

From: [Salzmann, Kristie L -FS](#)
To: [Stresser, Susan R -FS](#); [Troxel, Olga -FS](#)
Subject: FW: Travel Plan Comments
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 3:08:23 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Additional TM comments for NZ.



Kristie Salzmann
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From: David Courtis [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2015 2:41 PM
To: Salzmann, Kristie L -FS
Cc: Jenny DeSarro
Subject: Travel Plan Comments

Dear Ms. Salzmann,

This Email contains my comments related to two of the Travel Plan proposals for the Clarks Fork Ranger District which were discussed at the public meeting in Cody on September 23, 2015. I want my comments to be carefully considered as the Travel Plan is developed and finalized by the Shoshone National Forest. Also, I want my comments to be included in the public record.

A. Proposal NZ-05 (Closure of forest roads 165 and 178.1B at the points where they enter the Clarks Fork Wild and Scenic River Corridor)

Over the years, I have hiked the entire 20.5 mile length of the Clarks Fork Wild and Scenic River Corridor (Corridor) at either water level or along the rim of the inner canyon. The Corridor is a stunning place to visit. Based on my experiences there, I can unequivocally state that the three outstandingly remarkable values which were responsible for the Corridor's designation as a Wild and Scenic River make it the "crown jewel" of the Clarks Fork Ranger District and a geographic feature of national significance. Fortunately, the majority of the Corridor remains in its original natural, and pristine condition, and I and many other users

want to keep it that way. In addition, we want to encourage the forest service to mitigate the environmental damage which has been done in a few localities (e.g. Crandall area) by incompatible motorized use.

The 1990 Congressional legislation establishing the Corridor stipulated that it should be administered as a WILD River. A wild river is managed so it is generally inaccessible except by trail, its shorelines remain essentially pristine, and its waters remain unpolluted. Motorized travel may be permitted in a few circumstances. However, it a nonconforming use which can be restricted or prohibited if it adversely impacts the outstandingly remarkable values and/or degrades other resources which were responsible for the river's designation as a wild river.

The forest service's 2009 Comprehensive River Management Plan for the Corridor (page 21) explicitly states "the primary threat to outstandingly remarkable values is unauthorized motorized use." In addition, the forest supervisor's Decision Notice for the Plan (page 6) indicates "long-term motorized access would be subject to regulation or closure if monitoring indicates adverse impacts to the outstandingly remarkable values of the river corridor are occurring."

Along the segment of forest road 119 lying within the Corridor, the forest service has taken a proactive, protective action to prevent additional degradation of the "sand dunes" by erecting a fence to exclude motorized vehicles. In addition, the forest service has indicated its intent to potentially close forest road 119 to motorized recreational use if monitoring indicates adverse impacts to outstandingly remarkable values of the Corridor continue to take place. Consequently, based on these precedents, it is an appropriate time for the forest service to recognize unauthorized and incompatible motorized usage has caused unacceptable resource damage on those segments of forest roads 165 and 178.1B lying within the Corridor in the Crandall area. It is obvious that the degradation which has occurred has damaged some of the very resources and values which led Congress to establish the Corridor. The situation can only be corrected by closing the two road segments to motorized travel, and I fully support that mitigating measure. Moreover, the two closures should not unduly inconvenience fishermen, kayakers, and other non motorized users of the area. Furthermore, the road closures would be a desired step to return a degraded portion of the Corridor to its original natural condition and enhance primitive recreation in that area.

FOREST ROAD 165

The segment of the Corridor serviced by forest road 165 has been seriously degraded by motorized use. For example:

- * At the end of the currently authorized road, a 40-foot in diameter parking lot/campsite has been created by motorized users. Compacted soil, trampled vegetation, some trash, and a large permanent rock fire ring are prominent features of that area. In addition, the river is less than 30 feet from the semi permanent campsite.

- *An unauthorized road more than 300-feet long leads upstream to additional campsites with rock fire rings, and all of the campsites are less than 25 feet from the river.

- * An unauthorized road has been pioneered by an ORV user across rocky terrain to a point more than 300 feet downstream from the end of forest road 165. A parking area with an associated campsite with a large, permanent fire ring has been created. The area is less than 75 feet from the river.

The resource damage in the area is unacceptable, unsightly, and significant. The campsites certainly don't correspond to the desired "leave no trace" concept, an important guiding principle for activities within the Corridor. In addition, the Clarks Fork River is classified as a Class 1 stream which means that no further water degradation by point source discharges are allowed. All of the campsites are less than 100 feet from the river, and the potential concentration of human waste near the semi permanent campsite can cause pollution of unpolluted water and degradation of water quality.

I am highly concerned that without the proposed closure of forest road 165, resource damage will not only continue but also increase.

Some people may object to the proposed closure of forest road 165 at the Corridor's boundary because doing so would prevent young children, senior citizens, and individuals with serious health issues from enjoying the river. However, the river is only .35 miles from the point of closure, and it can be accessed after an easy walk over level terrain. In addition, I personally know of a number of children five years old or younger, individuals over 70, and a person over 70 who uses supplemental oxygen who have all walked the full two-mile long distance along forest road 165 from the Chief Joseph Highway to the river and back.

FOREST ROAD 178.1B

The segment of the Corridor serviced by forest road 178.1B has been seriously degraded by motorized use. For example:

- * At the end of the road there is a large parking area with bare ground and trampled vegetation.
- * An unauthorized road spur has been extended from the end of forest road 165 for a distance of less than 100 feet so motorized users can drive a tiny bit closer to the river which is still about 500 feet away. At the end of the spur road, there is a 50-foot in diameter parking lot/campsite with compacted soil, trampled vegetation, some trash, and a fire ring
- * Several years ago, an ATV user pioneered an unauthorized road from the end of the unauthorized spur road cross country to the top of the cliff overlooking the river.

I am concerned that without the proposed closure of forest road 178.1B, the resource damage will continue and likely increase in the future.

Some people may object to closure of forest road 178.1B at the Corridor's boundary because doing so would prevent young children, senior citizens, and individuals with serious health issues from enjoying the river. However, the current end of forest road 178.1B is only 2,300 feet from the point of proposed closure, and the terrain between the two areas is relatively flat and easy to walk. Moreover, I personally know of a number of children five years old or younger, individuals over 70, and a person over 70 who uses supplemental oxygen who have all walked the full distance of forest road 178.1B from the Crandall transfer station to the river and back.

The end of forest road 178.1B is the preferred egress point for kayakers floating Crandall Creek or the "honeymoon" section of the Clarks Fork River. Those kayakers must carry/drag their kayaks for approximately 800 feet through down timber and over rocky, irregular terrain while traveling from the take-out point on the river to the end of the road. In addition, kayakers planning to float the river below the end of the road must carry/drag their kayaks over a challenging portage approximately a mile-long. The portage is necessary because the river from the "honeymoon" take-out point to a point 1,600 feet above Reef Creek is

impassable because it has significant rapids, a major waterfall, and an area where giant boulders completely block the river. The portage is along a user-created path which crosses down timber and rocky, rugged, sometimes steep terrain. Because kayakers, by the very nature of their sport, have to be in good to superb physical condition, carrying/dragging their 35 to 40 pound kayaks the extra 2,300 feet over gentle terrain to/from the proposed point of road closure should not be a major, unbearable burden for them.

I feel strongly about closing forest roads 165 and 178.1B within the Corridor. Consequently if the forest service would like my financial support, I am willing, depending on their magnitude, to pay all or much of the closure costs.

B. Proposed Relocation of Morrison Jeep Road Gate

If the forest service gate at the base of the Morrison Jeep Road switchbacks is relocated to a new location on the Dillworth Bench, there needs to be adequate space at the new location for ORVs to easily turn around when the gate is closed.

Thank you for reading and considering my comments. Be sure to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

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Sincerely,

David M, Curtis