

Recreational conflict is affective: The case of cross-country skiers and snowmobiles

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Abstract

The authors conducted a field experiment to test the assumption that subjective feelings are important in recreation conflict. During a weekend, cross-country skiers in a popular recreation area were assigned randomly to an experimental group who were exposed to an operating snowmobile, and a control group who were not exposed. Both groups completed a self-report questionnaire to provide information on their subjective experiences during their outing. The experimental group answered the questions five to ten minutes after encountering a snowmobile. Participants were not informed about the connection between the snowmobile and the investigation, and the questions regarding effects were answered before any clues were given about snowmobiles being an issue. Results showed that relative to the control group, skiers who encountered a snowmobile had their affective quality significantly reduced. Moreover, encountering a single snowmobile had an effect on participants' beliefs about the extent to which noise from snowmobiles disturbed the quality of ski-touring in general.