

Wyoming National Forests

The Wyoming national forests contain:

- 1,592 miles of groomed winter trails
- 1,449 miles of groomed trails open to snowmobiles
- 143 miles of groomed trails closed to snowmobiles

See Table A.

The Wyoming national forests contain:

- 8,015,073 acres of land
- 4,905,161 acres of land open to snowmobiles
- 225,229 acres of non-wilderness land closed to snowmobiles
- 2,867,039 acres of designated wilderness land, also closed to snowmobiles

See Table C.

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

- 281,815 cross-country ski and snowshoe visits annually
- 486,675 snowmobile visits annually

See Table B.

These numbers show that on national forest land in Wyoming, there are 10 times more miles of groomed motorized trails than non-motorized while NVUM surveys for the forests in Wyoming indicate there are approximately 282,000 annual cross-country skier and snowshoe visits and 487,000 annual snowmobile visits. This disparity results in a density of 1,971 cross-country skier and snowshoe visits per non-motorized mile versus 336 snowmobile visits per motorized mile.

The disparity in opportunities for snowmobiles versus cross-country skiers and snowshoers is greatest in the Bridger-Teton National Forest. Though this forest has the highest percentage

of cross-country skiers and snowshoers of any part of the state, its ratio of users per mile is the most disparate. Only 44 miles of groomed non-motorized trails exist for an estimated 213,000 skier and snowshoe visits. On the other hand, snowmobilers enjoy 565 miles of groomed trails on that forest. These figures translate to a density of 4,848 skier and snowshoe visits per non-motorized mile versus 602 snowmobile visits per motorized mile.

The Medicine Bow National Forest is similarly weighted toward motorized use. Of 282 groomed miles of trails, only 38 miles are designated non-motorized. Despite the fact that snowmobile visits on this forest outnumber skier and snowshoe visits by only one-third, there are seven times more motorized trails than non-motorized.

For backcountry users desiring a non-motorized experience, neither the Bridger-Teton nor Shoshone National Forests offer any non-wilderness acres closed to motorized uses in winter.

Since the results of the NVUM activity analysis do not identify the types of activities visitors would like to have offered on the national forests or account for displaced forest visitors, the situation is likely more severe for skiers and snowshoers than the numbers reflect.

This situation is aggravated by state planners in Wyoming who have placed the development of non-motorized trails in a secondary role due to their assumption that “other federal, state and local agencies are the primary non-motorized trail managers in Wyoming.”⁹⁸

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.

- Miles of Groomed Trails Open to Snowmobiles
- Miles of Groomed Trails Closed to Snowmobiles

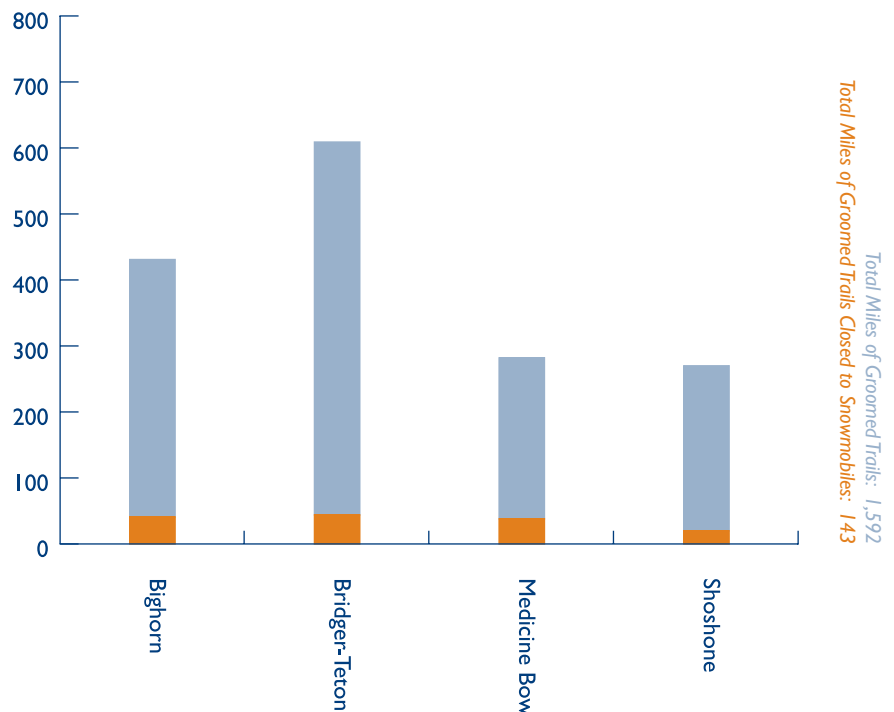
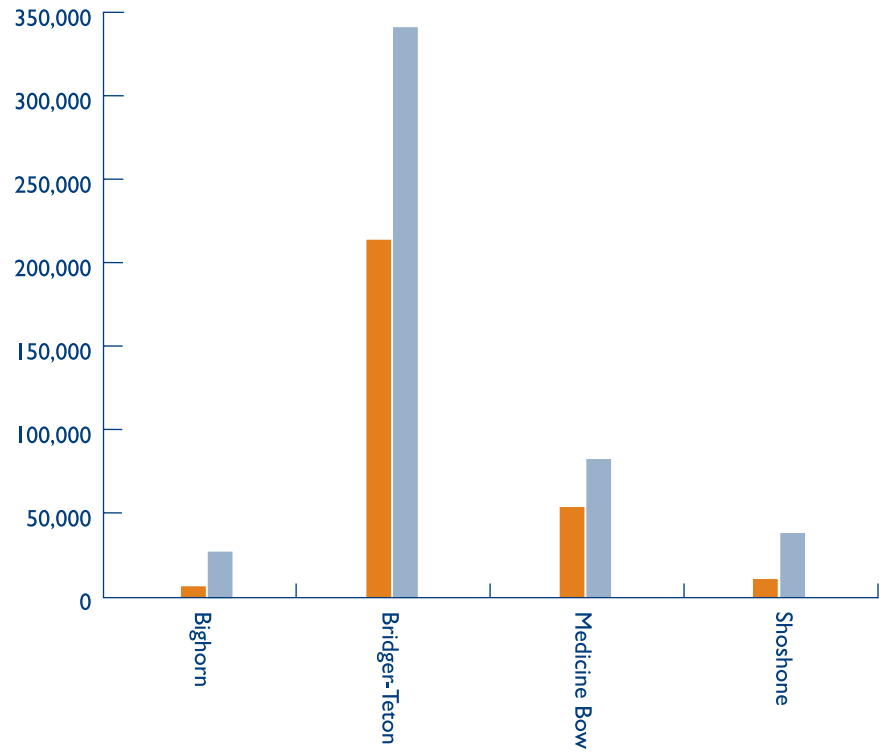


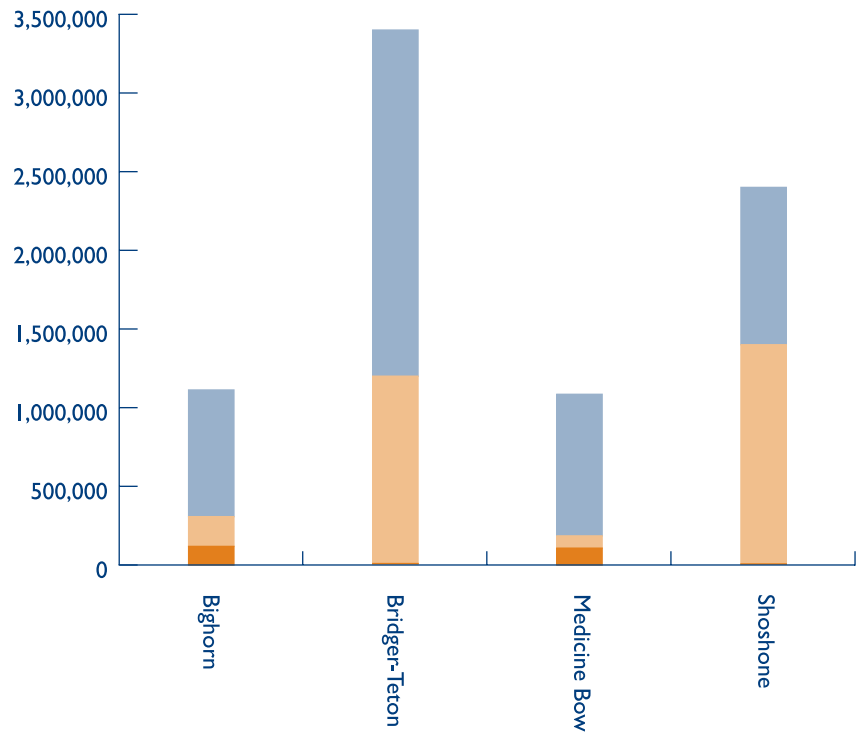
Table B: National Forest Annual Visits per Activity

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



Total Number of Snowmobile Visits: 486,675
Total Number of Cross-country Ski and Snowshoe Visits: 281,815

Table C: National Forest Acres Open and Closed to Snowmobiles



Acres Open to Snowmobiles: 4,905,161
Acres of Designated Wilderness Closed to Snowmobiles: 2,867,039
Acres of Non-Wilderness Closed to Snowmobiles: 225,229