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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

My name is TJ Krob. I am a Bozeman native with over 30 years spent recreating in our backcountry areas enjoying what MT has to offer....considering I am now 33 years young, the Gallatin forest served as my backyard spurning my own growth.

A few general comments regarding the Forest Plan process pertaining to Recreation...

-I sincerely hope that the FS gives a bit a weighting to each comment they receive regarding where it came from. This can include agencies which passed around a form letter for a bunch of random people around the nation to sign - if 10 people submitted the exact same form lettered comment, those comments should have far less weight than 1 individual who spent hours reviewing the documents to cater their true response. Do you do this? Otherwise the system breaks up into "who's got the most votes" which isolates us singular folk.

-I also hope that a person's place of residence weighs in on your process. Folks from Maine or Oregon or New York who do as above (sign a form letter) offer no legit feedback other than they can be a sheep signing on a line following what they thought was a nice document. They've never been to the specific area/trail they're claiming to have knowledge in regarding why it should be managed a certain way.

- I hope that tenure within the Bozeman area is included in feedback. Folks who imported here 2 years ago and now consider themselves local and this is their home are full of it. If you can't remember the nice old Jeep trail that ran through Bear Canyon in it's heyday, or don't know what Ernst or BigR are then you haven't spent enough time here to know how the quality of life and "Fun in the Forest" continues to degrade at the hands of foreigners or people who think they know what's right for us. Perhaps this includes many prior or current FS employees, and likely countless of commenters.

A less general comment follows a statistical mindset regarding population. As an Engineer in the Transportation Industry, if more people/traffic exists in a given area, what is the logical endgame the area? BUILD MORE, OPEN MORE, KEEP MOVING. The idea to condense more people into smaller open recreation areas is totally asinine. I too am a promoter of keeping things native, untracked, and undamaged, but ANY thought to remove access from one area will congest another. That'll lead to resource damage from too many folks there...and then what - you'll close that one down too from overuse. Is this your goal??? If anything, the Gallatin surrounding area needs to beef up its infrastructure, create more trailheads that support more people, shore up areas that tend to get wet, and cut down problematic trees ahead of the riding season months to avoid go-around damages.

The next item pertains to Timeshare opportunities. This has been a great way to reduce user conflict and encourage you to employ it - but in greater capacity. Perhaps on some trails that are multiple use, you don't just close it to bikes 3 days of the week [Reference Trail 427 or 434], but on the days that bikes are allowed there, you DO Close it to the other users (like no horses or no walkers on those same days) Doesn't that sound fair? ---- Fun fact on this one regarding user conflict - if we believe the "numbers" and these Green groups out there that comment*** in droves, they all love the wilderness and don't respect anyone who is aboard a wheeled device. They "think" that is the experience they want. Since we already have 1054191 acres of Wilderness, why is it that these people continue to have conflict with other recreation types? Why aren't they already in the Wilderness where they wouldn't have any conflicts? Easy - Wilderness is only used by 3% of the active users in the forest. Why? Because everyone loves the multiple use trail, trailhead, and feel of those recreation areas. Case and point are the complete Wilderness trails that barely make it onto a map each year. These see 5 people on them in a given summer leading to weeds overtaking the path, signage becoming dilapidated, a rats-nest of

downfall at each turn, etc. This is because it lacks attention and maintenance from the volunteers who carry saws and keep trails looking tidy. If we can't "mechanize" through there, then simply take it off the map...it won't exist in a few years anywho such as chunks of non-motorized trail 8, 327, 325, 321, 332, 152, 207, 444, 108, most of the Eastern Crazies, and many more! These all lose their defined route due to not being maintained or not being open for Multiple use.

***A comment segued by the above - I recently heard and read in the Chronicle that a Green Group planted a member of their team at trailheads throughout the past few summers (or maybe just last summer) to research how many users were going in and out of each place. They claimed to be documenting how many users passed by, what mode of transport they were using, along with other caveats related to their travel. If their sample size was "great" enough and they spent a thorough amount of time at each place, why is it that neither I, nor any member of the mechanized community I've run across were interviewed for this study? During the July 16-September 4 timeframe, you can be guaranteed that one of us will pass through a given section of this time sensitive land, but our voice wasn't heard. Where were these surveyors? Their collected data has either been falsified or they chose who to ignore.

A less common occurrence to perhaps implement time sharing might be to close specific trails due to weather impact. I don't have enough fingers or toes to count the times I've run up Trail 6 or 210 only to have a slug of horses post holing 6" deep into the muck. I realize there's "one in every crowd" who produce damage like this, but it can be reduced. AND - here's the lesser known part - IF you believe that a motorcycle will rut up an area with riparian damage after a wet storm more than a horse or even a person walking - then it's time to go back to school. Math supports less PSI on the ground relative to the friction force holding the earth in place leads to less damage from a wheeled vehicle.

Depending on the recommended plan, I'd propose that for every 1 mile of trail the FS attempts to close to mechanized use, they open up 1 mile. Whether it's an existing path already in place (but for some reason has been turned to "non-mechanized" - i.e. trails 133, 422, 169 in South Cottonwood....they're there, so let us ride and maintain them...) or a newly created trail somewhere else....that would solve the statistics problem I mentioned above.

I'll now jump into specifics of the proposed plans.

-I can support Plan A - Multiple Usagers or Mechanized Travelers don't get more with this alternative nor do we don't get less....we've never been offered more, so we've learned to live with what we have. Please don't take it away.

-I cannot support plan B.

-Plan C and D are too far out in the weeds, do not signify core hard-working Montana Values, and aren't valid as proposals.

-Plan E - now we're talking! Finally eliminating the defacto recommended wilderness areas from prior years is much needed. This would provide clarity and remove the uncertainty stemming from years being in a state of limbo (HPBH...just open it back up to bikes under the Backcountry Area designation).

Thank you for taking the time to read through my comments.

~T.J. Krob