



## WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

5400 Bishop Blvd. Cheyenne, WY 82006

Phone: (307) 777-4600 Fax: (307) 777-4610

Web site: <http://gf.state.wy.us>

**GOVERNOR**  
DAVE FREUDENTHAL

**DIRECTOR**  
STEVE FERRELL

**COMMISSIONERS**  
JERRY GALLES – President  
CLIFFORD KIRK – Vice President  
CLARK ALLAN  
FRED LINDZEY  
RON LOVERCHECK  
ED MIGNERY  
BILL WILLIAMS, DVM

---

November 23, 2009

WER 8303  
Forest Service  
Greys River Ranger District  
Star Valley Ridge Riders Annual Snowmobile  
Hill Climb in Phillips Canyon  
Lincoln County

Jay L. Dunbar  
District Ranger  
Greys River Ranger District  
PO Box 339  
Afton, WY 83110

Dear Mr. Dunbar:

The staff of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department has reviewed the Star Valley Ridge Riders Annual Snowmobile Hill Climb, in Phillips Canyon, on the Greys River Ranger District. We offer the following comments.

We have provided comments since the initial Afton hill climb was first reviewed in 1993. The Department has worked closely with the Forest Service in the development of mitigation measures and a comprehensive motorized winter travel plan that would provide snowmobile recreation, while protecting crucial wildlife winter ranges in the Salt River Watershed.

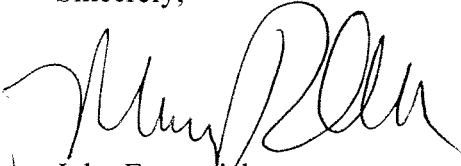
As a result of these efforts, our concerns relative to the annual snowmobile hill climb and the need for a comprehensive winter travel plan are summarized in our letters dated December 7, 1993, June 13, 1994, January 30, 1996, May 23, 1996, November 4, 1996, and December 2, 2008. We encourage the Forest Service to incorporate these recommendations as a precondition for issuance of the 2010 special use permit, and implement the comprehensive winter travel plan for the Salt River watershed that was developed and approved by the responsible agencies and concerned parties in October 1996. Implementation of the winter travel plans for the Salt River watershed was an integral part of the mitigation package developed during, and associated with, the environmental review of the snowmobile hill climb proposal.

Lastly, we support a one-time hill climb event in 2010, as well as in future years. We believe holding this event more than once, as was done in 2008, has significant impacts to big game animals that spend the winter in Phillips Creek and the crucial winter ranges adjacent to the hill climb site.

Mr. Jay L. Dunbar  
November 23, 2009  
Page 2 - WER 8303.00

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

  
John Emmerich  
Deputy Director

JE:MF:gfb

cc: USFWS  
Tim Fuchs, Jackson Region Wildlife Coordinator