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Comments: Letter to Forest Service--Crazy land and Exchange.

Following are some land exchange issues that I feel were not addressed, not addressed very well, or ignored.

1.This land exchange, as proposed, will lead to tremendous development of resources such as ski runs, homes, hunting facilities, and various other support businesses. All development will contribute to pollution of soil and water. A development such as Big Sky and the surrounding facilities have created pollution problems for the Gallatin River in the form of green algae despite preventative measures taken. The Gallatin is a fair sized river that just cannot dilute that much pollution adequately. The creeks on the east side of the Crazy Mountains do not carry as much water as the Gallatin and surely will not withstand as many contaminants particularly if most developments are sited on one or two creeks. The question is: Does the Forest Service not have a responsibility to insure that land they trade away will be taken care of in such a manner that the public can continue to enjoy their resources?

"The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations." How does the proposed Forest Service plan for the Crazies provide for future generations of Montanans who are not wealthy?

2."The Conservation Easements (CEs) were identified as being voluntarily placed by each of the three landowners following closing on the exchange as described in the EA (p. 12)." Surely you jest. These landowners have shown no intentions of doing anything they do not have to do. That exchange should not be made because of the affect it will have on the public.

3.This plan will reduce public access to public lands in effect privatizing our public lands. It is a great opportunity for landowners to obtain land basically for free. With animal unit costs now at about $1.35, which is about 10% of its retail value, plus the added income from harvesting Montana's wildlife, It is much cheaper for landowners than owning the land. Access by the public will be hampered or impossible because landowners/outfitters do not want competition for public wildlife which is a major reason for the conflict in the Crazy Mountains.