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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Custer Gallatin National Forest

Attn: Forest Supervisor, Mary Erickson

P.O. Box 130

Bozeman, MT 59771

Dear Ms. Erickson,

Thank you and the staff at the Custer Gallatin National Forest (CGNF) for the Preliminary Environmental Assessment for the East Crazy Inspiration Divide Land Exchange. Also, thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. I am of Cheyenne, Pawnee, and settler descent, and I am submitting comments on my behalf.

Tribal Cultural Consultation

As you are aware, the United States has a layered and complicated history. Millions of Indigenous peoples, or those who identify as Native American or American Indian, have a connection to all of the land that spans thousands of years. While the peoples of the Crow Nation have a unique and spiritual connection to the Crazy Mountains, it is important to consider and include the relationship of other Indigenous nations and peoples who identify as having a connection to the Crazy Mountains to obtain a deeper understanding and context of the Crazy Mountains and to make more informed decisions. Below are my suggestions on how a deeper engagement and understanding of diverse Indigenous nations can occur for the final assessment.

? Continually build and maintain a deeper relationship with diverse Indigenous nations who identify as having a connection to the Crazy Mountains.

? Provide a complete cultural survey or inventory of the public lands under consideration to the Indigenous nations who identify as being connected to the Crazy Mountains.

? Provide a summary or description of all the Indigenous nations CGNF is collaborating with on this land exchange in the environmental assessment.

? Provide a summary of how tribal cultural properties are identified, how Indigenous nations are part of the process to deem property as significant enough to protect, and the plan to protect them on private or public land.

? Conduct a comprehensive ethnography study or oral history with Indigenous nations and peoples who identify as having a connection to the Crazy Mountains. An oral history project has the potential to help CGNF gain a deeper understanding of the layered history of the project area. Many Indigenous peoples have used oral history or oral tradition for thousands of years to pass on important Indigenous knowledge of a place, history, and culture. This knowledge can be beneficial, especially when tribal cultural properties are not found on the land or are missed due to human error or the erosion or disruption of the land.

In future land exchanges, it is preferable to incorporate all the suggestions mentioned above in the preliminary assessment.

Crazy Peak Agreement

I support the agreement between the Crow Nation and Switchback Ranch, LLC, which allows Crow peoples of the Crow Nation access to Crazy Peak. I am curious about the process of implementing the agreement. I am also curious if other Indigenous nations and peoples who identify as connected to the Crazy Mountains can be considered and included. As stated in the preliminary assessment, this agreement is outside the control of CGNF. Since the agreement is mentioned in the initial assessment, I have included my comments here.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Warmly,

Francine D. Spang-Willis