



2013 Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy clarifies lack of impact that motorized recreation has on lynx habitat

The Organizations welcomed the release of the new interagency lynx biology team report yesterday, as this report added significant clarity to recent advances in research and supersedes the previous version of this document which was highly theoretical that has been heavily relied on for recent federal lands planning in Colorado.

Many of the management issues clarified directly impact motorized access to public lands and resolve theoretical questions that have existed since the release of the original lynx management documents. Management clarity on issues includes:

- Recreational usage of lynx habitat is a second level threat and not likely to have substantial effects on the lynx or its habitat. Previous theory and management analysis had placed a much higher level of concern on recreational usage of lynx habitat;
- Failing to manage habitat areas to mitigate impacts of poor forest health issues, such as the spruce and mtn pine beetle, is a major concern in lynx habitat for a long duration;
- Lynx have been known to incorporate smaller ski resorts within their home ranges, but may not utilize the large resorts. Dispersed motorized recreational usage certainly does not create impacts that can be equated to even a small ski area;
- Road and trail density does not impact the quality of an area as lynx habitat;

- There is no information to suggest that trails have a negative impact on lynx;
- Snow compaction from winter recreational activity is not likely to change the competitive advantage of the lynx and other predators;
- Snow compaction in the Southern Rocky Mountain region is frequently a result of natural process and not recreational usage; and
- Winter recreational usage of lynx habitat should only be "considered" in planning and should not be precluded given the minimal threat this usage poses to the lynx.

The Organizations anticipate providing hard copies of the complete report to Colorado land managers in the near future. A complete copy of the 2013 report is available here

http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/resources/pubs/wildlife/LCAS_revisedAugust2013.pdf