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Mary Erickson

Forest Supervisor

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Dear Ms. Erickson,

This letter is to address a few comments regarding the East Crazy Inspiration Divide Land Exchange proposal.

First I am concerned this proposal falls short in not providing a complete Environmental Impact Assessment including thorough cultural resource inventories. The impact on wildlife and the ecosystems in all these parcels being exchanged need to be studied more thoroughly. Building a new trail to replace the East Trunk trail 136 on the east side of the Crazy Mountains will surely disturb wildlife. The Yellowstone Club, LLC. plans to build a new ski lift on the parcels they gain in this exchange, these parcels border adjacent to the Lee Metcalf Wilderness area and the Madison Roadless area. More machinery and more people in this area will certainly affect these areas adversely.

The forest service should not give up on fighting for public access on the roads and lands that lead to Sweetgrass trail no. 122 and the East Trunk trail no. 136 on the east side of the Crazy mountains. They should at least take time to investigate historical data concerning the access points ie the railroad deeds issued from the early 1900's that convey deeds of land to persons but the roads are to stay open to the public. Other documents are available that show public monies were used to improve these roads more than once that would indicate historical use. Private landowners have prevented the public from accessing these trails by putting up illegal gates and intimidating the public and FS employees. If the FS would pursue this they would not have to exchange the lands. Both trails and roads could be improved with volunteers working with the FS so they can be used by the public more easily. They should at least wait to hear the judicial review on the appeal pertaining to public access in the crazies which will be heard in the Ninth district court in Billings on February 3, 2023 before making any decisions on these exchanges

Adding the Switchback Ranch, LLC arrangement with the Crow tribe to allow them access to Crazy Peak in section 7 does not involve either the forest service or the public in their decision thus it does not belong with this land exchange proposal. I hope the Switchback Ranch fulfills this promise to the Crow without this exchange. Shame on them if they don't !

One more suggestion is that there should be some conservation easements attached to all of the parcels exchanged to protect these lands from negative developments.

Thank you for allowing our comments and for your time in considering them.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P. Lanning