

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/24/2022 1:10:47 AM

First name: Bill

Last name: Lombardi

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please reject the Crazy Mountains access proposal. I agree with a majority of conservation and wildlife groups that it is not in the public interest.

I agree that with commenters (see Billings Gazette opinion piece dated 12.18.22) that monied private interests would receive more in benefits from the land swap than the public in this bad proposal.

As opponents note, the proposal would give an historic access trail (Sweet Grass Trail) and funnel an increasing number of the public through another trail and reward private landowners with richer lower elevation land. That is not fair.

I also want to echo the concerns of the Montana Public Land Water Access Association, which are:

The lack of due diligence performed regarding pursuit of and protection of public access at Sweetgrass Road;

- The ceding of Parcels 8 and 10 [S08, T04N, R12E and S10, T04N, R12E or Sections 1 & 2 in the PEA land swap designation] and relinquishing of the easements on Sweetgrass Trail by the USFS;
- The increasing impacts that would be felt upon flora, fauna, and users if 50% of the possible access points into the East Crazies were eliminated;
- The lack of codification of access rights and conservation planning included in the PEA;
- The PEA's seemingly contrary effects when taking into account its stated objectives;
- The risks to future recreation and conservation should the PEA move forward in its current form.

The proposal also would relinquish 100 percent of the public's mineral rights on the land transferred to private landowners and give the public mineral rights on only two of 11 of the sections it will receive.

For these reasons and more, the Forest Service should reject this proposal because it is not in the public interest and rewards private interests more than the public. The public should not give up more than they should receive.

Thank you.