

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/26/2020 12:18:18 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Shoshone NF Travel Management Planning Project

Sep 25, 2020

Mr. Mark Foster (Environmental Coordinator)

808 Meadow Lane Avenue

Cody, WY 82414

Dear Mr. Foster (Environmental Coordinator),

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Shoshone National Forest's Travel Management Plan and thank you for what has clearly been a significant review and reworking of the Plan.

My focus is in the Sunlight region, and I was pleased especially to see the closing of the four-wheeler trail in upper Sulfur Creek. I know that was first a private property issue but it also involved some serious degradation of the upper alpine basins. I do wonder why those trails were kept open for administrative use in the new Plan, but trust that means minimal use and only by the FS.

When we started all of this work with the RMP and then moved to the TMP a constant concern by many folks, including me, was the enforcement of the rules. I understand that is a big ask with your budget restraints and the increased use of the Forest and our passionate political times, but it is and will continue to be critical. More resources need to be devoted to that work. For example, I am familiar with the Henry's Mill area. Trail 103.2C shows a closed portion. When I was last up there, four or five years ago, a few folks had four-wheeled, in trucks and ORVs, right past the signs going all the way to the wilderness boundary. Others had gone north on the open ridges where your map rightly shows no trails. Your people had tried to dig a dirt barrier but it did not work. Perhaps you have addressed this or figured out an answer, but I use it as an example. Better signage and better barriers would help in that area and in others.

Getting FS personnel out on the trails will be crucial to the success of this plan. It is that simple. I also noted in an earlier communication a stray four-wheeling trail that came down from the private land below the Beartooth Hwy just short of Lilly Lake toward the old Wright place. Their trail cut right across the FS Clarksfork horse and people trail and stopped on the cliffs overlooking that homestead in the upper canyon. Getting people on those trails, even once a year, is critical to learning what is going on. I must admit I am stunned by the lack of a FS presence on the very trails in your

plan.

The seasonal closures make sense and I applaud these efforts to protect, I assume in part, calving areas for elk and migration routes. The closures, I understand, have many other purposes, but we are learning so much about the importance of the migration routes that I assume and hope those are in your considerations. If not, I hope you take this final opportunity to factor them in.

The TMP will be an important tool to guide decades of sustainable forest management. Thank you for your work on this important issue.

Respectfully,

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