

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/15/2019 2:20:12 PM

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Comments: Of the three landowner exchanges involved, I generally support the Forest Service land exchange with Rock Creek Ranch and Wild Eagle Mountain Ranch. However, the Crazy Mountain Ranch land exchange is not in the public interest and here's an example why. The Forest Service proposes trading Sections 4 and 8 for Sections 11 and 13, T3R, R11E. Sections 4 and 8 are pristine, easy-to-access, low mountain sections which contain some of the best fair chase hunting opportunities for elk on public land. Sections 11 and 13 contain the alpine lakes, Rock Lake and Smeller Lake, respectively. Many years ago, there was a concrete irrigation dam and outlet tunnel created (mined) under Rock Lake so that the landowner could literally drain the lake. It begs the question. Why would the Forest Service even consider this future disaster? The Rock Lake dam was breached as recent as 2012. Also, there are historic water rights on Rock Lake and its water will stay under the control of the Crazy Mountain Ranch, along with third-party irrigation water rights owned by other parties that will remain in private ownership. This is not a clean land exchange and will lead to future conflict.

Another point I would like to address is the obliteration and reroute of another portion of the historic Lowline Trail, which is also part of the land exchange with Crazy Mountain Ranch. Once again, why would the Forest Service consider this as the public has granted right of ways. Were there any public meetings pertaining to this reroute? The Forest Service is proposing building a new trail off of Trail 270, which will be extreme at best and disrupt more wildlife habitat.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this issue

Respectfully,

Pat Wilson  
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