

Colorado National Forests

The Colorado national forests contain:

- 2,384 miles of groomed winter trails
- 2,133 miles of groomed winter trails open to snowmobiles
- 251 miles of groomed trails closed to snowmobiles

See Table A.

The Colorado national forests contain:

- 14,119,841 acres of land
- 9,355,419 acres of land open to snowmobiles
- 1,470,939 acres of non-wilderness land closed to snowmobiles
- 3,205,994 acres of designated wilderness land, also closed to snowmobiles

See Table C.

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

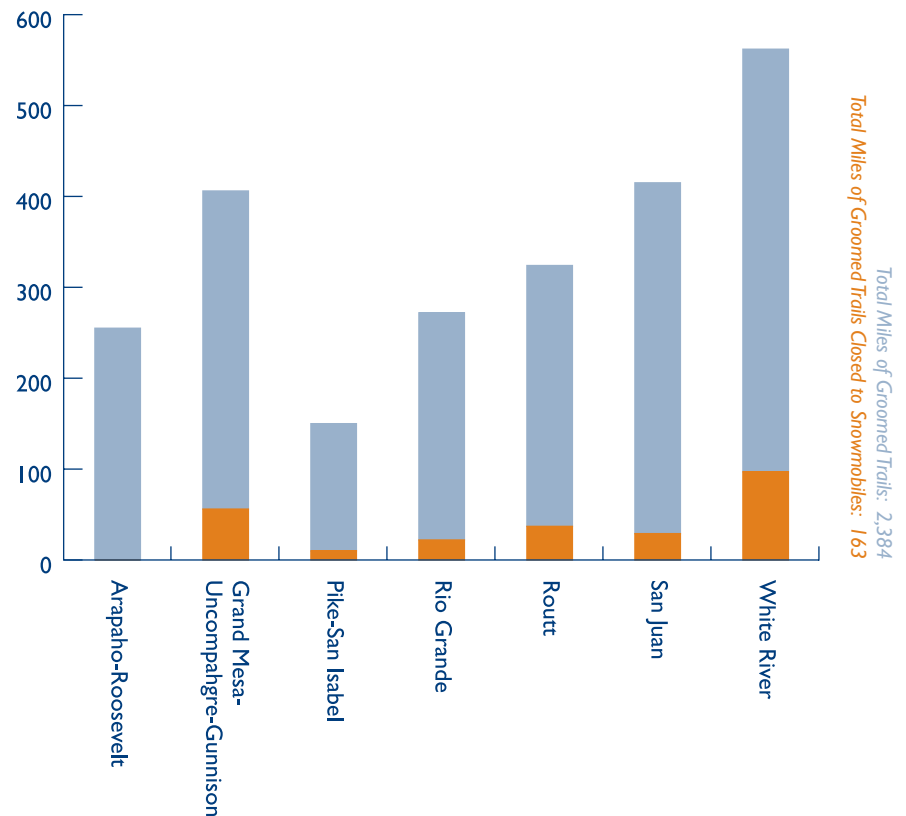
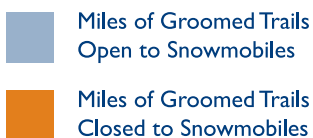
- 2,018,800 cross-country ski and snowshoe visits annually
- 1,345,660 snowmobile visits annually

See Table B.

These numbers show that on national forest land in Colorado, there are nine times more miles of groomed motorized trails than non-motorized, yet the NVUM data shows 50 percent more skier and snowshoer visits than snowmobile visits. Statewide, there more than 2 million skier visits annually and 1.3 million snowmobile visits annually. This disparity results in a density of 8,043 skier and snowshoer visits per mile of groomed non-motorized trail compared to only 631 snowmobile visits per mile of groomed motorized trail.

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.



This situation is mirrored in the individual forests throughout the state. In the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest, not one mile of 255 miles of groomed trails is designated non-motorized. Yet, NVUM surveys in this forest show that cross-country skier and snowshoer visits outnumber snowmobile visits five to one. This leaves no non-motorized groomed trail experience for the 868,000 skier and snowshoer visits on this forest land.

A similar situation exists on the Pike-San Isabel National Forest. Non-motorized users greatly outnumber snowmobilers, yet only 10 of 150 groomed miles of trail are designated non-motorized. This results in a density of 1,170 skier and snowshoer visits per groomed non-motorized mile compared to one snowmobile visit per groomed motorized mile.

In the White River National Forest, cross-country skiing is one of the primary visitor activities, with double the number of annual skier and snowshoer visits as snowmobile visits. Yet, only one fifth of the groomed trails are non-motorized. This results in a density of 6,300 cross-country skier and snowshoer visits per groomed non-motorized mile versus 709 snowmobile visits per groomed motorized mile.

In the San Juan National Forest, there are twice as many annual cross-country skier and snowshoer visits as snowmobile visits. Still, only 29 of a total of 415 miles of groomed trails are non-motorized.

The same disparity exists with respect to the forest acres open and closed to snowmobiles. Only one-third of the forest lands in Colorado are closed to snowmobiles, two-thirds of which are wilderness areas. This results in a density of 10 times more cross-country skier and snowshoer visits per non-motorized non-wilderness acre than snowmobile visits per motorized acre.

Since the NVUM activity analysis does not identify the types of activities visitors would like to have offered on the national forests or account for displaced forest visitors, it is probable that the non-motorized visitor numbers would be even higher if there were more non-motorized groomed trails and acres available for cross-country skiers and snowshoers.

Forests that are jointly administered supplied total acreages and miles for the combined forests, yet the NVUM data is for each forest separately. Thus, to arrive at ratios of user numbers to miles and acres, the total visits for each forest were added together to determine a combined forest-wide percentage of users for each activity.

Table B: National Forest Annual Visits per Activity

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

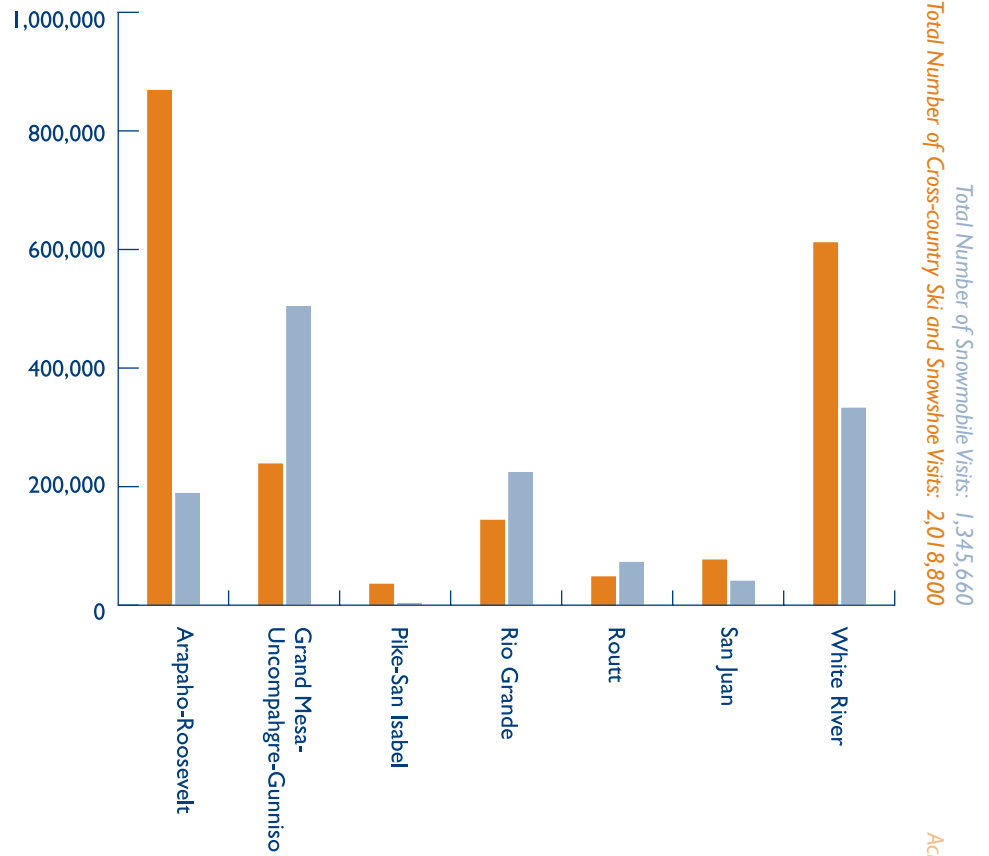


Table C: National Forest Acres Open and Closed to Snowmobiles

