

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/23/2022 6:50:22 PM

First name: Lester

Last name: Ashwood

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Responsible Project Official,

I am writing to express my complete and total opposition to the East Crazies Land Exchange #63115 for multiple reasons.

First, and primarily, there seems to be a loss of public access points to the National Forest which is already limited. Relinquishing several trails, including the Sweetgrass Creek trail, number 122, and administrative roads is unacceptable because access is already too difficult as it stands now. Exchanging these for one long access trail would basically eliminate day hiking possibilities into this area of the mountains.

Further this would set a dangerous precedent by obstructing current public access to forest service lands.

This proposed exchange would result in a net loss of federal wetlands, riparian habitat, and the accompanying miles of fishing streams.

The PEA does not seem to include any disclosure or discussion of the valuations of exchanged timberlands.

The PEA does not seem to contain any disclosure or discussion of the monetary valuation of the severed water rights

Why give away public mineral rights which might have future monetary values for the public agencies? Further, if the mineral rights were to be used by the private recipients it would most likely damage the wildlife habitat and scenic values in that area.

Due to the long distance from my home in Helena I am not very frequently able to get into the Crazy Mountains but when I do have the opportunity it is a most rewarding experience. Our family particularly enjoys camping and hiking in the Big Timber Creek and Sweetgrass Creek areas in the heart of the Crazies. These are very productive and relatively secluded mountains and we need to do all we can to protect their fish, wildlife, and recreational values as well as the public access. This proposal does exactly the opposite in addition to potentially reducing the public coffers

Thank you for listening to my concerns and please discard this potential land exchange