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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Marshall Canyon Area:

The recommendation is to designate much of the southern and eastern blocks of land abutting Marshall mountain as general forest. I think the more appropriate designation (especially for the lands around the ridge south of Marshall property) should be Concentrated Use. Marshall Canyon is becoming one of the most popular trailheads service the greater Missoula area. With the acquisition of Marshall Mountain by Missoula County and the plan for trails and facilities there, this use will certainly increase significantly over time. Through the Marshall Mountain master planning process it was clear that Missoula residents supported more concentrated use on and around the Marshall mountain property. There is already a history of significant recreational use on those properties, and the trail connection opportunities in that area to create a better, more user friendly system are abundant. Including connections to City owned conservation lands and trails in the Rattlesnake NRA and on Mt. Jumbo, as well as connections to more primitive landscapes up around sheep mountain, Mittower and beyond. A forest designation that would allow for more recreational development (trails) on these lands would better serve the residents of Missoula. With the potential partnerships (City, County, Non-Profit) who are interested in developing Marshall Mountain as a high-use recreational park there will be opportunities for partnerships in developing the USFS lands around this area, that could help further the stated objectives of developing 1 non-motorized recreational site in the next 10 years.

O'Brien Creek:

O'Brien Creek is a perennial stream that has water flowing into the Bitterroot river year round. It surprises me that this is not designated as a watershed in need of conservation or other stewardship.

I am concerned with the "roaded natural" designation along O'Brien creek. This area is special, with limited use (for being so close to the city) and limited accessibility (due to private property the current gate and parking location). O'Brien creek is a perennial stream with abundant healthy and sensitive riparian habitat. The canyon in general has an abundance of wildlife (mule deer, whitetail deer, elk, mountain lion etc). The impacts of motorized use along this corridor would be detrimental to wildlife, and to the few users who currently enjoy quiet recreation in that area. This area should be semi-primitive non-motorized. Motorized use should be concentrated in the areas around blue mountain where facilities already exist to accommodate that use, and it is already an established use.

Rattlesnake Canyon:

I am against the designation "semi-primitive motorized" that allows motorized use on the rattlesnake corridor. This will certainly create significant user conflicts with the thousands of people who participate in quite recreation along that corridor. I wonder if this designation is a response to the desire for electric bicycle use in this area? If in fact this is the case I think that allowing E-bikes in this corridor will have a detrimental impact to wildlife, and will likely result in more people breaking the rules and taking E-bikes on non motorized trails throughout the area. Traditional motorized recreation is certainly not appropriate in this area. I think this area should be semi-primitive non-motorized.

Lolo Pass area:

It is difficult for me to tell exactly where areas are being changed here, it appears that the areas I am concerned with are proposed to be designated "roaded Natural" which allows for motorized recreation. I am not supportive of motorized use (winter or summer) in the areas locally known as the "crystal amphitheater", "G-Spot", and "Hangover Hill". I am a frequent backcountry skier in these spots, and much of the Lolo pass are is open to Snowmobiles except these particular location. It is important to the backcountry ski community that these spots remain non-motorized. These are some of the only easily accessible backcountry ski spots near Missoula and

they get heavy winter "quiet" recreational use. Introducing snowmobiles here would be detrimental to the recreational experience of these places. There is already hundreds of acres of semi-primitive motorized, roaded natural and rural areas open to snowmobiles. Preserving these spots a semi-primitive non-motorized is important.

Timber management (logging) in the past is what allowed backcountry skiing to become popular around Lolo Pass. In particular, "the G spot" "hangover hill" and areas along lee ridge were logged in a way that allowed backcountry skiing to take place. As the forest regenerates there is a need to thin this new growth, to manage fire but also to allow for this recreational experience to continue. Listing forest management for recreational opportunities as an objective would be very desirable.

Clearwater Upper Blackfoot:

In general I am supportive of the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act. I think the forest plan should use the recommendations of the BCSA and the many years of negotiations, and public process that was part of the BCSA.

Morrell Mountain Area (Clearwater Upper Blackfoot)

The "roaded natural" "Rural" and "semi-primitive motorized" areas around this area should be reduced to only allow motorized use on certain roads (not in between). When you are in this area it has an extremely remote feel, is an area with significant Elk populations (that are not heavily hunted due to the ruggedness of the terrain). Allowing more motorized use will be detrimental to the character of the landscape, and the wildlife that is abundant here.

Montanan Snowbowl:

This is perhaps beyond the scope of the forest plan revisions, but in recent years there has been a significant increase in uphill ski traffic at Montana Snowbowl. This use can be compatible with Snowbowls operations, and the forest management in that area, as can be seen at many other ski areas across the country on USFS lands. It would be desirable to incorporate a goal or objective to provide for, and allow this uphill use in a way that is satisfactory for both users and Montana Snowbowl Managers. The current policy results in many conflicts (not necessarily real safety concerns), and should be addressed in a proactive, and positive manner.