

Snowkiting may soon face regulations

by UPI

BEND, Ore. -- The sport of snowkiting could soon face regulations in U.S. states like Oregon as a result of wilderness designations, an official says.

Deschutes National Forest trails specialist Chris Sabo said legislators were considering regulations for snowkiting, which has been around since the 1960s, since the sport currently takes place outside federal and state laws, The (Portland) Oregonian said Monday.

Snowkiting is a sport where skiers or snowboarders use kites to pull them across the snow - typically in officially designated wilderness areas.

"Periodically new things pop up on us that we just can't envision," Sabo said.

The main problem facing the sport, in which skiers or snowboarders use kites to pull them across the snow, is that the mountainous areas typically used by snowkiters are officially designated wilderness areas.

Under the 1964 Wilderness Act, no mechanized transport or motorized craft can be used in designated wilderness areas.

Susan Sater, northwest wilderness program manager for the U.S. Forest Service, told the Oregonian the proposed change in agency regulations for snowkiters is a rare instance.

"It's been over 20 years, I think, since we changed the existing regulations, so that tells you something. It takes quite a big issue," she said.

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