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Comments: In the past thirty years, motorized recreation use in national forest lands has increased by seven times (Wilson, 2008)[Wilson, P. I. (2008). Preservation versus motorized recreation: Institutions, history, and public lands management. *The Social Science Journal*, 45(1), 194-202.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2007.12.003>]

and some of the alternatives in the updated GMUG Forest Service Plan are encouraging this trend. However, to preserve public lands for future generations as well as for ecological biodiversity, it is vital that we limit motorized recreational use on national forest lands.

Motorized vehicle use has a significant negative impact on wildlife. In addition to fragmenting habitat, motorized roadways disrupt wildlife behavior. One study found that elk disrupted by human vehicle activity continued to avoid that area, no matter what useful habitat was present there (Wuerthner, 2020)[Wuerthner, G. (2020). Mechanical Recreation Impacts on Desert Ecosystems. In M. I. Goldstein & D. A. DellaSala (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of the World's Biomes* (pp. 230-235). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-409548-9.12111-6>]

. The Forest Service Plan also acknowledges that areas with more vehicle access would have negative impact because of the ability to bring in more things, such as dogs, firewood, and bigger tents.

Noise too, contributes to habitat destruction and fragmentation of public lands, and its effect extends for over a mile into the forest (Barber et al., 2010). Wildlife relies on acoustic signals to communicate, find food and mates, and even to understand what is happening in the landscape around them. Masking these sounds with "anthropogenic noise could have volatile and unpredictable consequences (Barber et al., 2010)."[Barber, J. R., Crooks, K. R., & Fristrup, K. M. (2010). The costs of chronic noise exposure for terrestrial organisms. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 25(3), 180-189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2009.08.002>]

The transportation network is immense, and only 3% of the United States is more than 3 miles from a road (Wuerthner, 2020). Therefore, preserving the small amount roadless and non-motorized areas is a worthy goal. While there are thousands of magnificent outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the United States, non-motorized pristine places are disappearing quickly.

As the Forest Service plan states in the Environmental Impact Assessment, Alternative D has the least adverse impact on wildlife, due to including less motorized use and less developed land. I encourage the Forest Service to consider this alternative. If we want to preserve the ecological integrity of public lands and have them be available for future generations to enjoy, we must restrain ourselves from using outdoor recreation as an excuse for natural area overuse and exploitation.

Barber, J. R., Crooks, K. R., & Fristrup, K. M. (2010). The costs of chronic noise exposure for terrestrial organisms. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 25(3), 180-189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2009.08.002>

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