



PRESS RELEASE

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Bush Administration Denies Petition to Ban Sleds from Parks Snowmobile problems persist while Bluewater prepares for lawsuit

San Francisco, CA – On the same day that a federal judge scolded the National Park Service for ignoring an order to phase out snowmobiles in Yellowstone, the Interior Department denied a rulemaking petition from Bluewater Network that called for a ban of the machines throughout the park system. In a six page letter, the Bush administration made the same arguments for allowing snowmobiling in the parks as it did to reverse a Clinton administration rule to ban the machines from Yellowstone. The Bush Yellowstone decision was rejected by a federal judge in December.

“This is a 180 degree change from the Park Service’s initial reaction to our petition,” said Sean Smith, Public Lands Director at Bluewater Network, and a former Yellowstone ranger. “The snowmobile industry itself could have drafted the response we got from this administration.”

The denial letter relies heavily on the winter use environmental study of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and cites “newer technology” as the reason to allow snowmobiling throughout the park system. The same environmental study also concluded that snowmobiles, regardless of technological advances, have more direct impacts to wildlife than other means of winter transportation.

“This same tired old reasoning was already rejected by a federal judge once” said Carl Schneebeck, Public Land Campaign Associate at Bluewater Network and a former ranger at Grand Teton National Park. “The Bush administration has demonstrated again and again that it will ignore science, the public, and the law when it comes to managing our national parks and this falls right into that pattern.”

In response to the denial, Bluewater Network is gearing up its legal team and threatening to take the Park Service back to court.

“Unfortunately, the management of our parks will once again have to be decided in a court of law,” said Smith. “It’s a shame that we cannot rely on the agencies entrusted with protecting our parks to actually protect them.”

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Under the existing laws and regulations, snowmobile use is currently allowed in these National Park Service units.

<u>National Parks Units</u>	<u>State</u>
Acadia	Maine
Aniakchak	Alaska
Appalachian National Scenic Trail	Multi-States
Bering Land Bridge	Alaska
Bighorn Canyon	MT/WY
Black Canyon of the Gunnison	Colorado
Blue Ridge	NC/VA
Cape Krusenstern	Alaska
Cedar Breaks	Utah
Crater Lake	Oregon
Curecanti	Colorado
Denali	Alaska
Delaware Water Gap	NJ/PA
Dinosaur	CO/Utah
Gates of the Arctic	Alaska
Glacier Bay	Alaska
Grand Portage	Minnesota
Grand Teton	Wyoming
Herbert Hoover	Iowa
John D. Rockefeller, Jr.	Wyoming
Kenai Fjords	Alaska
Katmai	Alaska
Klondike Gold Rush	Alaska
Kobuk Valley	Alaska
Lake Chelan	Washington
Lake Clark	Alaska
Mount Ranier	Washington
Noatak	Alaska
North Cascades	Washington
Olympic	Washington
Perry's Victory	Ohio
Pictured Rocks	Michigan
Rocky Mountain	Colorado
Ross Lake	Washington
Sequoia and Kings Canyon	California
Saint Croix National Scenic River	Wisconsin/MN
Theodore Roosevelt	North Dakota
Voyageurs	Minnesota
Wrangell-St. Elias	Alaska
Yellowstone	ID/MT/WY
Yukon-Charley Rivers	Alaska
Zion	Utah