

The Idaho national forests contain:

- 4,464 miles of groomed winter trails
- 4,137 miles of groomed trails open to snowmobiles
- 327 miles of groomed winter trails closed to snowmobiles

See Table A.

The Idaho forests contain:

- 20,800,000 acres of land
- 14,161,250 acres of land open to snowmobiles
- 2,692,954 acres of non-wilderness land closed to snowmobiles
- 3,967,296 acres of designated wilderness land, also closed to snowmobiles

See Table C.

The NVUM surveys for the Idaho forests show there are an estimated:

- 279,000 cross-country ski and snowshoe visits annually
- 877,000 snowmobile visits annually

See Table B.

On national forest land in Idaho, there are 13 times more miles of groomed motorized trails than non-motorized while there are only three times more snowmobile visits than skier and snowshoer visits. This disparity results in a density of 854 skier and snowshoer visits per groomed non-motorized mile compared to only 212 snowmobile visits per groomed motorized mile. These figures would be farther apart if user data from the forests with no groomed non-motorized trails were included.

The Payette National Forest has a total of 237 miles of groomed trails, not one mile of which is designated as non-motorized.

This leaves no non-motorized groomed trail experience for the 21,600 cross-country skier and snowshoer visits on Payette National Forest land.

The Boise National Forest has the greatest number of participants in cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the state, yet of 811 miles of groomed trails, only 34 miles are designated non-motorized. With relatively close numbers of people participating in each sport in that forest, the result is a density of 2,588 skier visits per groomed non-motorized mile versus only 141 snowmobile visits per groomed motorized mile.

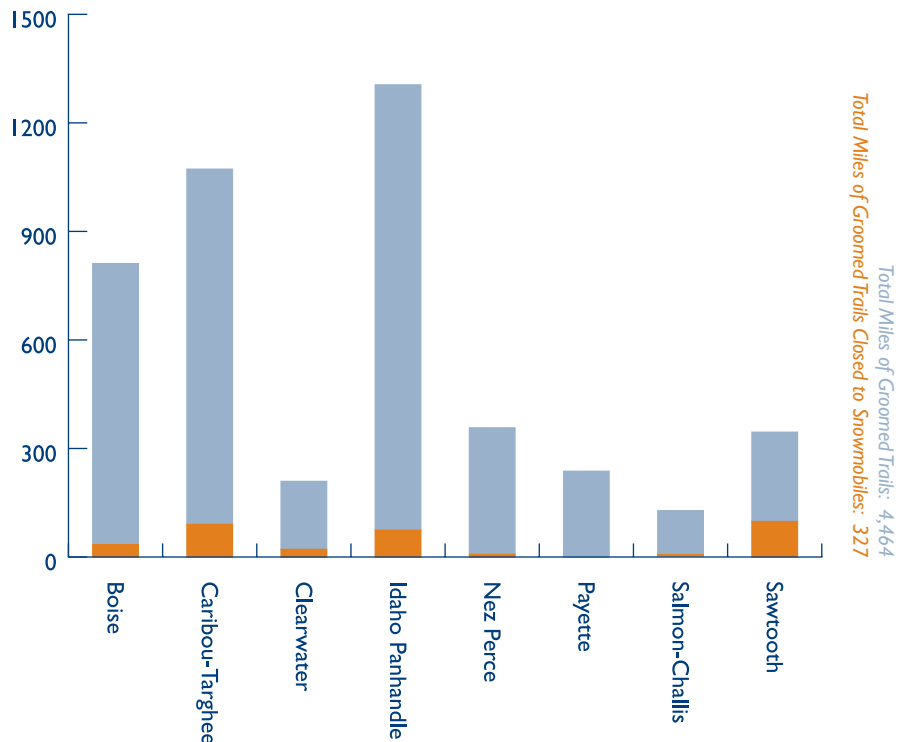
The Idaho Panhandle National Forest has more than four times as many skier and snowshoer visits as snowmobile visits, yet it has 17 times more groomed motorized trails than groomed non-motorized trails.

Only seven of the 357 miles of groomed routes in the Nez Perce National Forest are designated non-motorized, resulting in a ratio of 30 skier and snowshoe visits per non-motorized mile to one snowmobile visit per motorized mile.

Two Idaho state sponsored surveys show much closer participation numbers than those obtained in the NVUM survey. The first, an Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation 2002 report, estimates that there are only one-third more snowmobilers than cross-country skiers and snowshoers in the state, an estimated 237,000 snowmobilers and 176,000 skiers and snowshoers.⁸³ In that same survey, respondents identified “providing designated cross-country skiing trail systems” as more important than providing more snowmobile trail systems.⁸⁴

Table A: Total Miles of Groomed Winter Trails on National Forest Land Open and Closed to Snowmobiles

See Appendix 3, pg. 38, for comparison of snowmobiles vs. skiers/snowshoers per mile of motorized and non-motorized trails.



The second study, a traveler study conducted by the Department of Resource Recreation and Tourism of the University of Idaho in 1999-2000, estimated that 27 percent of both resident and non-resident travelers to Idaho participated in cross-country skiing, 25 percent in snowmobiling and 18 percent in snowshoeing.⁸⁵ These studies may be more accurate for Idaho considering that snowmobile registrations in the state of Idaho declined 4.25 percent between 2000 and 2005.⁸⁶

Also, since the NVUM participation rates do not identify the types of activities visitors would like to have offered on the national forests and do not account for those who no longer visit the forest because of lost opportunity for the activities they desire, the great difference in participation rates of the NVUM survey directly reflect the lack of groomed non-motorized trails available on national forest land in Idaho.

Table B: National Forest Annual Visits per Activity

Source: U.S. Government, National Visitor Use Monitoring data

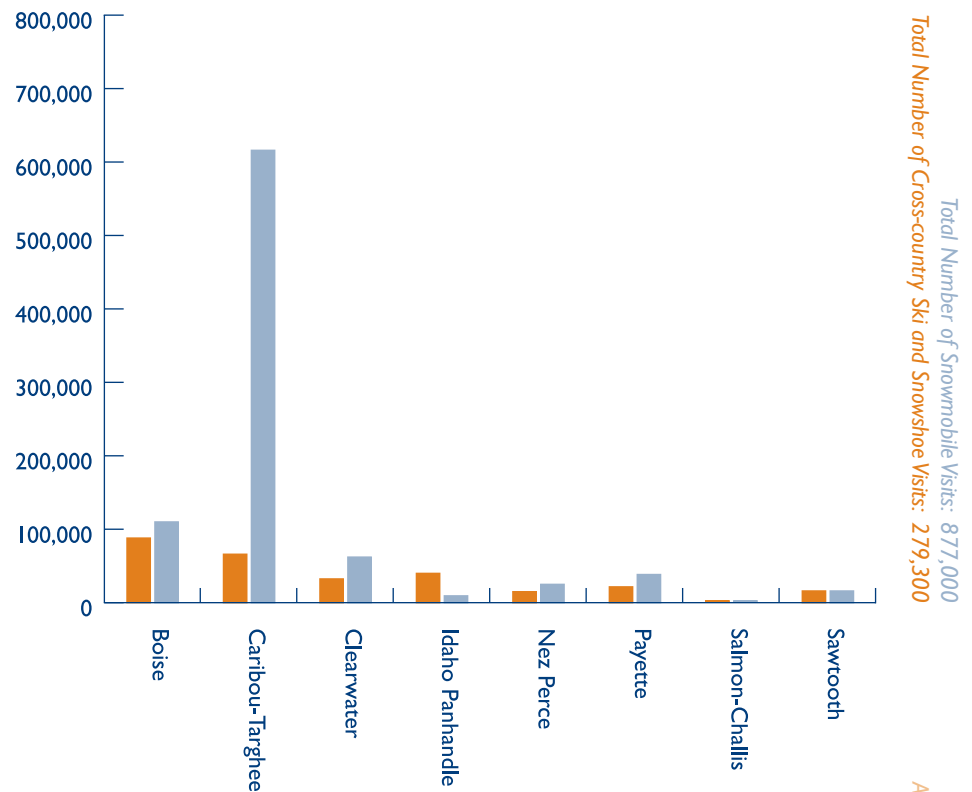


Table C: National Forest Acres Open and Closed to Snowmobiles

