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Comments: Recent news articles about the Crazy Mountain land exchange process in Montana contain some false assertions about the historic aboriginal use of the "lower elevations" of the Crazy Mountain area, namely:

"The ceremonial sites stay intact because of where they are. If they were lower down on the mountainsides, they would wash away during the annual spring or summer melt. In the jagged peaks of the Crazies, the snow pack is particularly intense, as is the flooding...Crow people have never thought of the Crazy Mountains as a destination for resource gathering and instead have considered it a place for ceremonial use... Elk and bison and other wildlife would congregate at lower elevations, and violent floods limited access into the range for the majority of the year."

These undocumented assertions contradict the historic human record for this area. Noting that the "lower elevations" would include the plains grassland/mountain flank life zones from about 5000 to 6500 feet in elevation.

Large human group, communal bison kills, some 2000 years old, are located in the "lower elevations" along Big Elk, Swamp, Big Timber, Sweet Grass and Duck creeks. Construction and operation of these sites began in late summer and use continued until spring. The upper components in the Duck Creek and Sweet Grass creek kills may represent Crow use. In addition to bison kills, numerous other sites reflect all-season multiple resource use of the "lower elevations" of the Crazy Mountain. Indeed, the Sam Morris artifact collection from campsites in the Little Timber, Swamp Creek, Big Timber Creek and Duck Creek areas document intensive use of the "lower elevations" for some 11,000 years.

Obviously, the proposed Crazy Mountain land exchange represents complex social, political and legal processes. Unsubstantiated, "alternative facts" only add to the conflict, schism and complexity of the issues.

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