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Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I write this letter in objection to moving the Pacific Northwest Scenic Trail. The trail consists of a combination of trails existing in the Yaak for many years. Hikers, hunters, berry pickers, photographers, and others use these trails to access areas like Fish Lakes, Mount Henry lookout, and Northwest Peaks.

Relocating the Pacific Northwest Scenic Trail because of grizzly bear habitat is absurd. There are over 300 grizzlies in Glacier Park and 700 miles of trails. There are 150 grizzlies in Yellowstone and 1000 miles of trails. The Bob Marshall Wilderness, part of the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystems (NCDE), has hundreds of miles of trails and many grizzlies.

In British Columbia, where several large parks exist, Jasper hosts an estimated grizzly bear population of 100-120 bears, and Banff holds around 65 bears. Both these parks have extensive trails and visitors each year-thousands more visitors and hikers than the Yaak will ever see.

While researching information on the Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem (CYE), I was amazed at how many bears have been trapped and transplanted into the area from the 1980s to 2020 (CYE Grizzly Bear Recovery Area 2020 Research and Monitoring Progress Report). The number of 100 grizzlies for the CYE was a surprise, as no one has come up with science-based number to say what constitutes a sustainable number of bears for the CYE.

At this date, two of the three targets for the recovery plan remain unmet. The most disturbing fact about the recovery program is the number of bears killed or moved on from the recovery area and the amount of money the taxpayers have paid to fund this program.

The maps of where and how far these bears travel reveal the grizzly bears' independence and that the so-called recovery area fails to ensure their preservation. Forty years of trying to nurture the grizzly bears' into co-existence with humanity created more disturbance to the bears than necessary. Further, the socio-economic impacts of these measures do not benefit those who live and work in Northwest Montana.