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November 9 15

Sue Stresser, District Ranger Wapiti/Clark's Fork/Greybull Ranger Districts
Shoshone National Forest
203A Yellowstone Ave.
Cody, WY 82414

Dear Ms. Stresser,

Here are some additional areas in the travel Mgmt. Plan that I have comments on. I already sent a letter regarding the Little Sunlight campground proposal, which I recommended having no dispersed camping along Sunlight rd. as far as the bear gate, updating Gas Creek campground for the ATV/trailer campground by improving roads, creating official campsites with bear boxes, and making the existing Little Sunlight campground horse/tent only. Below are some additional suggestions.

1. **Line Creek:** I strongly oppose the Line Creek ATV road addition. This is a very narrow corridor for elk, deer, sheep, and other wildlife including more and more grizzly bears. It is overwintering range for upwards of around 4500 elk. On one side is the Beartooth range, on the other side is development. By dissecting this area with a road with ATV use, this important corridor is cut-off from wildlife. Here are the specific roads I propose closing: 123.1A, 123.1B, 123.2C, 140, 121.B, and the last ~2 miles of 121 up Littlerock Creek. Roads 123.1A, B, & 123.2C are redundant, too close together, serve no purpose, and increase wildlife impacts due to density. Road 140 should be closed with a locked gate where it turns off from road 123, and where it enters the National Forest on section 2 (from the south.) Tolmans could keep using road 140 through administrative access for grazing management, with a key. In the southern part of this area, roads 121 and 121.1B are not used much, don't go far, and serve no real purpose. Road 121 should be closed with a gate or impassable barrier in the northeastern quarter of section 26, just above where 121.1H joins, in a defensible location.
2. **Morrison Jeep Trail New Proposed Closure Gate:** I oppose moving the winter gate farther up the Clark's Fork Canyon. The canyon is winter habitat and provides seasonal movements for elk, deer, sheep, and cougars. Instead of moving the gate farther up the Beartooths, **I propose moving the gate in winter to the end of the black top at the mouth of the canyon.**
3. **New Proposed Closure:** The Sulphur Creek Mining Rd. 108.1 has been abused by ATVer's. On the old 7.5 minute 1996 map, the road ends just above the private lands. Now the road goes to Stinkingwater Pass overlooking Copper Lakes, a pristine hiking area. There is also additional road creep around the talus slopes to the west. These talus slopes are a delicate area used at times by grizzly bears. I propose putting a gate in just above the old

Sulphur mining camp, which is about ½ mile before the private land. The landowner would have an access key.

4. **New Proposed Closure:** The Sunlight Valley area has seen exponential traffic over the last five years, especially from ORVer's. I live off Sunlight Rd. and we now have severe dust issues and multiple vehicles traveling on the road at any one time, including large campers hauling ATV's. Weekend use is intolerable with noise. To protect wildlife, as well as soft use such as fishing, horseback riding and hiking, I propose **closing rd. 31** to all recreational use. This would be a closure of Sunlight Rd. at the final creek crossing of Sunlight Creek before it goes up the hill to the mining district. Mine users would have access keys. I have seen the existing bear gate lock broken by ATVer's for Memorial day fun use. The creek crossing at Lee City has been severely altered for easier access for ATVs. The trail head at Painter Cabin over the last year was made into a road by ATVers. The heavy use every weekend in this area has become a problem that the forest service is unable to control or supervise. In addition, times are changing and the talus slopes and mountain passes that are accessible now to ATVers are grizzly bear moth sites in various years. **Closure of this portion of the Sunlight Road is long overdue.**
5. **New Proposed Closure:** Sweetwater Creek rd. This route is highly erosive and washes out regularly, with the FS wasting a lot of money each year to rebuild when other legitimate FS roads languish (I might point out in my area Trail Creek which every year washes out the G&F road. FS has never put money into this road). This area was not included in the PCA because of the lodge, which is now gone, and the PCA was drawn around it. A deciduous riparian valley, extremely valuable ecologically and biologically. **Closure at existing gate by river.**
6. **New Proposed Closure:** Elk Fork Creek Rd. Many of the same values as Sweetwater Creek: deciduous riparian vegetation, very biologically diverse, very important wildlife habitat. Current motorized use causes substantial damage when trucks drive through wet meadows, really tear riparian areas up. Trucks go up the road well into December. A large campground is developed near the highway, which could be a logical place to stop the road.
7. **Clark's Fork Wild & Scenic Road Closures at Crandall Creek bridge:** I support these closures with one exception: Put a locked gate at the best take-out for kayakers. The kayaking season is a narrow window for this river. But this is an important take-out before the Box, which is class 5-6. A locked gate with a **check-out key** would give kayakers easy access to load their kayaks. This closure would protect wild and scenic river corridor values.
8. **New Proposed Closure 149.1:** I propose closing this section where it divides down to Fantan Lake. In addition, Fantan lake needs bear boxes. There is too much trash and several firepits with trash around the lake because of easy access.

As far as 149.1, because access is so easy for ATVs and 4-WD vehicles, there is heavy use around the lake with a lot of spur roads created by ATVs. This

year I witnessed a Grizzly sow with 3 cubs receive a massive food reward when car campers ran away from the bear and left a full cooler. There are no bear boxes there either. I have personally seen 5 grizzly bears in this area this summer alone. The area is becoming good bear habitat and heavy use by people who have no knowledge of bear awareness is dangerous for the bears. It is also a heavy use area for elk and wolves all summer long. This should be a walk-in trail.

Thank you for allowing me to comment,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Leslie Patten', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leslie Patten

