

# South Dakota National Forests

The Black Hills National Forest contains:

- 414 miles of groomed winter trails
  - 387 miles of groomed trails open to snowmobiles
  - 27 miles of groomed trails closed to snowmobiles
- See Table A.

The Black Hills National Forest contains:

- 1,200,000 acres of land
  - 1,047,000 acres of land open to snowmobiles
  - 39,574 acres of non-wilderness land closed to snowmobiles
  - 13,426 acres of designated wilderness land, also closed to snowmobiles
- See Table C.

The NVUM surveys for the Black Hills National Forest show there are an estimated:

- <130 cross-country ski and snowshoe visits annually
  - 30,940 snowmobile visits annually
- See Table B.

These numbers show that in the Black Hills National Forest in

South Dakota, there are 14 times more miles of groomed motorized trails than non-motorized. While the NVUM survey for this forest shows no participation by cross-country skiers or snowshoers, this national forest is an example where the NVUM survey results are likely under-representing non-motorized users due to the lack of non-motorized opportunities.

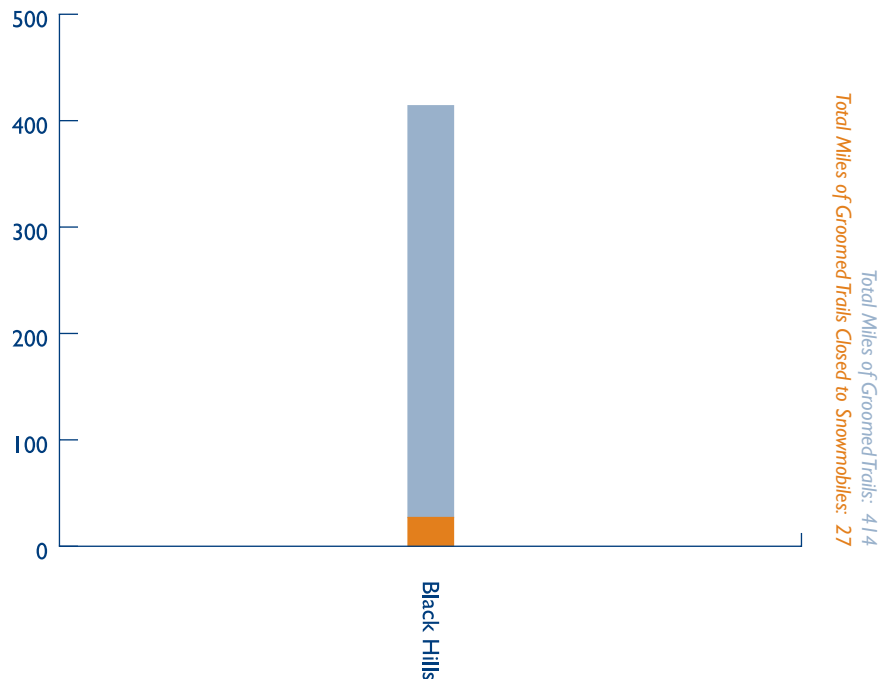
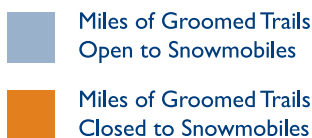
The South Dakota SCORP survey shows that 18 percent of responding households, or an estimated 11,520 residents, in the Black Hills region participated in snowmobiling, and 10 percent, or an estimated 6,400 residents in cross-country skiing.<sup>93</sup> This disparity results in a density of 237 cross-country skier and snowshoer visits per non-motorized mile versus 30 snowmobile visits per motorized mile.

Thus, while there are at least half as many skiers and snowshoers as snowmobilers in that region, there are 14 times more motorized groomed trails than non-motorized.

Further, of a total of more than 1.2 million acres of national forest land, only 53,000 acres, just four percent of the entire forest, are designated non-motorized.

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

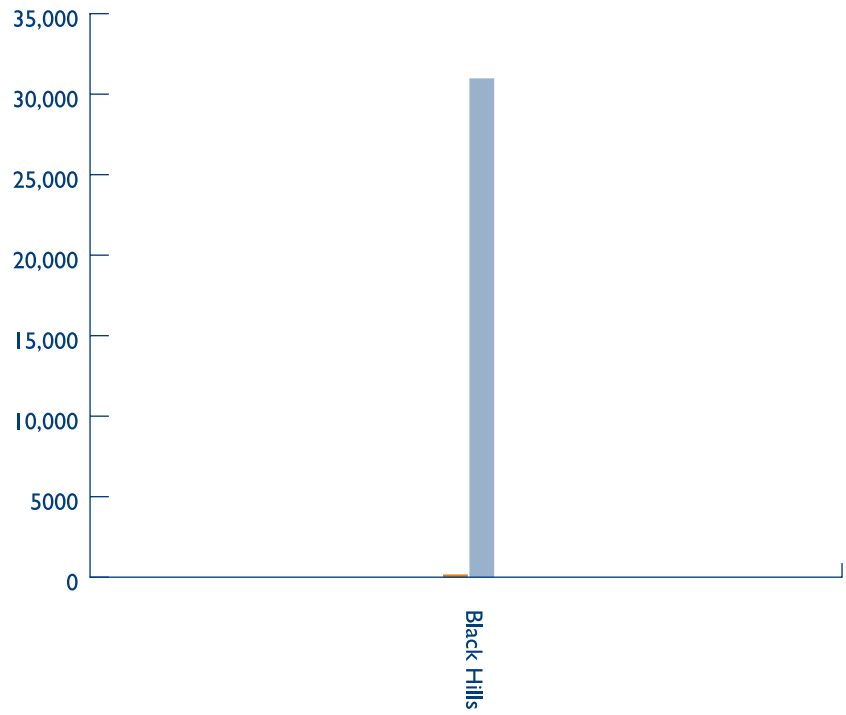
See Appendix 3, pg. 38, for comparison of snowmobiles vs. skiers/snowshoers per mile of motorized and non-motorized trails.



**Table B:** National Forest Annual Visits per Activity

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

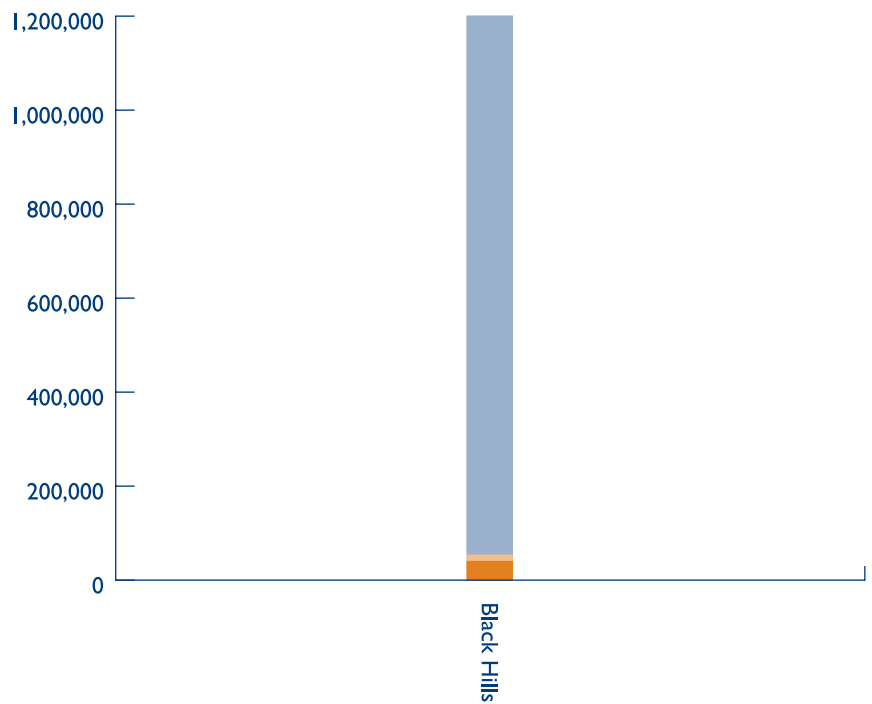
- Cross-Country Ski and Snowshoe Visits
- Snowmobile Visits



Total Number of Snowmobile Visits: 30,940  
Total Number of Cross-country Ski and Snowshoe Visits: 130

**Table C:** National Forest Acres Open and Closed to Snowmobiles

- Acres Open to Snowmobiles
- Designated Wilderness Acres, Closed to Snowmobiles
- Non-Wilderness Acres Closed to Snowmobiles



Acres Open to Snowmobiles: 1,047,000  
Acres of Designated Wilderness Closed to Snowmobiles: 13,426  
Acres of Non-Wilderness Closed to Snowmobiles: 39,574