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Comments: I understand that these exchanges are never easy, and a lot of work has been done on this project, but I am not in support. I originally scrutinized the deal with online resources, and only feel my initial thoughts were spot on after attending the meeting held at the commons. I feel that it is quite clear that the public is getting the short end of the stick in this deal. First, it is obvious that the private land owner is trying to get exclusive rights to sweetwater. I used to look at hiking the 16 miles up past twin lakes and over to glacier lake as the long way to access that drainage. Now it is proposed to be the short way? It is a high barrier of entry to have to hike this new 22 mile trail just to have access. Aside from a few people with stock and trail runners, there will be no day trips. Its a big thanks for nothing to say we will build you an access trail still, but you have to hike 44 miles round trip just to set foot on the old trail. You may as well tell me I cant go there. And as for hunting, the same thing goes. Once again you will require to stock to benefit from the majority of this trail. Who is going to hike 30-40 miles round trip to pack out an elk?

Then there is the other recreational use. The new proposed trail doesnt really offer much for recreation in hiking/backpacking. It looked like there is hardly any good terrain to camp, and the drainages dont lead to any high cirques with lakes or really anything that would be a point of interest. Contouring around an incised creek bed or draw in the forest isnt anything exciting.

Then the upper reaches is not an equal value trade at all. The private land owners can keep A and B. Of course they want to trade impassable land that cant be developed for some Prime lower elevation cottonwood creek bed habitat (1 & 2) those lower reaches of creek access as well as the small public access on big timber creek are some of the highest value public land parcels for access and recreation, and they are traded away for some cliff bands and talus slopes that nobody will ever be able to set foot on, that is if they are even willing to hike 30 miles round trip just to get there. Same with milly creek. Only the lower section of Milly creek is traded. Of course the land developers dont want to trade away any of the land in the higher drainage. The land that is actually of any use and interest.

If this was my private land instead of public land I would never make this deal. Public lands are one of the things that have made Montana, and the USA as a whole, an incredible place to live. This is because you dont need to have the millions of dollars that those in the Yellowstone Club or the private land owners of Sweetgrass Creek to be able to access some wild, rugged, and scenic places. This would set a terrifying precedent to close of access to those without wealth under some guise of land trades. Please do not proceed with this plan.