

Important Note

Important information that would expose the significant issues associated with the Salmon Challis Forest Plan Project have not been adequately disclosed to the public and, therefore, are not available to us. To demonstrate the information that must be developed and evaluated, we are providing the following comments that include highlighted information that serve as examples of the type of information that must be developed as part of the evaluation of the Salmon Challis Forest Plan Project.

Highlighted Information on the following pages are provided to demonstrate the type of information that must be developed as part of the public disclosure process and used in the evaluation and decision-making process. The information needed to fill in the highlighted comments for the Salmon Challis Forest Plan Project is not available to us. Additionally, the data that is available to us is seriously out of date following all of the changes originating from the overwhelming number of designations and actions that are taking place on public lands. The **highlighted Information** is provided as an example of the information that must be collected and the analysis that must be undertaken for an adequate NEPA analysis and for full and honest public disclosure. The development of this information and the analysis is the agency's responsibility. Full and adequate consideration of these issues, comments, and information will easily justify an alternative to enhance existing motorized recreational opportunities. We look forward to an analysis that adequately addresses these comments. We would appreciate receiving copies of the highlighted information when it developed by the agency.

Again, Highlighted Information for the Helena National Forest is used as the example in the following comments with the request that the **Helena National Forest examples** be used to develop the appropriately information for the Salmon Challis Forest Plan Project in order to adequately identify and address the significant issues and needs of motorized recreationists in the Salmon Challis Forest Plan Project.

Over-Represents the Public's Need for More Wilderness

- Less than 3% of the visits to the forest are for wilderness recreation and 97% of the visits are for multiple-use.
- Management of the forest must reflect the ratio of visitors and meet their needs in an equal manner.
- Current wilderness is poorly managed and to create more only compounds the problem.
- The current planning process is being used as a backdoor process to create defacto wilderness areas by closing motorized access and motorized recreation on lands designated for multiple-use.
- Improperly Considers Roadless Areas
 - The proposed alternative effectively converts multiple-use lands to defacto wilderness lands which circumvents congressional law and the wilderness designation process.

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1. Over-Represents the Public's Need for More Wilderness

1. The majority of the population in the United States lives in big city urban settings and their definition and understanding of "wilderness" is settings like Central Park. Therefore, the work "wilderness" is used by the majority of the public to describe any outdoor setting.
2. Ninety-nine percent of the self-reported hikes are taken either on a road or motorized trail or within a mile of a road. Actual wilderness visits and hikes are very limited in number. Most wilderness areas are not accessible to the public. The evaluation and decision must adequately recognize this condition and the important that roads and motorized trails play for the majority of the public.
3. The current allotment of recreation resources on all Forest Service lands is way out of balance with 44,919,000 acres out of 192,300,000 acres or 24% in wilderness designation while no more than 2.55% of the visitors are wilderness visitors. Designation as wilderness is further out of touch with the needs of the public because recreation is not a stated purpose of the wilderness act and, therefore, recreation in wilderness area cannot and should not be emphasized. Note that we could oppose any recreation development in wilderness areas in retaliation to non-motorized groups that go after our recreation opportunities but we have chosen not to do so. Recreation is a stated purpose in the multiple-use laws and, therefore, should be emphasized in the purpose and action.
4. If Roadless acres are included in this total, it becomes even more unbalanced with at total of 103,437,000 acres or 54% in wilderness or roadless designation while only 2.55% of the visitors are wilderness visitors.
5. The evaluation must adequately consider and address the fact that motorized access to the national forest is relatively limited as shown by the miles of roads versus the number of acres in the following table. The miles and percentage of non-motorized trails is excessive compared to the use that they receive and this does not consider the endless cross-country opportunities that available to non-motorized recreationists. The total route opportunity available to non-motorized recreationists is 510,575 miles; the total miles of exclusive non-motorized trails are 93,088 or 75% of the existing total. The miles of non-motorized cross-country opportunity are infinite.
6. The total miles of roads open to motorized recreationists are 286,445 and the total miles of trails open to motorized recreationists are 31,853 or 25% of the existing total. The cross-country miles are or will be shortly equal to zero. Therefore, the overall allocation of non-motorized versus motorized access and trail riding opportunities in the national forest system is way out of balance with the needs of the public for motorized access and the recreational needs of motorized recreationists.

Furthermore, we request that the data in the next two tables be updated to reflect the significant reduction in miles of roads and motorized trails that decisions have produced since this data was assembled. This revised data should be used to guide the decision-making to forest plan and travel plan alternatives that adequately meet the needs of the public by increasing motorized recreational opportunities in the national forest system.

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Region	Forest	District	NFS Acres	Current Status	Projected Date for Designation	Existing NFS Roads	Existing NFS Roads Open to Motor Vehicle Use	Existing NFS Trails	Existing NFS Trails Open to Motor Vehicle Use	Existing NFS Trails Open to Motor Vehicle Use (Single-Track)	Acres Currently Open to Cross-Country Motor Vehicle Use
Totals			194,015,494			385,634	286,445	124,941	31,853	15,526	65,887,245
Miles of Open Road per Square Mile =						0.74					
Total Roads and Trails Open to Non-Motorized Use, Miles						510,575					
Non-Motorized Trails, Miles =						93,088					
Non-Motorized Trails, % =						74.51%					
Motorized Trails, miles =						31,853					
Motorized Trails, % =						25.49%					
Trails Open to Motorcycles %						12.43%					
http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohw/ http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohw/travel_mgmt_schedule.pdf											

NOTE: This data is out of date by at least 8 years and does not reflect significant motorized closures that have occurred since this table was put together.

7. The evaluation must adequately consider and address the fact that motorized access to the national forest in **Region 1** is relatively limited as shown by the miles of roads versus the number of acres in the following table. The miles and percentage of non-motorized trails is excessive compared to the use that they receive and this does not consider the endless cross-country opportunities that available to non-motorized recreationists. The total route opportunity available to non-motorized recreationists in **Region 1** is **73,348** miles; the total miles of exclusive non-motorized trails are **14,521** or **66%** of the total existing miles of trail. The miles of cross-country opportunity are infinite.

The total miles of roads open to motorized recreationists are **26,259** and the total miles of trails open to motorized recreationists are **7,521** or **34%** of the total existing miles of trail. The miles of cross-country opportunity are or will be shortly equal to zero. Therefore, the overall allocation of non-motorized versus motorized access and trail riding opportunities in **Region 1** is way out of balance with the needs of the public for motorized access and the recreational needs of motorized recreationists.

Region	Forest	District	NFS Acres	Current Status	Projected Date for Designation	Existing NFS Roads	Existing NFS Roads Open to Motor Vehicle Use	Existing NFS Trails	Existing NFS Trails Open to Motor Vehicle Use	Existing NFS Trails Open to Motor Vehicle Use (Single-Track)	Acres Currently Open to Cross-Country Motor Vehicle Use
Totals			26,254,657			51,306	26,259	22,042	7,521	5,052	4,352,849
Miles of Open Road per Square Mile =						0.51					
Total Roads and Trails Open to Non-Motorized Use, Miles						73,348					
Non-Motorized Trails, Miles =						14,521					
Non-Motorized Trails, % =						65.88%					
Motorized Trails, miles =						7,521					
Motorized Trails, % =						34.12%					
Trails Open to Motorcycles %						22.92%					
http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohw/ http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohw/travel_mgmt_schedule.pdf											

Note that this data was assembled in 2006 does not reflect the motorized closures that have occurred in the last 11 years due to lack of adequate evaluation and disclosure by the agencies. The percentage of non-motorized trails is even higher than 65.88% now.

8. Additionally, specific NVUM data for Montana National Forests shows that there were **10,055,000** total site visits to the forest and only **304,000** wilderness visits (http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/revised_vis_est.pdf). Therefore, wilderness visits in Montana are only **3.02%** of the total visits yet past decisions have produced both a disproportionately large and an increased number of recreation opportunities for non-motorized and wilderness visitors and at the expense of the multiple-use and motorized visitors. The remaining **96.98%** of the visitors are for the most part associated with multiple-uses. The public comments and votes by how they use the forest, and more motorized access and recreation is what they are asking for with every visit regardless of whether they provide comments in a cumbersome NEPA process.

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Table of Wilderness Visits to Montana National Forests versus Multiple-Use Visits

Forest	All Site Visits (000's)	Wilderness Visits (000's)	Wilderness Visits (%)	Multiple-Use Visits (%)
Beaverhead-Deerlodge	1,377	15	1.09%	98.91%
Bitterroot	731	122	16.69%	83.31%
Custer	845	12	1.42%	98.58%
Flathead	1,514	24	1.59%	98.41%
Gallatin	1,650	46	2.79%	97.21%
Helena	508	3	0.59%	99.41%
Kootenai	1,400	32	2.29%	97.71%
Lewis & Clark	536	26	4.85%	95.15%
Lolo	1,494	24	1.61%	98.39%
Total	10,055	304	3.02%	96.98%

http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/revised_vis_est.pdf

9. Additionally, specific NVUM data for the Helena National Forest shows that there were 508,000 total site visits to the forest and only 3,000 wilderness visits (http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/revised_vis_est.pdf). Therefore, wilderness visits in the Helena National Forest are 0.59% of the total visits yet past decisions in Region 1 and the proposed plan by the Helena National Forest have produced both a disproportionately large and an increased number of recreation opportunities for non-motorized and wilderness visitors and at the expense of the multiple-use and motorized visitors. The remaining 99.41% of the visitors are associated with multiple-uses. The public comments and votes by how they use the forest, and more motorized access and recreation is what they are asking for with every visit regardless of whether they provide comments in a cumbersome NEPA process.
10. The NVUM and Southern Research Station reports cited prove that there are 146,000 (508,000 forest visitors x 29.1% OHV) OHV visitors to the Helena National Forest and 3,000 wilderness visitors. The ratio of trail users is 49 motorized to 1 non-motorized yet the balance of existing trails is 21% motorized versus 79% non-motorized. Clearly there is an imbalance of opportunity that justifies more (not less) motorized recreational opportunities.
11. As demonstrated by Table 3, the ratio of acres available to wilderness/non-motorized visitors versus the acres available to multiple-use visitors is way out of balance in the existing condition with 39 acres per wilderness visitor and 1.70 acres per multiple-use visitor for a ratio of about 23:1. The proposed action to designate all roadless areas non-motorized areas makes this inequity even worse by providing 187 acres per wilderness visitor and 0.82 acre per multiple-use visitor for a ratio of about 228:1. The available multiple-use (MU) acres and acres per MU visitors is less than this example because even though lands are designated as MU by congress the agency is effectively managing many multiple-use acres as non-motorized/defacto wilderness. Therefore, the acres per MU visitor are significantly less than shown and the imbalance of the ratio of defacto wilderness acres per visitor to MU acres per visitor is significantly greater than this example.

Table 3 Acres per Forest Visitor and Ratio

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Total Annual Forest Visitors =	508,000
Wilderness Visitors =	3,000
Multiple-use Visitors =	505,000
Forest Acreage =	977,000
Existing Wilderness Acreage =	117,000
Existing Multiple-use Acreage =	860,000
Proposed Defacto Wilderness Acreage =	445,000
Total Proposed Defacto Wilderness =	562,000
Total Proposed Multiple-use Acreage =	415,000
Existing Acres/Wilderness Visitor =	39.00
Proposed Acres/Wilderness Visitor =	187.33
Percent Increase =	380%
Existing Acres/Multiple-use Visitor =	1.70
Proposed Acres/Multiple-use Visitor =	0.82
Percent Decrease =	-52%
Existing Ratio of Defacto Wilderness to MU Acres per Visitor	22.90
Proposed Ratio of Defacto Wilderness to MU Acres per Visitor	227.96
Note 1: Total Proposed Defacto Wilderness includes all Roadless Areas which the Agency is inappropriately managing as non-motorized.	
Note 2: The available multiple-use (MU) acres and acres per MU visitors is less than this example because even though lands are designated as MU by congress the agency is effectively managing many multiple-use acres as non-motorized/defacto wilderness. Therefore, the acres per MU visitor is significantly less than shown and the imbalance of the ratio of defacto wilderness acres per visitor to MU acres per visitor is significantly greater than this example.	

12. We recognize the desire for a quiet experience in the forest as a legitimate value. To varying degrees, we all visit the forest to enjoy the natural sounds of streams, trees, and wildlife. Forest visitors who require an absolutely natural acoustic experience in the forest should be encouraged to use the portions of the forest which have been set aside for their exclusive benefit where they are guaranteed a quiet experience, i.e, wilderness areas. Given the demonstrated underutilization of existing wilderness areas, it is entirely reasonable to conclude that there is adequate wilderness area. Given that vast areas of our forests have been set aside for the exclusive benefit of this relatively small group of quiet visitors, it is not reasonable to set aside more areas and trails for their needs.
13. There is no need for additional Wilderness for recreational usage based on the following information. Wilderness also includes all defacto Wilderness areas (in practice but not ordained by law) such as non-motorized Roadless areas and designated non-motorized areas such as proposed for the Salmon Challis Forest Plan.
- The huge lack of wilderness use is documented in an article on a 20 day, 200 mile hike through the Bob Marshall and Mission Mountains in the Montana Standard (http://mtstandard.com/lifestyles/outdoors/photographer-retraces-bob-marshall-s-epic-hike-in-spirit/article_a84bfa47-f841-5ae8-9f95-a9fc08e20a07.html). "Other than some scattered encounters, he found the solitude remarkable. On the Swan Crest, he only saw only four hikers on 40 of the 48 miles before reaching the Jewel Basin. In the Bob Marshall portion, he saw only four hikers in 90 miles, not counting outfitters and horse riders."
 - Twenty percent of USFS trails are in Wilderness areas (Source #1 below), and these areas receive only 4% of all visitor days to USFS lands (Source #2). Routes in Wilderness areas are difficult and exceptionally expensive to maintain, due to strict

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management limitations (Source #3). Teams of horses and mules can move large amounts of materials but are not cost effective when compared to a pickup truck, and the maintenance equipment cannot be left on the mules overnight.

- i. #1. United States Government Accountability Office Report GAO-13-618; Forest Service Trails; Long- and Short-Term Improvements Could Reduce Maintenance Backlog and Enhance System Sustainability; June 2013 at page 30. Complete report is available here: <http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/655555.pdf>
 - ii. #2. USDA Forest Service; National Visitor Use Monitoring Results USDA Forest Service National Summary Report Data collected FY 2008 through FY 2012 Last updated 20 May2013; at page 8.
 - iii. United States Government Accountability Office Report GAO-13-618; Forest Service Trails; Long- and Short-Term Improvements Could Reduce Maintenance Backlog and Enhance System Sustainability; June 2013 at page 30.
- c) The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently identified that motorized users are the only ones who “pay to play” on USFS trails. And even with this funding, only 25% of all routes are financially sustainable due to high percentages of routes in Wilderness designations (Source #4). If motorized funding is not available for management of dispersed recreational opportunities, the resources available to maintain any trail greatly diminish and possible impacts expand.
- i. #4. United States Government Accountability Office Report GAO-13-618; Forest Service Trails; Long- and Short-Term Improvements Could Reduce Maintenance Backlog and Enhance System Sustainability; June 2013 at page 30.
- d) The true economic driver for local economies is multiple-use recreation on public lands. USFS comparisons of user group spending profiles, made as part of the National Visitor Use Monitoring process, estimate that the motorized user spends 2 to 3 times the amount of money spent by non-motorized users (Source #5). This compounds the possibility of negative economic impacts to local communities from significantly lower levels of visitation after Wilderness designations.
- i. #5. USDA Forest Service; White and Stynes et al; Updated Spending Profiles for National Forest Recreation Visitors by Activity November 2010 at page 6.
- e) Many Wilderness Proposals erroneously rely on the newly released Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) Report that concluded that \$646 billion is annually spent on outdoor recreation. Wilderness Proposals frequently assert this was the result of quiet use recreation. This is simply incorrect, as the 2012 OIA study included motorized usage in their analysis (Source #6). Previously, versions of the OIA study attempted to only include non-motorized usage.
- i. #6 Outdoor Industry Association; The Outdoor Recreation Economy; Take it Outside for American Jobs and a Strong Economy; 2012 report.
- f) A recent USFS report to Senator Mark Udall (D-CO) specifically stated that Wilderness Areas are a significant factor contributing to poor forest health and the outbreak of mountain pine beetle throughout the western U.S. (Source #7). This position has been repeatedly stated by the Colorado State Forest Service, which has found management restrictions in Wilderness Areas have caused significant outbreaks of Spruce Beetle infestations (Source #8). USFS guidelines for management and protection of watersheds identify the critical need for active management of watersheds to insure

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water quality (Source #9). This management is impossible in a Wilderness Area. Limited forest management is specifically identified as a major factor negatively impacting endangered species such as the Canadian lynx (Source #10).

- i. #7. USDA Forest Service; Review of the Forest Service Response: The Bark Beetle Outbreak in Northern Colorado and Southern Wyoming; September 2011; at pages i, 5, 12. Complete report is available here: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/barkbeetle/home/?cid=stelprdb5340741>
 - ii. #8. Colorado State Forest Service; 2012 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forests; Forest Steward Ship through Active Management; at page 5. A copy of this report is available here: <http://csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/137233-forestreport-12-www.pdf>.
 - iii. #9 Executive Summary; PROTECTING FRONT RANGE FOREST WATERSHEDS FROM HIGH-SEVERITY WILDFIRES AN ASSESSMENT BY THE PINCHOT INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION FUNDED BY THE FRONT RANGE FUELS TREATMENT PARTNERSHIP. A complete copy of this report is available here. http://www.pinchot.org/gp/Colorado_watersheds
 - iv. #10 Interagency Lynx Biology Team. 2013. Canada lynx conservation assessment and strategy. 3rd edition. USDA Forest Service, USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, and USDI National Park Service. Forest Service Publication R1-13-19, Missoula, MT. 128 pp. at page 75.
- g) The critical need for motorized access to multiple-use recreation was recently identified by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF). It found that a lack of motorized access was the largest single barrier to those wanting to hunt and fish (Source #11). A lack of multiple-use access is also identified as a significant limitation to herd management and herd health (Source #12).
- i. #11. National Shooting Sports Foundation; Issues Related to Hunting Access in the United States; Final Report November 2010 at page 7, 13, 56.
 - ii. #12 National Shooting Sports Foundation; Issues Related to Hunting Access in the United States; Final Report November 2010 at page 11.
- h) Agency inventories and determinations on possible designations of Roadless Areas are not management decisions, but are rather inventories of characteristics of that area. Roadless areas are still governed by multiple-use management and changes to management require NEPA analysis or Congressional action. There are significant limitations on the scope of the Roadless Rule, as it only applies to new road construction or major reconstructions. Trails, even those over 50 inches wide, are not impacted by the Roadless Rule. Many areas that are involved in citizen Wilderness Proposals have been inventoried and found to be unsuitable for Roadless designation and this should weigh heavily against any suitability for Wilderness designation.
14. The Forest Service and BLM do not have the authority to create de-facto wilderness. It is critical that the agency differentiate between the powers of rule promulgating and enforcement agencies (like the BLM and Forest Service) and our federal rulemaking body (Congress). Rulemaking agencies cannot create areas that are wilderness in all but name. Wilderness study areas and non-motorized areas are managed as wilderness areas and are simply a mechanism to evade the measures set forth in the Wilderness Act. If these lands are important wilderness-type lands, then the agency must follow the laws set forth in the Wilderness Act (Public Law 88-577 - 16 U.S. C. 1131-1136) including: *Presidential recommendation to Congress. The President shall advise the United States Senate and House of Representatives of his recommendations with respect to the designation as "wilderness" or other reclassification*

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of each area on which review has been completed, together with maps and a definition of boundaries...Congressional approval. Each recommendation of the President for designation as "wilderness" shall become effective only if so provided by an Act of Congress.

15. There simply is no justification for creating more wilderness or defacto wilderness areas on our forests. If forest management continues to allow anti-access groups to use the travel planning process to further their agendas the travel plan will certainly fail! It should not be the purpose or intent of the travel planning process to exclude OHV travel or to crowd these users into small areas. To do so will produce unacceptable impacts on the forest and ultimately result in inappropriate use brought on by the travel plan itself.
16. Further evidence that the public widely supports multiple-use management of roadless areas was demonstrated by a ballot initiative in Montana. Flathead County voters have once again shown that they want federal roadless areas managed for multiple-uses, with 65 percent saying roadless lands "should be managed for multiple use purposes including motorized recreation and roaded timber production." With most of the votes counted, 7,796 voters supported that option, while 4,321 supported the alternative of managing roadless areas "for non-motorized recreation and roadless timber production."
(<http://www.dailyinterlake.com/articles/2006/06/07/news/news06.txt>)
17. Additionally, general public support for motorized access and recreation is demonstrated by the Flathead County Natural Resources Plan which has objectives of keeping at least 75% of the roads and trails outside of Wildernesses open at least seasonally to motorized access.
(<http://www.co.flathead.mt.us/fcpz/Natural%20Resource%20DOC.pdf> See Recreation section on page 43).
18. The Debate section of the April 2008 issue of Costco Connection (<http://www.costcoconnection.com/connection/200901/?u1=texterity>) asked the question "Are we doing enough to protect our national wilderness?" Results were reported in the May 2008 issue with 75% of the respondents answering Yes and 25% responding No. Clearly this demonstrates that the overall public opinion is that an adequate amount of our wilderness areas are protected under current conditions.
19. Additionally the decision must consider that non-motorized recreationists have the opportunity to go not only to designated wilderness areas but anywhere while the opportunities for motorized recreationists are limited to designated routes in a small portion of multiple-use areas.
20. The current allotment of recreation resources on all Forest Service lands is way out of balance with 44,919,000 acres out of 192,300,000 acres or 24% in wilderness designation while no more than 2.55% of the visitors are wilderness visitors. Designation as wilderness is further out of touch with the needs of the public because recreation is not a stated purpose of the wilderness act and, therefore, recreation in wilderness area can not and should not be emphasized. Note that we could oppose any recreation development in wilderness areas in retaliation to non-motorized groups that go after our recreation opportunities but we have chosen not to do so. Recreation is a stated purpose in the multiple-use laws and, therefore, should be emphasized in the purpose and action.
21. If Roadless acres are included in this total, it becomes even more unbalanced with at total of 103,437,000 acres or 54% in wilderness or roadless designation while only 2.55% of the visitors are wilderness visitors.

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22. We recognize the desire for a quiet experience in the forest as a legitimate value. To varying degrees, we all visit the forest to enjoy the natural sounds of streams, trees, and wildlife. Forest visitors who require an absolutely natural acoustic experience in the forest should be encouraged to use the portions of the forest which have been set aside for their exclusive benefit where they are guaranteed a quiet experience, i.e, wilderness areas. Given the demonstrated underutilization of existing wilderness areas, it is entirely reasonable to conclude that there is adequate wilderness area. Given that vast areas of our forests have been set aside for the exclusive benefit of this relatively small group of quiet visitors, it is not reasonable to set aside more areas and trails for their needs.
23. It is more reasonable and fair to allow continued motorized use of existing routes in inventoried roadless and wilderness study areas until such time as congress approves the area as wilderness. The courts have already established this precedent as supported in Judge Molloy's ruling in 2001 on the Montana Wilderness Study Act and the Big Snowy Mountains travel plan which was upheld in 2006.
24. With regard to wilderness areas, roadless areas, national recreation areas, natural landmarks and monuments, and wild, scenic, and recreational rivers, the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service are only authorized to delineate such areas and report such findings to Congress. Unless and until Congress actually designates such areas under applicable law, such delineations should have no effect on the multiple use and sustained yield mandates for management of public lands.
25. With regard to research and natural areas and scenic by-ways, the BLM and FS can designate such areas; however such designation should have no effect on the multiple use and sustained yield mandates for management of those public lands. Finally, with regard to critical waterways, geological areas, unroaded areas, botanical areas, and national scenic areas, the BLM and FS have no statutory authority to designate and manage such areas. Any such designations can by law have no effect on the multiple use and sustained yield mandates for management of national forests. Accordingly, these "special designations" should be deleted from the proposed alternative.
26. Current land management trends are applying wilderness standards and criteria to lands intended for multiple-use. For example, total National Forest area equals 191,856,000 acres (http://roadless.fs.fed.us/documents/feis/data/sheets/acres/appendix_forest_acres.html). Total designated wilderness/protected areas equal 42,351,000 acres or 28% of the total forest area. Additionally, there are other non-motorized designations that effectively eliminate motorized access and motorized recreation in large areas of the forest.

Other designations that preclude unrestricted multiple-uses include roadless areas which total 54,327,000 acres or 22% of the total forest area. First, the rules governing identified roadless areas clearly allow motorized recreation and roadless areas currently provide many important motorized recreational opportunities. However, in practice roadless areas are managed with restrictions that severely restrict multiple-use and access of those areas by the public. Therefore, the national forest area with severe access and use restrictions totals at least 96,678,000 acres or 50% of the total forest area.

Similar trends have occurred on lands managed by the Department of Interior (DOI) which total 507 million acres which is about one-fifth of the land in the United States. Acreages managed by each Interior agency include: 262 million acres managed by the Bureau of Land Management, 95 million acres managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service, 84 million acres managed by the National Park Service, 8.6 million acres managed by the Bureau of

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Reclamation, and 56 million acres managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Statistics summarizing acres of multiple-use and restricted-use on DOI lands are not readily available to the public, however, a significant portion of these lands have limited motorized access and limited motorized recreational opportunities. DOI should adequately disclose these land use statistics to the public including motorized recreationists as quickly as possible.

Therefore, the cumulative negative effect of the pre-Columbian scheme, wilderness designations, wilderness study areas, national parks, monument designations, roadless designations, non-motorized area designations, travel management, wildlife management areas and other restrictive management designations over the past 35 ± years have restricted the public land area (USDA and DOI) available to multiple-use visitors seeking motorized access and/or mechanized recreational experiences (over 95% of the public land visitors) to less than 50% of the total national forest and public land area.



It is not reasonable to close this area to the majority of uses. In order to be responsive to the needs of the public all of the remaining (100%) multiple-use public lands should be managed for multiple-uses including motorized access and motorized recreation. Therefore, all public lands such as those in this project area must remain open as multiple-use lands in order to avoid contributing to the significant cumulative negative effect associated with the trend of converting multiple-use lands to limited-use lands. We request that the document and decision adequately evaluate the needs of multiple-use and motorized recreationists and adequately evaluate the cumulative negative impacts that have resulted from inadequate evaluations in past actions. We also request that an adequate mitigation plan be included as part of this action to compensate for past cumulative negative impacts.

27. Sign-in kiosks are routinely provided at wilderness trailheads to record the use of wilderness areas. We have never seen an equivalent facility or program and this lack of data puts motorized recreation at a disadvantage.
28. The wilderness designation is not good for recreation and an alternative designation is needed. Many U.S. citizens do not trust our federal land managers to manage our natural resources responsibly. Wilderness advocates have taken advantage of this situation to promote the Wilderness designation and now the Roadless designation as a means to protect these areas. Wilderness designation was originally conceived, by the Wilderness advocates involved in the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act, as appropriate for about ten million acres of administratively designated Primitive Areas. Present day Wilderness advocates have since expanded the concept to a system of over one hundred million acres and they say we need much more.
29. An alternative land designation is needed to resolve the Wilderness and Roadless area debate. Off-highway motorcycles, aircraft, snowmobiles, 4X4s, mountain bikes, ATVs, and personal watercraft are not allowed in designated Wilderness areas. Therefore, these popular recreation pastimes are severely impacted by the Wilderness and Roadless designation. Motorized uses that have been grand fathered into some Wilderness areas, such as use of aircraft and powerboats, are subjected to harassment. Horseback riders, hunters and other non-motorized recreationists are also increasingly under attack from Wilderness advocates who push more

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restrictive regulations in existing Wilderness areas and those areas proposed for that designation.

The U.S. Congress should act on legislation establishing a federal designation that is less restrictive to recreational use than Wilderness and the Roadless designation. It should be called "Back Country Recreation Area" (<http://www.sharetrails.org/index.cfm?page=39> and <http://www.sharetrails.org/index.cfm?page=40>). This designation should be designed to protect and, if possible, enhance the backcountry recreation opportunities on these lands while still allowing responsible utilization of these areas by the natural resource industries.

This designation should be used for those areas currently identified by the federal land management agencies as "roadless" and thus currently under consideration for Wilderness designation. Areas considered may or may not be recommended for Wilderness designation or classed as Wilderness Study Areas. In addition, the Forest Service (FS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have administratively developed non-Congressionally designated Wilderness-like reserves or buffer zones. The Forest Service's buffers are called natural and near-natural areas. The BLM's reserves are named primitive and semi-primitive. These non-Congressionally approved land classifications should be receive the Back Country Recreation Area (BCRA) designation.

Many roadless areas have been under consideration for Wilderness designation for over 35 years. The opposition to Wilderness designation in many of these areas has been largely from recreationists whose preferred form of recreation isn't allowed in Wilderness areas. Recreational resources need not be sacrificed for responsible resource extraction. The BCRA designation will encourage cooperation, not only between diverse recreation interests, but also between recreationists and our resource industries.

A recent public opinion survey shows majority support for a Backcountry Recreation Area alternative to a proposed 300,000 acre Wilderness Bill in Northern California (<http://www.sharetrails.org/index.cfm?page=42&magazine=50>). In Del Norte County, 66 percent of people surveyed supported a Backcountry alternative instead of a Wilderness designation. Fifty-three percent of respondents in Humboldt County said it was wiser to designate land as a Backcountry Recreation Area. We request that all "roadless" federal lands, not currently designated as Wilderness, be reviewed for their importance to back country recreationists and designated as Back Country Recreation Areas.

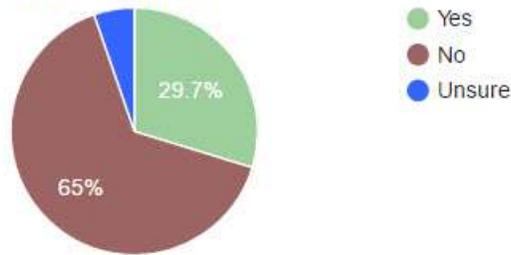
30. Page 215 of the Supplement to Big Snowy Mountains EA. *Solitude is a personal, subjective value defined as isolation from the sights, sound and presence of others, and the development of man.* We acknowledge the value of solitude and point out that there are many acres of wilderness/non-motorized/exclusive-use available to provide that solitude. Our concern is in regards to the diminishing amount of multiple-use lands and the unreasonable concept that multiple-use lands should be managed as wilderness/non-motorized/exclusive-use lands. Managing multiple-use lands by wilderness criteria and for perfect solitude does not meet the communal needs of the public and is not a reasonable goal for multiple-use lands.
31. The opportunity for solitude must be reasonably balanced with the multiple-use needs of the public. For example, the Montana Standard in an article on December 14, 2000 reported that hikers on the Continental Divide trail "walked for 300 miles without seeing another human being". This article illustrates a significant long-distance interstate recreational opportunity available to non-motorized visitors and the negligible use that it sees. Additionally, we have been camping in the Telegraph Creek drainage for 27 years and we have met only 2 people

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using the CDNST in that area. In contrast, a long-distance interstate recreational opportunity similar to the CDNST does not exist for OHV recreationists.

- 32. It is not equitable to provide recreationists seeking solitude and wilderness experiences exclusive access to tens of millions of acres and thousands of miles of non-motorized trails while restricting the public seeking multiple-use opportunities access to an inadequate road and trail system. In other words, it is not reasonable to allow a very limited group of individuals who do not want to meet other people to displace thousands of other people. We request an equitable and balanced allocation of motorized access and recreational opportunity.
- 33. The need for more wilderness is not backed up by facts, site specific studies, data, and monitoring, and overall public need and must not be used as a ploy to close motorized recreational opportunities.
- 34. Additionally, the public does not support the use of Presidential orders to create monuments and other non-motorized, defacto wilderness designations as demonstrated by a recent poll in the Helena Independent Record:

Should the president have unilateral authority to create national monuments from federal lands?



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