unique experiences. Our events, our organized rides, and our riding clubs and groups are the lifeblood for creating a sustainable future for offrecreation and a model to emulate for newer recreation users.

Organizing and educating those who are discovering the treasures that await us on our adventures has never been more urgent or necessary. COVID restrictions have cut off our lifeblood for sustaining our culture at the same time millions of new users are choosing the outdoor recreation lifestyle. We appreciate your support as we work to rise to this challenge.



BUSINESS SDUILGIT YELLOWSTONE ADVENTURES



by JACK WELCH

BRC Vice President

THE SCHMIER FAMILY has been involved with snowmobiles in West Yellowstone, Montana, since the mid-1960s. Racing and the love of the sport started it all.

In the early 1970s, Jerry Schmier became a Ski-Doo dealer. In the early days, there was not a formal trail system in the West Yellowstone region; Jerry Schmier was one of a group of locals that began the West Yellowstone regional trail system. Today that system has made West Yellowstone the Snowmobile Capitol of the World. In addition, Jerry was one of the original founders of the West Yellowstone Snowmobile EXPO and volunteered in making the snowmobile manufacturers' "Snow

Shoot" an annual event and a major economic boost for the local economy. For Jerry's efforts, he was recognized and inducted into the International Snowmobile Hall of Fame in 2016. Well deserved!

Through the many years the Ski-Doo dealership, owned and managed by Jerry and his son Brad, has grown and is still family owned and operated. The Schmier's were very involved in the battle to keep Yellowstone National Park open to snowmobile access; they have been an integral part of Blue

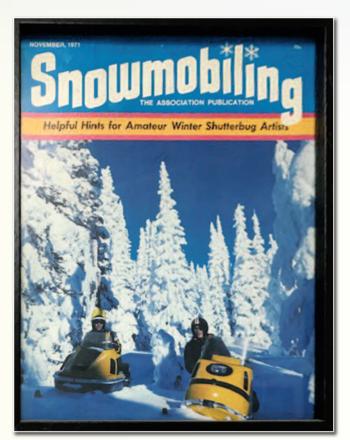
Jerry Schmi

Ribbon's Yellowstone Action Task Force, that to this day, 20 years later, continues to keep snowmobile access to Yellowstone Park at a meaningful level.

In my discussion with Brad about this article he described his business, "We are known as Yellowstone Adventures, a full line Bombardier Recreation Products (BRP)- SKI-Doo dealer located in West Yellowstone, Montana. We are an authorized BRP dealer featuring snowmobiles, ATVs and UTVs. We offer sales, service, rentals and everything related. We feature ATVs and UTVs rentals in summer months to explore the National Forests surrounding West Yellowstone. In the winter, we offer snowmobile rentals to explore the same national forests."

In closing, the Schmiers and Yellowstone Adventures have been supporting the BlueRibbon Coalition as members for 23 years and have donated many times to support our efforts. We thank them and invite you to visit their website **www.yellowstoneadventures.com** or call 800-231-5991. Or stop by if you visit West Yellowstone; their address is 121 Dunraven St.

Jerry and Brad invite you to come and



experience their backyard in West Yellowstone, Montana!





Jerry Schmier



It Really Doesn't Matter



by REBECCA ANTLE

BRC Secretary

IT DOESN'T MATTER if you are with an organized club or association or a loner. We are all in this together. If we work together we will accomplish more. But if we work against each other we are slitting our own throats.

Special thanks to NAXJA for their continued support...

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Special thanks to ISMA

for their continued support...

http://snowmobile.org



Supporters like these allow Sharetrails/BRC to continue with its vital mission to protect YOUR recreation access!

How do you think the anti-access groups have gotten so many of our roads and trails closed? It is because they are organized, have the money, the backing, the lawyers and they all work together for one goal to close public lands to motorized use.

Do you know who they are? The Sierra Club, Center for Bio Diversity, Earth First, Wilderness Alliance, Sky Island Alliance, Friends of the Earth, Arizona Wilderness Coalition, Wilderness Society, Audubon Society, these are just a few of the larger ones. Check out their websites and see who is on their board or committees. They have lawyers, attorneys, legal assistants. Then read their mission statement, it typically does not promote motorized recreation.

As with everything in life it takes money to make anything happen. The only way that works is if you are willing to give a little. Everyone who has worked to keep a trail open knows that.

Motorized recreation groups and clubs are all volunteer, we don't have the backing of companies and industry. The volunteers attend the meetings, drive to the meetings, drive to project sites all on their own dime. It gets to be expensive and takes time away from family, work or doing the fun things like going out on 4 wheel drive runs.

After a while you get burned out. And that is what the anti-access crowd expects to happen. And when it does they win, again and again.

The anti-access groups work together for what

they want, closure of your access to public lands. This happens with travel management, wilderness study areas (WSA), mitigation and other ways to close access to motorized and mechanized recreation.

Believing in something and keeping involved takes gas, energy, time and more time and money. It takes research, letters, meetings, talking to people and staying involved.

When someone starts to degrade, or berate another group that just puts one more nail in the motorized recreation coffin. And, typically when a nail goes in it never comes out.

Think about how many closures of trails you have seen lately? Could they have been avoided or maybe not been so drastic if we had all just written a letter or attended a meeting? It is tedious work, but the other side has a very long head start. Motorized/mechanized recreation is always just trying to catch up.

We are up against a lot of well-organized anti-access groups with lots of attorneys, lawyers and money backing them. Unfortunately, the motorized community needs the same thing. We need more volunteers, not only people but lawyers and attorneys to help us out. But, with that also comes that money thing again.





We need the industry and manufacturers to come to the rescue. We need to keep our access open for motorized recreation. If there aren't any roads and trails, then there isn't a need for manufacturers or their products.

So, let's work together instead of separately. The more we join forces the bigger our army will be.

It doesn't matter if you are a member of a club or organization, it helps but it isn't always necessary.

Clubs and organizations sometimes have a better, quicker way to keep people informed. The

CLOSED TO MOTORIZED TRAVEL

yearly fee is less than one tank of gas for a weekend trip.

Or think of it this way, maybe the cost of one tank of gas could save 1 mile of road.

Local clubs and organizations help on the local level. State associations work within the entire state to keep everyone informed of what is going on, what planning processes, what is being closed and typically why.

Your small donation of a yearly membership in a state-wide organization does more than you think. It helps with the costs of getting the information out to more people, advocacy.

Internet and Facebook is a great way to meet people and maybe go places you might not go otherwise. But to go to those places you need to have open access and roads to do it on. That is what we need to protect

Motorized recreation is a growing sport with diminishing access. Keep that in mind next weekend when you are out on the trail. What is the possibility of the road you are on being closed in the future if you don't help to keep it open today?

Special thanks to **UPLA** for their continued support...





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WASHINGTON STATE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION

by MATT MEAD, Publicity Secretary Washington State Snowmobile Association

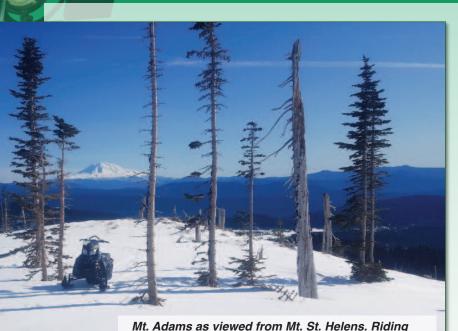
THE WASHINGTON STATE Snowmobile Association (WSSA) was formed in 1972 to promote and protect snowmobiling in the Evergreen state. Working with Washington State Parks, a trail grooming program was established by the early 1980s and funded by registration fees and a portion of the state fuel tax; WSSA's number one priority is protecting this funding annually and accomplishes this with an organized lobbying effort in the state capitol of Olympia.

WSSA is an all-volunteer organization and its many dedicated members host and participate in a wide range of important events annually. Every snowmobiler in the Pacific Northwest is aware of the WSSA Snowmobile and Power Sports Expo and Swap Meet held in Puyallup every October; this is WSSA's premier event and fundraiser and includes volunteers from member clubs to staff the event and boosts club budgets as well. This event is the kickoff to snowmobile season in the West!

OTHER ANNUAL EVENTS INCLUDE:

A Military Appreciation ride held in Central Washington where volunteers take a handful of active duty soldiers from a local military training center out for a day of snowmobiling; snowmobiles and gear are provided and riders learn the basics, enjoy a hot trailside lunch, and take in the spectacular views of Mt. Rainier and surrounding Cascades.





abounds in nearly all regions of Washington State.



The organization's 'All Trails to Olympia' day is a model program of grassroots lobbying, with WSSA putting snowmobilers in front of their legislators in one-on-one meetings to promote the sport. In addition to educating senators and representatives on the positive impact snowmobiling has on the state's economy and importance of protecting our dedicated funds to maintain safe trails and sanitary facilities, it is an

opportunity to promote legislation WSSA is sponsoring or supporting, most recently with easing licensing of snowbikes and currently an effort to legalize tracked ATVs/UTVs. Hostess Snowballs are the organization's trademark for this event and are delivered to all legislative offices, always a big hit!

Every spring WSSA takes part in the **D.C. Fly-In** sponsored by the American Council of Snowmobile Associations where snowmobile representatives from the Snowbelt states converge on the Capitol and spread the word of snowmobiling organized to our congressional delegation. Meetings are held with agency officials such as the U.S. Forest Service and Federal Highway Administration, and other recreational organizations. Two months later, many of these same folks, along with a handful more, participate in the International Snowmobile Congress to meet, greet and share information among most of the snowmobile associations across the U.S., Canada and other interested nations.

WSSA isn't all work and no play and hosts 'Winter Rendezvous' annually over Presidents Day Weekend in prime riding areas around the state or in bordering locales. This three-day event provides riding opportunities for all

types and style of riders; family-friendly trail rides with lots of stops for snacks and photo ops, faster paced trail and off-trail for the experienced rider, and more adventurous rides for those seeking extreme terrain challenges. After the day's snow play, evening entertainment and an awards banquet fill the off hours.

As would be expected, the organization has a strong focus on safety and works closely with

Washington State Parks and the Northwest Avalanche Center, promoting motorizedspecific avalanche safety and training, along with general trail safety. A wellequipped safety trailer with an attentiongetting wrap is towed around the state and displayed at events and in sno-parks, with WSSA members on hand to answer questions about safety and the organization's mission. Kids are educated and entertained as they enjoy searching the cartoon pictures enveloping the trailer, seeking hidden safety items tucked in the artwork, and also receive free snowmobile activity books and packs of crayons.

The state of Washington approximately 40 snowmobile clubs which work closely with WSSA. In addition to offering an umbrella insurance policy option to cover events, WSSA offers a trail grant program specifically to help clubs with projects benefiting snowmobilers and other winter recreationists. A popular grant use of late is for local clubs to unite and pool monies to build mobile warming shelters which are moved in during the fall and out in the spring and have been a more favorable solution with local Forest Service land managers.

Washington snowmobilers sometimes ask, "Who is WSSA and what do they do for It takes more than a board of directors; WSSA is its members. Members are everywhere and actively promoting snowmobiling, whether it is volunteering on Washington State Park's Snowmobile Advisory Committee or the State's Recreational Trail Grant (RTP) Advisory Board, holding grooming and plowing contracts around the state, being employed by the Forest Service and other land management agencies, or running a business in a snowmobiling community. WSSA members are intertwined with all aspects of snowmobiling throughout the state!





As WSSA nears its 50th anniversary in 2022, the organization is making plans for the next 50 years, protecting and promoting snowmobiling spanning riding areas across the state including Mt. Baker, Mt. Adams, Mt. St. Helens, the Central Cascades, the Okanogan and Methow, and the Washington Blues.

For more information, check out the WSSA website at: www.wssa.us or follow us on Facebook. We're always looking for new members!



by JACK WELCH

BRC Vice President

AT THE START of the 2020-2021 snowmobile season, BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) was invited to be a part of the Colorado, Idaho and Utah Snowmobile Snow Shows.

The first show was scheduled in October in Denver, Colorado. This would have been the 34th Annual Rocky Mountain Snowmobile Expo and again BRC would have been featured. However, because of COVID-19, it was cancelled. I want to thank Snow Goer Magazine and the Colorado Snowmobile Association for inviting us.

The second show was the Utah SnoWest Snowmobile show held October 30th and 31st in Sandy, Utah. It was held and information on the show is covered later in this article. The third show was the Idaho SnoWest Snowmobile Show held in Nampa, Idaho. BRC was

not able to attend because of the COVID-19. I want to thank SnoWest for inviting us to the Utah and Idaho shows.

This year the Utah SnoWest show featured the new 2021 snowmobiles from the four manufacturers, Arctic Cat, Polaris, Ski-Doo and Yamaha. In addition, aftermarket products, resorts, lodges, trailers, and destinations for snowmobilers were on display.

Showcased at the show was the latest information on BRC's Legal Action Program. The Legal Action Program has helped maintain snowmobile access. The Yellowstone success story is covered in a prior ShareTrails Magazine article on the history of snowmobile access to Yellowstone National Park. In addition, this year at the Utah Show BlueRibbon distributed the latest available update on the 2020-2021 non-commercially guided access program for Yellowstone National Park.

One of the highlights of the Utah show was being able to speak with SnoWest Editor Steve Janes and Publisher Ryan Harris about issues facing snowmobiling including the ongoing efforts to maintain and improve snowmobile access to Yellowstone National Park. We also discussed the latest Winter Wildlands Alliance and other anti-groups' actions on the Over Snow Vehicles (OSV) and Forest Service Travel Management Planning process. In addition, we talked about the ongoing efforts to limit snowmobile access in California National Forests based on snow depth. Watch for more information on these issues on the BRC website www.sharetrails.org.

In summary, the attendance at the Utah snow show was up over last year and even with COVID-19 issues facing us, attendees were very upbeat about the 2020-2021 season and hoped it would snow very soon and it has!















by CHUCK RAMSEY

BRC Board Member

WINTER IN THE NORTHERN Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming usually starts with the Bear Lodge Bad Boys Riding Club's Annual Dinner Party hosted at Bear Lodge. The kickoff dinner occurred on November 28th, 2020. Unfortunately, this year the warm weather in November all but wiped out the snow that fell in October. Although, there was little snow, the 18th Annual event was a success selling out all 500 tickets to participants from Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, as well as other states and providences across North America.

The purpose of the dinner party is to support and improve recreational fun in the Northern Big Horn Mountains. It also helps to fund the Burgess Junction Rescue. The cost of this wonderful dinner is a donation of \$100 per ticket. This ticket not only purchases a fabulous dinner, but also 361 chances to win one of 5 prizes. What are these prizes? There are (300) \$50 prizes, (52) \$100 prizes, (4) \$250 prizes, (4) \$500 prizes and (1) Grand prize of \$10,000 to spend at any recreational dealer of the

winner's choice. At the 2020 event, there were two people who had their ticket number drawn 5 times for 5 different prizes. Yes, everyone has a 1 in 500 chance to win up to 361 prizes drawn. There is no requirement to be present in order to win these generous prizes.

The money earned is split so that 66.4% goes into the prizes and 33.6% goes towards the cost of the dinner party, efforts to improve recreational fun in the Northern Big Horn Mountains, Burgess Junction Rescue and BlueRibbon/Share Trails.

On behalf of BRC, we want to thank the owners of Bear Lodge, Rick and Roberta Young, the Bear Lodge Bad Boys Riding Club, as well as all the recreational enthusiasts that helped make the event a success for the support of the BlueRibbon Coalition/Sharetrails.

US Department of Commerce releases Economic Output Data for Outdoor Recreation

by **ED KLIM**

International Snowmobile Manufacturer's Association (ISMA)

HASLETT, MI, November 20, 2020: The US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis has released the Economic Output for outdoor recreation for this past year. The Recreation Industry generated \$788 Billion Dollars in 2019, which is \$ 10 Billion Dollars higher than in 2018. The outdoor recreation economy continues to grow and outperform the economic growth in the United States during the pandemic. Individuals are continuing to reach out and recreate in the great outdoors across the United States.

The latest report shows that Outdoor Recreation, as part of the Gross Domestic Product, is 2.1%. What does that mean you ask? Outdoor Recreation produces more of the GDP and is bigger than mining and agriculture! Snow Activities, including snowmobiling, grew 3.1%. Most of that activity is within rural America and is the economic engine for many rural families and their economy.

Outdoor Recreation generates 5.2 million jobs in the United States. The states with the largest percentage of state GDP related to outdoor recreation are Hawaii, Vermont, Montana,

Florida, Maine, and Wyoming. In Montana, 32,000 jobs are generated by the Outdoor Recreation Economy which is 4.7% of the state's GDP.

Boating and Fishing is the largest conventional activity for the Recreation Economy generating \$23.6 Billion Dollars of economic activity while RVing is the second largest activity nationally generating \$18.6 Billion Dollars of economic activity. Snow Activities was rated the 6th largest of the economic activities.

Snowmobiling is an important part of the overall recreation economy and we generate economic activity during peak winter months when much of rural

America is in need of economic output and support.

The recent study underscores that individuals that are outdoor enthusiasts are active in the winter and warmer weather as well. Surveys by ISMA show that approximately 60% of all snowmobilers also ride ATVs and UTVs in the summer. More than 50% of snowmobilers enjoy boating and fishing and recreational camping. Outdoor recreation enthusiasts participate in many activities and they are healthy, strong, and do not participate in a great deal of TV watching and internet-based recreation.

The snowmobile manufacturers and the snowmobile community are pleased to participate with the studies conducted by the Bureau of Economic Analysis within the Department of Commerce. We provide supporting data and information to the department upon request. We highlight the high activity level of the recreational snowmobiling customer base and highlight to elected representatives how we are active supporters of recreation on public land and great, responsible, family activity.





by JACK WELCH

BRC Vice President

THIS YEAR, the Clean Snowmobile Challenge was celebrating 20 years since its founding in Jackson, Wyoming, in 2000. I was personally honored, as a founder of the Challenge for BlueRibbon Coalition, to be asked again this year to judge the competition and speak at the opening ceremony of the Challenge on Tuesday morning.

This year we had 14 teams competing with internal combustion engines and 9 with diesel engines for a total of 23 teams. Please note, the Challenge dropped electric sleds because of safety concerns several years ago.

This year's Challenge had an incredible twist. On Thursday Michigan Tech, the host University, cancelled all classes and closed all facilities including the food service because of the COVID-19. What did this mean? The last day's competition, including the Acceleration event and Objective handling event, had to be cancelled. The COVID-

19 virus also caused the cancellation of the Awards Banquet. The winners of the competition were announced at the test facility instead of the Banquet.

Overall winner in the gasoline category: Michigan Tech's own team (\$1,000 from International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association). Second place was the University of Maryland Baltimore County (\$750). Third was Ecole DeTechnologie Superieure from Canada (\$500). This year Michigan Tech's entry was one of five gas-powered snowmobiles to pass both emissions and sound standards; all the other 9 teams failed either emissions or sound testing. So, we had only five teams that could receive awards.

Overall winner in the diesel category was Clarkson University (\$1,000 from Oshkosh); second place, the University of Wisconsin at Platteville (\$750 from Cummins), third place Ecole DeTechnologie Superieure from Canada (\$500). Winner of the Special BlueRibbon Coalition Award For Most Practical Solution was Michigan Tech.





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The 2021 Clean Snowmobile Challenge will be a 100% virtual event. The event will include the following: Written Design Paper, Oral Design Presentation, Dynamic Event Modeling, Judging, and Educational online workshop(s).

As a judge at this year's 2020 SAE Clean Snowmobile Challenge, I was pleased to join in and help. It was great being part of the formative years of the Challenge which started in 2000. I look forward to judging again at the 21th Challenge in 2021.

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MUCH IS SAID today about recreation and the changing lifestyle of people that allows more freedom for leisure time activities. During their leisure time, people have the freedom to engage in a variety of activities and outdoor recreation is very popular. Some recreationists are informed and experienced; others are uninformed and inexperienced.

When I use the term "uninformed recreationist", I am referring to the guy that is gung-ho on going anywhere at anytime without a care in the world for what he is doing. Someone that has the attitude that they "own" the land and their rights comes first, above all.

"An 'enlightened recreationist' realizes that the land and its resources are the wealth of the nation and belong to the people of the nation."

An "enlightened recreationist" realizes that the land and its resources are the wealth of the nation and belong to the people of the nation. He accepts that it is not about going anywhere at anytime without a care in the world for what he is doing.

He also realizes that routes are the key to access and natural resources are the reason for access. Routes were constructed to access the forests for the lumber to build homes. Routes were constructed to mines where minerals and ore were extracted to provide raw materials to manufacture the goods used in our daily lives. Routes were constructed to access lands used for grazing of livestock that helps feed the people.

When you look at history, there was a period in the late 1800s that was a low point in caring for the land and resources. Logging, mining and grazing practices of that era were not a shining example of efficiency. There was plenty of waste. Extraction was king. Preservation was not an issue. Recreation was not a part of the equation. Survival was the primary concern.

As the years passed, times changed. Preservation pressures increased. Logging, mining and grazing on public lands gave way to preservation of public lands. Recreation pressures increased. People changed their views about public lands. The routes still provide access to the natural

resources for a changing purpose.

We are at a point today when the original goal of maintaining public lands for the public has been lost. Preservation is king. Recreation is growing. Extraction of resources is on the decline. Using public land for the good of the public (generating and sustaining wealth) is looked on as the evil incarnate. Routes

constructed for support of extraction are key to recreation. Those routes are a bane to preservation.

For public lands and the recreation cycle, you have a triangle. One point is preservation. Another point is recreation. The third point is extraction (logging, mining, grazing).

For aesthetics and symmetry, the triangle needs the balance of equal sides and angles. Preservation is fighting both recreation and extraction for control. Recreation is fighting preservation AND extraction. The extraction is losing.

There are a few recreationists that realize the importance of extraction. The U.S. Congress established laws that govern the extraction

industries. Under those laws, routes were constructed to support the industries. Those routes exist because of mining, logging and grazing. With the loss of mining, logging, and grazing, removes the legal basis for the routes. Extraction needs the routes for access. Preservation wants the routes closed. Recreation wants the routes for access. Interests are in conflict.

In the beginning was extraction. Preservation began to correct the abuses of extraction. Preservation is in conflict with growing recreation. Preservation is placing the wealth of the public lands out of reach; off limits to extraction and to recreation.

The crux of the problem is getting extraction, recreation, and preservation working for the same goal; access. The issue is ACCESS and the goal is conservation. Conservation to provide for sustainable extraction of raw materials for economic needs. Conservation to provide for the social needs of recreating public. Conservation to provide for the preservation of natural wonders. Extraction, recreation, and preservation are of equal importance. It would be unwise for recreation or extraction or preservation to be the sole policy at the expense of the conservation.

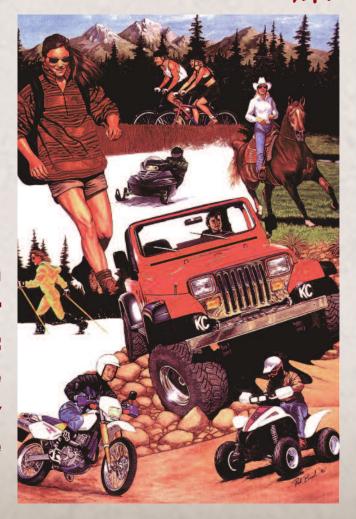
The bell is tolling for extraction and recreation. The "enlightened recreationists" understands the link between extraction and recreation. Preservation

Change is needed. Recreation growing. Options for recreation access to public lands are decreasing...There are no quick and easy answers. It is going to take time, effort and pain.

"The crux of the problem is getting extraction, recreation, and preservation working for the same goal; access."

is at odds with extraction and recreation. Preservation wants more lands for wilderness. Extraction and recreation want more access to public lands. The triangle is out of balance.

Change is needed. Recreation is growing. Options for recreation access to public lands are decreasing. Changes to laws governing wilderness and endangered species are needed; changes that support a balanced conservation goal. There are no quick and easy answers. It is going to take time, effort and pain.



BLUERIBBON COALITION LEADS EFFORT TO INCREASE WINTER SNOWMOBILE ACCESS TO YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK



by JACK WELCH

BRC Vice President

UPDATE ON THE 2020-2021 SEASON. On December 15, 2020, the main West, South, North, and East gates were opened to another season of snowmobile access to Yellowstone National Park. This will be the seventh season of the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program (N-CGSAP) for the park. The N-CGSAP is regulated by the "Yellowstone Winter Use Plan" and is the Final Regulation to implement the Record of Decision (ROD) which was approved in the fall of 2013.

Under the Record of Decision and Final Regulation the following will take place. The 2020/2021 Winter Season the Park would permit up to 110 "transportation events" daily, initially defined as one snowcoach or a group of up to 10 snowmobiles, averaging seven snowmobiles per group per season. The number of Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile

Access Program "transportation events" is only 4



a day with only 5 snowmobiles, a total of only 20 snowmobiles that must be Best Available Technology (BAT).

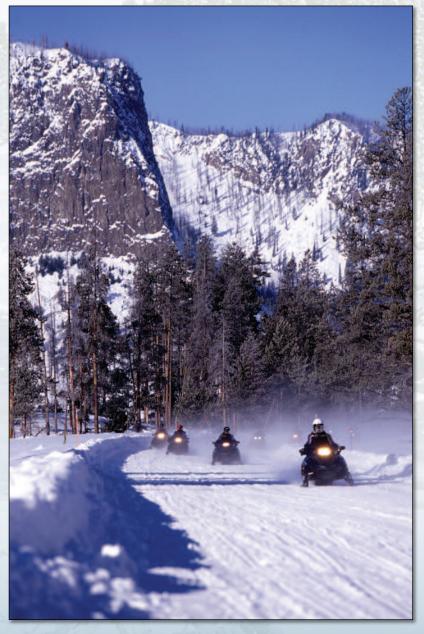
Under the Final Regulation up to 500 snowmobiles could be allowed in the Park per day. This was a major victory for snowmobile access to Yellowstone! However, with only 20 snowmobiles out of 500 being Noncommercially Guided we are coming up short on allowing NCGSP machines in the Park each day!

It is important to note every season since the Winter of 2013-2014 the number of entries into the Lottery program -- to get 1 of the 4 daily permits for 5 snowmobile entries -- has grown. This season 2020-2021 the applications total 1028! This means with a 90-day season December 15th through March 15th only 360 permits could be awarded and only 149 have been awarded for this season.

The BlueRibbon Coalition is proud of its important role in helping to develop the current management plan for Yellowstone Winter Use. We feel with the current demand to visit the Park in Winter as a Non-commercially Guided snowmobile group, it is time to increase these entries into Yellowstone! Starting this month, we will begin forming an Increase Task Force to explore increasing Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program!

Note: The non-commercially guided access has provided snowmobilers a chance to visit their Park without hiring a commercial guide. If you want to visit the Park this winter, then go online to: www.recreation.gov to search Yellowstone National Park and the "Non-Commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program". There are cancellations that can become available for reservations daily.





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