

November 11, 2023.

To: Northern Regional Office  
Responsible Officer: Forest Supervisor Mary Erickson  
Attn: Objection Reviewing Officer  
ECID, 26 Fort Missoula, Road  
Missoula, MT 59804

FR: Yellowstone Country Hunters and Anglers  
[biglonesomeaws@gmail.com](mailto:biglonesomeaws@gmail.com)  
(406) 580.0119

**RE: Objection to East Crazy/Inspiration Divide Alternative 1 Draft Notice**

The following objection is submitted on the Finding of No Significant Impact on for the East Crazy Inspiration Divide Land Exchange published September 27, 2023. Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 218.8(d)(4), We object to the following project: East Crazy Inspiration Divide Land Exchange The Responsible Office and Forest Range District are Forest Supervisor Mary Erickson, Northern Regional Office, Custer Gallatin National Forest, Bozeman and Yellowstone Ranger Districts

Lead Objectors

As required by 36 C.F.R. § 218.8 (d)(3), the Objectors designate the “Lead Objector” as follows:

Tess Goosey and Chloe Goosey, co-Founders  
Yellowstone Country Hunters and Anglers  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 280.0119  
[biglonesomeaws@gmail.com](mailto:biglonesomeaws@gmail.com)

Hello,

We are writing to express out objections to Alternative 1 of the proposed East Crazy/Inspiration Divide land swap as outlined in the Draft Decision Notice and FONSI, published on September 27, 2023.

We have carefully reviewed the information provided, and I believe there are several critical points that need to be reconsidered due to their potential impact on wildlife and subsistence hunters of southwest Montana. We ask that you review the following literature and suggested impacts of furthering the conflicts between non-consumptive human recreation and wildlife resources.

Our Environmental concerns originate from Cassirer et al. (1992) which highlights the potential disturbance to elk populations in the area, particularly their response to recreational activities such as cross-country skiing and also Cleveland et al. (2012) highlighted the link between elk movement and resource selection, indicating that hunting pressure in a heterogeneous landscape can significantly influence elk behavior. The 22-mile-long trail will provide unnecessary access to currently remote portions of the Crazy Mountains resulting in displacement of elk from public lands to private lands. This is bad for subsistence hunters who want to harvest and elk and adjacent private land owners who are raising cattle.

We are also concerned about our local communities. Crane et al. (2016) emphasizes the importance of considering elk foraging site selection on foothill and mountain rangeland, as

changes in land use may impact local communities and traditional land use practices. Furthermore, Gude et al. (2006) discuss prey risk allocation in grazing ecosystems, raising concerns about the potential effects on local communities and the need for a balanced approach to land management. Beyond this, our concern about historical and cultural preservation by Naylor et al. (2009) and Wisdom et al. (2018) who address the behavioral responses of North American elk to recreational activities, indicating that the proposed land swap may disrupt elk behaviors and habitats important for cultural and historical preservation.

As a result, we propose the alternative solutions presented by Proffitt et al. (2010) and Ranglack et al. (2017) who provide insights into changes in elk resource selection and distributions associated with hunting seasons, suggesting alternative solutions that might achieve the desired objectives without the negative impacts associated with the proposed land swap. While Stankowich (2008) emphasizes the need for a comprehensive understanding of ungulate flight responses to human disturbances.

Those alternative solutions and ideas should have been presented and still can be addressed by greater public involvement in this process. Unfortunately, from the onset of discussions and proposals on the Crazy Mountains, dating back to 2016, and development of local working groups, the greater interest of the public have largely been ignored, in favor of a few groups who do not have the support of the community at large. Increased public involvement in the decision-making process, as suggested by Lima and Dill (1990), would ensure a more inclusive assessment.

I appreciate your attention to these concerns and trust that you will thoroughly consider the potential implications of Alternative 1 of the East Crazy/Inspiration Divide land swap. I look forward to your response and hope that the final decision reflects a balanced and responsible approach to land management.

Sincerely,

Tess Goosey, co-Founder



Chloe Goosey, co-Founder



Yellowstone County Hunters and Anglers  
Livingston, MT