



Big Hill/Garden Creek Trails Construction Project

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need are to build a network of multi-use single-track motorized and non-motorized trails within the Big Hill Gulch and Garden Creek drainage and re-establish four existing single-track trails in the Garden Creek and Bayhorse Lake area. The existing Forest Service single track motorized and non-motorized trails systems centric to the community of Challis, ID are more than 10 miles away and only accessible by high clearance vehicles. This can be a deterrent to many recreationists. A trail network that is closer (7miles), via a road that was designed for cars would enhance recreational opportunities in the area by creating a variety of trail options for hikers, trail runners, Nordic skiers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, motorcyclists, families, and other users. This trail system would provide a unique recreational opportunity for visitors and residents in a forested ecosystem that is accessible by car via the Custer Motorway and closer to the community of Challis.

What are we going to do?

The proposed action is to build 19.7 miles of trails composed of nineteen segments of single track non-motorized trails within the Big Hill and Daugherty Gulch area. These trails will create a variety of non-motorized recreational opportunities with multiple loops with connections to open Forest Service roads. Additionally, three of the segments will serve as Nordic and fat biking trails during the winter months. There are multiple access points with parking immediately off the Custer Motorway (FS 40070). These include the BLM ATV/UTV parking area and the Big Hill Summit crest on the Motorway. A new trailhead will be established 1.2 miles in on the Big Hill Road (FS 40256). That trailhead will be approximately 1 acre in size. *The proposed action should allow Class I e-bike access to these trails. A Class I e-bike is a pedal assist bike that cannot exceed 20 miles per hour and does not have a throttle.*

The proposed action also includes three segments of single-track motorized trails within the Garden Creek and the Big Hill area for a combined distance of 13.7 miles. These trails will create a variety of recreational opportunities for motorcycle and non-motorized users. These trails will connect with existing motorized and open routes within the Bayhorse Lakes, Big Hill, and Custer Motorway area (Fanny's Hole, Tollgate Station) allowing for additional riding and hiking loops.



The proposed actions will reestablish three legacy trails, Garden Creek (4159), Spruce Gulch (4201), and Trelor Spur1 (4154.1). These trails will require some improvements such as signage, clearing, reconstructing, rerouting around water, and improvements such as puncheons, bridges, or raised turnpikes. These trails are currently designated as single track non-motorized. We propose to change the current designation to single track motorized with seasonal closure. This change will match other trails in the area offering multi users access in the Bayhorse or Buster Lake area. This change in designation should allow more frequent trail maintenance.

The proposed action will reroute portions of Bayhorse Lakes trail (0325) between the two campgrounds to address grade and erosion issues that currently exist.

Single Track Non-motorized

Woodcutter Trail-1.39 miles. This is a new construction trail from FS #40256 to FS #40258. Single track exists on the west side of the timber sale boundary. The trail then connects to an old wagon prism. The trail then contours across FS #40258 through the timber sale and thinning areas.

Woodcutter Cabin Path- .54 miles. This is a new construction trail that is a direct route up to the cabin from the Woodcutters Cabin Trail.

258 to Woodcutters Cabin - .21 miles. This new construction trail spurs off the 258 to Woodcutters Trail that goes to the Woodcutters Cabin path.

258 to Woodcutters Trail - .75 miles. This is a new construction trail from FS #40258 down to the Woodcutters Cabin Trail.

260 Link - .4 miles. This new construction trail utilizes an existing road prism that extends from the open route FS #40256 over to route FS #40260 to a water trough. This was the original path of the buried water line for the Big Hill range improvement water system. To establish this as a single track trail, the prism width will be narrowed by scattering debris.

Ben's Trail - 1.21 miles. This new construction trail starts on FS #40256. This trail will also be a Nordic path during the winter. The trail is below the road and travels west towards the Aspen grove, crossing FS #40256. A spur on the west side of the aspen grove, will climb up and turn east to cross Big Hill Gulch returning above FS #40256 road to its origin. Water runoff will be an issue during spring and early summer.

Big Drop Part 1- 1.37 miles. This new construction trail starts on FS #40258 and returns to FS #40256. The trail will be downhill only due to a variety of difficult technical features



(rocks, etc.). The trail will require some constructed improvements to access rock features (ramps, kickers).

Big Drop Part 2 - 1.55 miles. This is a new construction trail that starts on FS #40258 and returns to FS #40256. The trail is multi-directional, but the preferred route will be downhill. No improvements are needed.

Big Drop Part 3 - .62 miles. This new construction trail starts on FS #40256 and returns to FS #400070. The trail will be downhill only due to its steeper grade.

Big Hill Small Drop - 1 mile. This new construction trail starts from the Woodcutter Trail down to the junction of the 260 link trail and FS #40256. Improvements may be needed to access certain features.

Daugherty Up - 1.65 miles. This new construction trail starts off FS # 40078 and proceeds uphill to FS # 40259.

Daugherty Down - 1.62 miles. This new construction trail starts at the junction of FS #40259 and FS #40078.

Low Trail - 1.49 miles. This new construction trail starts at the new Trailhead off FS #40256. The trail proceeds downhill then west crossing FS #40256. A spur to the west side of the aspen grove ascends and connects with Ben's Trail.

Mill Ridge - 2.72 miles. This new construction trail (2.27 miles long) begins at the Southwest corner of Ben's Trail. The trail proceeds north, gaining elevation, then turning south up to a user created road spur off of FS # 40256 above Big Hill Gulch Spring. Spur trails will be narrowed to single track by placement of debris.

Nordic 1 - .16 miles. No construction required. Brushing and clearing of debris to a 6 feet width will be required. This trail starts off FS #40256 and returns crossing FS #40256 connecting to Ben's Trail.

Nordic 2 - .22 miles. No construction required. Brushing and clearing debris of trail to a 6' width will be required. This trail spurs off Nordic 1, crosses FS #40256 and connects to Ben's Trail.

Pipeline - .61 miles. A prism exists at this location from when the pipeline was placed. Minor brushing and tread work is required. The trail starts at the water trough at the end of 260 link trail and contours east to FS #40258.



Pipeline 2 - .55 miles. New trail construction needed for approximately 500' to an existing prism where abandoned water pipeline was buried. This trail will start at the junction of FS #40256 and the 260 Link trail. The trail contours across the hill to the west returning to FS #40256 road. The prism portion will require brushing and minor tread work.

Woodcutter Cabin Path - .54 miles. The new trail starts off the Woodcutters trail, then proceeds south with climbing switchbacks ending at the historic woodcutters' cabin. An interpretive sign could be placed at this location explaining how the community of Challis in its early days hired woodcutters in this area to meet their needs.

Woodcutter Trail - .77 miles. This new trail is a mixture of an existing prism and new trail to be built. This trail starts off FS #40256 very near where the Pipeline 2 and Ridge to Big Hill Gulch trail end. The trail proceeds east for .22 miles on an existing trail prism to the Timber sale boundary. New trail construction will be needed to gain elevation through the west side of the timber sale boundary. The trail will connect with one of the existing skid trails that contours across. An existing skid trail connects with an old wagon path prism near the Woodcutter cabin path. The trail follows the wagon path east for .14 miles. Debris will be cleared though the single track character of the trail will be maintained. From the end of the wagon path prism, a new trail contouring across the timber sale unit over to the FS #40258 will be required. This section drops approximately 150' below on to FS #40258.

Big Hill Trailhead - 1 acre. This new trailhead is located where FS #40260 road meets FS #40256. The trailhead will be built on the saddle located just below this junction. Leveling will need to occur along with the placement of harden surfacing material. A wooden fence should be placed around the parking area and a cattle guard at the entrance.

Single Track Motorized

Big Hill Summit Path - 3.76 miles. This trail starts at the end of FS #40241. The trail follows the old road prism across the top. The trail travels east where it ends at 1.64 miles. From there, 2.12 miles of new construction will follow the ridge down into Daugherty Gulch to FS #40259. A barricade or restrictor will be needed at the trail's west end to clearly define it as a single track trail.

Bull of the Woods – 2.8 miles. This trail begins of FS #40069 and continues along an existing prism for approximate 1.48 miles. No construction is needed on this section other than brushing. At the end of prism, partial new trail construction will be required. Where the prism is not visible, new construction is required. Where the prism is present, brushing and minor tread work are needed. This trail ends where it intersects FS # 4124. Two water



crossings occur on this trail made up of hard cobble rock. Two small bridges can be built if trail usage is significant.

Tollgate to Fannys' Hole Trail - 7.14 miles. This is a new construction trail that starts at FS #4153 and proceeds west along the ridge divide for 5.82 miles. From here, the trail will head down for 1.32 miles into the Mill Creek drainage, crossing Mill Creek, and coming out at Tollgate Station on FS #40070.

Legacy Trails

Garden Creek #4154 – This trail begins at Bruno Cabin just off FS #40069. The trail proceeds west where it ends just east of Buffalo Ridge. The trail junctions with the Spruce Gulch trail 4201. The trail location is not what is shown on the current Forest Service map. Water and grade issues exist on this trail. Small reroutes and improvements such as puncheon, turnpikes, or a bridge can resolve these issues.

Spruce Gulch #4201 – This trail begins just east of Little Bayhorse Lake and proceeds west above Big Bayhorse Lake. The trail turns northwest over to FS #4152 where it meets at the divide into Passasikwana Naokwaide drainage. Three reroutes are needed, one by Little Bayhorse Lake and two other locations on the trail between the lakes. The trail location is incorrect on the current Forest Service map. The trail remains to the east of Buffalo Ridge.

Trelor Spur 1 #4159.1 – This trail begins off FS #4159 and follows the fence line over Buffalo Ridge to FS #4201 above Big Bayhorse Lake. This trail crosses several open meadows making it hard to follow. Minor reroutes are needed to address some erosion concerns on the Bayhorse side.

Bayhorse Lake Trail #0325 – This trail connects the two campgrounds on Bayhorse and Little Bayhorse Lakes. Erosion issues are visible as follow the trail into the gully. Rerouting the trail can address these issues with a trail that maintains the appropriate grade and drainage. A possible reroute would be to follow the hill and come out at the outlet at Little Bayhorse Lake. A spur trails could be added for those who want to walk down to the upper end of Little Bayhorse Lake along the existing trail.