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Title:

Comments: Comments on Clearwater NF DEIS

To whom it may concern,

These are my comments on the DEIS alternatives for the Clearwater National Forest. It was great to meet all the Forest Service personnel who have been working hard on this project at the Missoula meeting, including Forest Supervisor Cheryl Probert.

As I discussed with Cheryl, the historical use of the Great Burn / Hoodoo RWA for over-snow motorized use is my primary concern. Before the RWA was closed for over-snow use, I had the privilege of enjoying the area by over-snow motorized use on many occasions. I am attaching pictures from back in the day when it was still open to over-snow use.

The area was challenging to access at times and one of the most beautiful wintertime areas imaginable.

Impact on wildlife by motorized over-snow use is nonexistent, and there is no science to support the assertions that mountain goats and wolverines are impacted in any way. In the many many years I rode the area, I never observed a mountain goat nor a wolverine in the course of my riding, and I did not and do not ride a noisy snowmobile that would scare wildlife. No tracks observed other than the occasional moose or bird tracks.

My preferred alternative would be Alternative Z, except that the Great Burn / Hoodoo area needs to be designated as 'semi-primitive motorized' instead of a RWA. Access for this area could be limited to snowmobiles, snow bikes and mountain bikes. This would be a fair way to designate this area that would allow historical access while maintaining the unique beauty and character of the area. Over-snow use leaves no lasting tracks; one snow storm, or spring snowmelt, and all traces are gone.

Also, the North Fork Spruce-White Sands and Sneakfoot Meadows RWA's should be eliminated; they have been historically accessed by over-snow vehicles for many years and do not possess the wilderness characteristics worthy of being considered or recommended for wilderness. I personally have family history, with my Dad working for the Forest Service for his entire professional career, accessing many of the areas that are under discussion today doing mapping and fire work and surveys in the field. He passed away in December of 2019; I would like to be allowed to access these areas once again; my wife, who is currently in ill health, wanted to access the Hoodoo / Great Burn area after seeing the pictures I had taken, as her health improves I hope this will once again be a possibility, and again, NO negative impact to wildlife has been proven as it does not happen, and no diminishment of the character of the area by the limited use I have proposed above.

Everyone should be allowed to enjoy this unique area as a semi-primitive motorized area.

Thank you for your time. And enjoy the pictures.

Mitch Rosenau