

# Utah National Forests

The Utah national forests contain:

- 956 miles of groomed winter trails
- 885 miles of groomed trails open to snowmobiles
- 71 miles of groomed trails closed to snowmobiles

See Table A.

The Utah national forests contain:

- 8,351,533 acres of land
- 6,789,063 acres of land open to snowmobiles
- 809,072 acres of non-wilderness land closed to snowmobiles
- 772,027 acres of designated wilderness land, also closed to snowmobiles

See Table C.

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

- 266,670 cross-country ski and snowshoe visits annually
- 326,370 snowmobile visits annually

See Table B.

These numbers show that on national forest land in Utah, there are twelve times more groomed motorized miles than non-motorized, yet only 25 percent more snowmobile visits than skier and snowshoer visits. This disparity results in a density of 3,756 skier and snowshoer visits per groomed non-motorized mile compared to only 369 snowmobile visits per groomed motor-

ized mile. These figures would be farther apart if data from the forests with no groomed non-motorized trails were included.

Three Utah national forests, Ashley, Fish Lake and Uinta, have no non-motorized groomed trails at all despite an estimated 42,000 skier and snowshoer visits on those forests. Uinta National Forest shows the greatest disparity with an estimated 36,000 skier and snowshoer visits without any non-motorized groomed trails on forest land even though there are a total of 150 miles of groomed motorized trails in that forest.

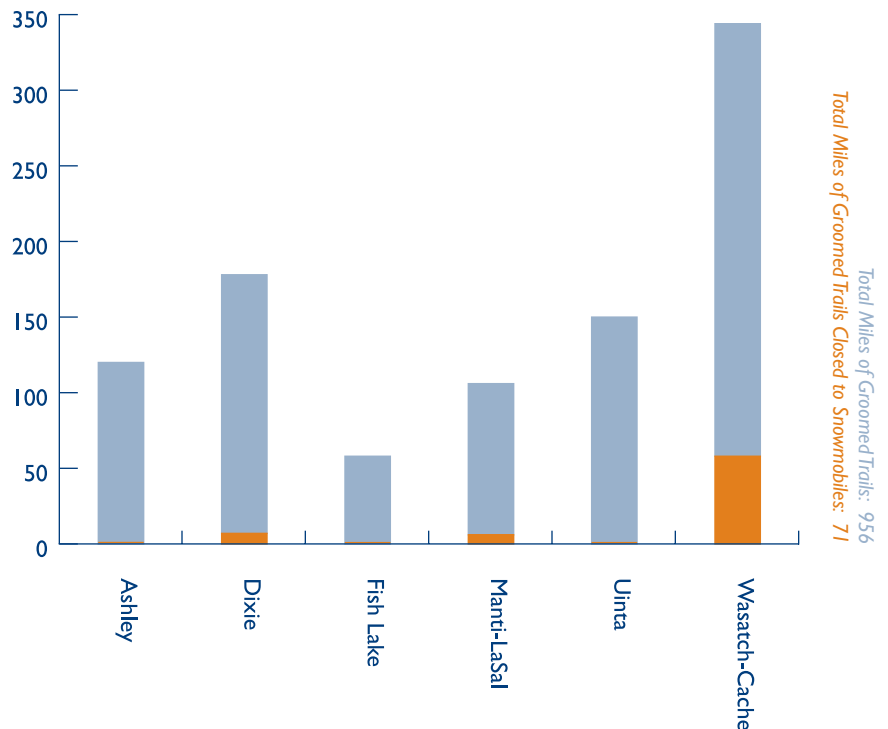
Even on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest where there are 50 percent more cross-country skier and snowshoer visits than snowmobile visits, only a fifth of the groomed trails are designated non-motorized. The result is 10 times more skier and snowshoer visits per groomed non-motorized mile than snowmobile visits per groomed motorized mile.

Almost seven million acres of forest land in Utah are open to snowmobiles, five times more acres than are closed. For practical purposes, since only slightly more than half of the closed acres are non-wilderness acres, there is nine times more acreage available for snowmobilers than for skiers and snowshoers seeking a non-motorized experience.

Since the results of the NVUM activity analysis do not identify the types of activities visitors would like to have offered on

**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.

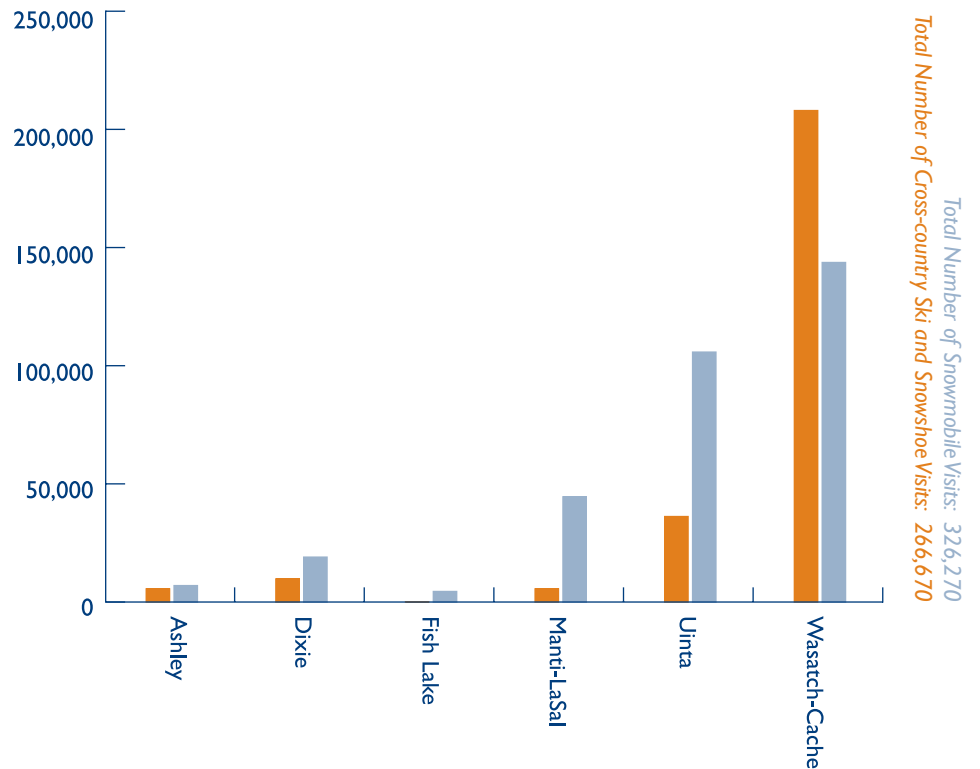


the national forests or account for displaced forest visitors, the situation is likely more severe than it appears. This is especially true of the three national forests that have no groomed non-motorized trails whatsoever. This bias toward motorized trails is noted in the Utah SCORP, which mentions that motorized and

multiple-use trails are emphasized in three of the seven planning districts in the state, despite only one of those districts reporting higher motorized participation than non-motorized participation.<sup>94</sup> In fact, snowmobile registrations in Utah declined by 20 percent between 1998 and 2004.<sup>95</sup>

**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**

