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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Plan Revision Team

I object to the Draft Revision of the Helena Lewis and Clark Forest Management Plan. It does not in any way designate enough recommended Wilderness. In my comment letter I mentioned the following issues that were not resolved to my satisfaction in the the Draft revision.

Issue: Not enough recommended Wilderness

Solution:

I recommend Wilderness designation for the entire Big Snowies WSA. I also recommend that all roadless areas connected to the Big Snowies WSA be designated as wilderness.

I recommend Wilderness designation for the entire Deep Creek WSA. We need to protect these lands from forest fires and according to Bradley et al 2015 <https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ecs2.1492>

I recommend the Additions to the Scapegoat Wilderness that include Red Mountain, Arrastra Creek and Silverking, etc. I would recommend even more protections in the area. As part of the Bob Marshall Wilderness complex, I do not support any disconnect or roads or mountain bike trails that might disconnect these areas. These areas along the Continental Divide are important connective corridors for wildlife.

I support the Gates of the Mountains Wilderness additions which include Big Log, Boley-Edith and Blackfoot Meadows. I would recommend more additions to this beautiful area in order to connect to other wilderness areas

I recommend Wilderness for the 29,168 acres in Camas Creek. This is the largest area in the Big Belts and it is high in wilderness characteristics. This area should be protected as Wilderness.

I recommend Wilderness for Nevada Mountain, The Crazy Mountains (including Loco Mountain), the non-motorized part of the Tenderfoot area along the Smith River.

I recommend wilderness designation for Camas Creek in the Big Belts, Colorado Mountain, and the non-motorized areas of the Middle Fork Judith.

I recommend protections for the wild core of the Elkhorn Mountains. I have backpacked in these areas and it would be a shame to see them opened up to oil and gas leases. I would like these areas to be more clearly protected that includes a ban on oil and gas leases throughout the Elkhorn Wildlife Management Unit.

I recommend wilderness for the roadless parts of Mount Baldy, Deep Creek and the Smith River Corridor in the Little Belts, Electric Peak in the Divide area and for the North Crazy Mountains.

I recommend protective standards that are similar to wilderness in the Badger-Two Medicine area that recognize tribal treaty rights to this area. Create a clear, strong protection that allows the Blackfeet to make management decisions with the Forest Service. Please make sure that these areas do not allow mechanized use.

Issue: The Continental Divide Trail Corridor is not protected from oil and gas exploration.

Resolution: Continue protections of the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) Corridor. Please exclude oil and gas development, use of the CDT for skid trails, and all motorized use. The CDT should remain a quiet trail and no exceptions should be made to the area to allow for motorized special events on the CDT.

Issue: Wilderness Quality is not being preserved.

Resolution: Exclude mechanized and motorized recreation in all recommended wilderness areas RWA's and Wilderness Study Areas WSA's. When these types of uses become established, the ability for the areas to be designated wilderness becomes next to impossible over time. Since these areas are being considered for wilderness, clear language in the Forest Plan that excludes motorized and mechanized use from both RWA's and WSA's is essential.

I support the exclusion of mechanized and motorized recreation in all Wilderness Study Areas.

Issue: Chainsaws degrade Wilderness quality.

Resolution: Do not allow chainsaws in wilderness study areas. They are to be managed for wilderness characteristics and the massive amount of trail clearing using chainsaws in WSA's is distracting, loud and takes away the wilderness characteristics. In the Bitterroot WSA's after a mistaken interpretation of a judicial ruling, Bitterroot Backcountry Cyclists cleared/cut over 500 downed trees from 20 miles of trail in just a few weeks in July. This is in complete opposition to the idea of quiet, primitive wilderness and secure wildlife habitat. I am sure it had a huge affect on wildlife as they raised their just born young in these areas. Trails are to be primitive in primitive wilderness areas. And wilderness characteristics are to be maintained. That means NO CHAIN SAWS.

Issue: The Primitive Recreation Setting designation is inadequate:

Resolution: Do not add a new designation. Use proven dedignations: WSA's, RWA's and other strong designations that exclude certain types of travel. But if you are to create a Primitive Recreation Setting, please make sure the language is clear to exclude motorized and mechanized uses.

Issue: Designations are unclear as to allowed use.

Resolution: Make designations clear about the uses they allow.