

**Issue Report**  
**Use this form to report on agency inquiries**

Submitted by: Art Pope

Date: 12/12/2017

Report Title: Equal Access

Summary: 250 word max

Upon finding private vehicles behind a locked Forest Service gate I became curious as to how and why these people had privileged access to backcountry skiing in Oregon's Three Sisters Wilderness.

Wilderness or Wild River: Three Sisters Wilderness

Management Unit: Deschutes National Forest

Administrative Location: Bend, Oregon

Head of Administrative Unit: John Allen, Forest Supervisor

Contact and Agency Response: please grade the agency's response with an A to F letter grade. Comments must support letter grades in each category.

**B** Responsiveness: how long did it take the agency to respond to your inquiry.

My initial written inquiry directed to the local District Ranger resulted in two phone messages. I sent a written reply asking for a written response so his response could be accurately shared on this website. After six months without a reply I contacted the Forest Supervisor requesting his assistance with this inquiry. A response was received from the Forest Supervisor in about a month.

**A** Completeness: was your question fully answered.

My inquiry requested a response to two questions. Both questions were specifically addressed.

**C** Stewardship: are management actions in accord with wilderness values.

The management response seems to contradict itself when it indicates that the Three Creeks Road is closed to motor vehicle traffic during the winter season but that there is another road around the gate and there is no prohibition from accessing the Three Creeks Road by that route. Seemingly, if you can get around the gate the road is not actually closed to motor vehicle traffic.

Additionally, management policy allows holders of a special use permit to access the area using motor vehicles (when snow levels prohibit the use of snow machines) while that access is denied to the general public.

Wilderness Report believes that unenforceable and contradictory policy is not in accord with positive management.

**D** Wilderness: how well is management protecting the wilderness resource.

The response received to this inquiry indicates that the responsible federal management agency for this area, the Deschutes National Forest, has no idea who might be accessing

the Three Creeks Road behind their locked gate. Wilderness Report believes that if the managing agency deems it necessary restrict to public access to an area they must accept responsibility for assuring that all members of the public have fair and equal access to that resources and any required closures and restrictions are applied equally to everyone.