

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/24/2022 2:57:19 AM

First name: Jessica

Last name: French

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Overall, I am opposed to the Proposed Action. While the Proposed Action would increase and consolidate public-owned acreage, this is greatly outweighed by the potential negative impacts of the Proposed Action. The document fails to offer a comparative analysis of the ecological, recreational, spiritual, historical, and financial values of the lands being exchanged. This document also fails to identify, describe, or analyze the concept of public ownership of the "disputed" access identified in the purpose and need for the project. It is very likely that legal access already exists, and the Forest Service has, and is continuing to fail to uphold its own 1993 supplemental policy, which states "Forest Supervisors are responsible for and shall: Continue to use, operate, control and maintain...existing roads and trails within the Region not covered by written easements...Monitor roads and trails that cross non-Federal lands, and when land management activities such as logging, road building, fencing, or signing/orange paint threaten to breach the facility or restrict National Forest use, immediately contact the landowner to prevent such breaches." This PEA would set a dangerous precedent allowing the Forest Service to cater to selfish private landowners, rather than to serve the greater good of the public, as they are obligated to do so. The Final EA should examine this issue in much greater depth, describe actions that are being taken to protect public parcels and access (in particular those proposed for exchange) and include a more robust alternatives analysis that includes defending the long asserted public ownership interests at issue. The Forest Service must ensure that they know the absolute value of the lands they are proposing for exchange (wildlife habitat, wildlife numbers, recreation opportunities, potential for values such as hiking, wildlife watching, photography, horseback riding, hunting, etc.