

9/12/2019

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Objector: Mike Lilly

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Purple Martin
Cabinet Ranger District
District Ranger John Gubel

Responsible Official: Chad Benson
Kootenai National Forest
31374 US Hwy 2
Libby, MT 59901

District Ranger or Responsible Official,

Objection

First I would like to offer my utmost support for the Purple Martin Project. The project is addressing many issues facing our National Forests today. There is one aspect of the project that is troubling me and the many others that voiced their opinions at public meetings and during the scoping process; the unjustified loss of motorized access.

I whole heartedly object to any net loss of motorized access in this project. As the draft decision states, there will be a net reduction of 3.6 miles of motorized access. This loss in access will never be reversed and is further turning away current and future potential visitors to this area. The project area is one of the only places on the district where motorized use is currently allowed and with the upcoming grizzly bear travel management changes, motorized access is going to be further limited on the Cabinet District. As stated in my letter dated 10/23/18 I stated:

“there is no data shown on current or future potential use, current impacts to wildlife, or any documentation on any current user conflict. The change in use designation actually goes against the goal of the forest plan for maintaining a road and trail system to provide access to a safe loop trail for motorized use. Those trails currently open for motorized use provide multiple loop options inside itself as well as multiple loop options with open trails and roads outside the project area. Although there are roughly 7 miles of trails currently open for motorized use in the

Huckleberry and Devils Gaps IRAs, all 7 miles are in Management Areas 5c. The forest plans states MA5c is managed to provide opportunities for year-round non-motorized use, motor vehicle use on designated roads and trails, and over-snow vehicle use. Trails 1099, 1083, and 811 inside MA5c provide precisely what the forest plan direction dictates for that management area, a "more remote and undeveloped recreation experiences largely through the management of the various trail systems (i.e., motorized and non-motorized)." If reading the forest plans goals and the management direction of MA5c, these trail should in no way be changed to non-motorized use designation but, actually be improved in a couple areas to enhance the safety of motorized users seeking a more remote and undeveloped recreation experience."

Solution

In order to have no major net loss of motorized access on the Purple Martin project, two options exist.

Alternative A Modified: The responsible official should go back and choose Alternative A, no change to the existing condition, but changing the motorcycle trails to seasonal use Dec 1 through October 15.

Alternative C Modified: The other option that would satisfy this objection is Alternative C modified. Leave all aspects of alternative C as is while leaving the Stevens Creek trail #1099 open to motorcycle use. Alternative C modified would construct 0.8 miles of new trail while converting 1.0 miles of motorized trail to non-motorized. While still a net loss of motorized access, this alternative is a common sense trade as it solves actual problems on the ground.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Lilly', written in a cursive style.

Resident, Sanders County

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