

Robin:

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on this. I will do what I can to give you my comments. The short turnaround time means I have not had a real good opportunity to really understand the complexities of the Forest Harvesting Plan. That said; skiers have formally used the Moose Meadows area for skiing for almost 20 yrs. and occasionally prior to that. Trails were cut for skiing in the area in the mid to late 80's by the local ski club. Since then Y2C2 (Youth Conservation Corps) has spent at least 2 summers that I am aware of on improving the trails. Other volunteer work has been ongoing in maintaining and keeping the trails in ski condition over the years. Trails are also used by snowmobilers, late season moose hunters, dog sledgers etc over the years so are basically a shared use at present. Presently the ski trails begin across from the Auriol Ski trail parking lot on the Haines Hwy. and basically links a number of the meadows east of the hiway until it hits the original Quill Cr. road. Then follows the road back towards Quill Cr and then out to the hiway. At times skiers take advantage of the other cut lines, wood trails, fire roads, and exploration trails linking them together to form a pretty nice complex of trails. This however depends on snow conditions and if packing and grooming equipment has been in the area. But the main loop is about 25km. in length with the last leg of the loop following the Haines Hwy back to the parking lot.

As far as harvesting in the area goes and the effects on skiing I can see some conflicts, depending on timing and location of the harvest. Definitely a summer or fall harvest would be better for skiers. I can see some benefits to harvesting for skiers as well depending on a number of things. Possibly trails can be improved and possibly more ski areas opened up by the trails the harvesters would leave after harvest, but this would have to be planned ahead of time. All in all this is an area that is underutilized from a xc ski perspective with a lot of future potential to be developed into a much better system than is presently in place. Over the long term I can't see the harvesting having a significant negative impact on xc skiing in the area as long as the harvest is managed properly, especially timing of the harvesting (non winter) and I can see working cooperatively towards this as the way to proceed.

If you need further clarification on anything I've mentioned or location of the trails etc. give me a shout. Realize that these are only my opinions and certainly do not reflect the opinions of all ski users of the area.

Rick Staley
Haines Jct.