**Livingston Enterprise Op-Ed, November 30, 2022**

**False assertions about historical aboriginal use of part of Crazy Mountains Editor:**

A recent news article in The Enterprise about the Crazy Mountain land exchange process contain some false assertions about the historic aboriginal use of the “lower elevations” of the Crazy Mountain area, namely: “The ceremonial sites stay intact because of where they are. If they were lower down on the mountainsides, they would wash away during the annual spring or summer melt. In the jagged peaks of the Crazies, the snow pack is particularly intense, as is the flooding ... Crow people have never thought of the Crazy Mountains as a destination for resource gathering and instead have considered it a place for ceremonial use … Elk and bison and other wildlife would congregate at lower elevations, and violent floods limited access into the range for the majority of the year.” These undocumented assertions stand in complete contradiction to the historic human record. Large human group, communal bison kills, some 2,000 years old, are located in the “lower elevations” along Big Elk, Swamp, Big Timber, Sweet Grass and Duck creeks. Construction and operation of these sites began in late summer and use continued until spring. The upper components in the Duck Creek and Sweet Grass creek kills may represent Crow use. In addition to bison kills, vision quest structures at various elevations, camps, burials, “medicine rocks,” tipi rings, hunting blinds, quarries, stone tool caches and other sites reflect some 11,000 years of all-season multiple resource use of the “lower elevations” of the Crazy Mountain. Obviously, the proposed Crazy Mountain land exchange represents complex social, political and legal processes. Adding unsubstantiated, “alternative facts” to the mix only adds to the conflict, schism and complexity of the issues.

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