

COALITION TO PROTECT THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FRONT

Montanans Speak Out For Quiet Use

Excerpts from Front Travel Plan comments, summer 2005

I own and use both 4X4 pickups and ATVs, but believe that their use in the Front is not consistent with good land management principles because of the resource damage potential they pose. The limited Law Enforcement capability of the U.S. Forest Service cannot guarantee compliance of "some" use...A total non-motorized use strategy will make enforcement more practical with limited numbers of officers.

--Dick Mangan, Missoula

President, 2004-05 International Association of Wildland Fire

Alternative 3, by your analysis and our analysis, best serves the area's wildlife resources. ... This Alternative appears to be the "will of the people." ... With Alternative 3, all wildlife values will be enhanced. In the long-term, hunters and anglers will be better served. There will be 477 miles of trails available for non-motorized recreation and 88 miles of roads and trails available for motorized recreation. Fourteen trailheads will be available for hunter access.

Mike Aderhold

Regional supervisor, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Badger-Two Medicine is special with multiple ecosystems as well as having Blackfeet traditional sites. Increased motorized travel would degrade these areas.

--Richard Odegaard, Browning

We can attest to how motorcycle owners have flagrantly left permissible trails to ride game trails in Mortimer Gulch. After a few trips on game trails, subsequent riders can't tell which are allowed trails and which are prohibited.

--Max Barker, Augusta

JJJ Wilderness Ranch

We are hunters and fishermen and we have spent many days hunting in Blackleaf, the Blindhorse drainage and Ear Mountain management area and fishing the Sun, Dearborn and Teton rivers. It bears repeating that these are remarkably beautiful places which are remarkable also for the unique balance of wildlife still found here. Quiet solitude is an endangered experience in today's world. We support Alternative 3 as the best hope for preserving a place where the sounds of nature can still be enjoyed.

Judy Cornell, Choteau

There is so little quiet left in our crowded country. We all need the peace and quiet of nature....Please help preserve it for us and for future generations.

--Judy Singer, Choteau

For the last century and long before, outdoorsmen have been content with walking or riding horses and mules into these lands. Non-motorized use also provides for a real hunting experience, but this can be ruined by herds of ATVs interfering with a real experience, not to say what it does for the populations of wildlife.

Arlo Skari, Chester farmer

We have an opportunity to preserve a unique and special place which was used by our ancestors, not only for preservation of life but also for the preservation of spirit ... I have listened to stories told by my uncle of tree burial sites and vision quest places in the Heart Butte area. The area all along the Front, from St. Peters Mission to Chief Mountain, still holds religious and cultural significance for both the Little Shell and Blackfeet Tribes.

Larry Salois, Cut Bank

Little Shell tribal member of the Chippewa Cree

Our friends and neighbors are horse packers and hunting guides and taxidermists who depend on the health of the land to an extent that is rare in the modern world. Most of us live here because, unlike the vast majority of the U.S. and the world, this is a place where motorized use has not eclipsed traditional uses of the land. Economically, there is no way that a management plan that expands motorized use could outweigh the benefits of having this last, unique area maintained as it exists right now. ... Motorized recreation, if it is to not be destructive, requires more oversight from Forest Service staff, costing more taxpayer dollars that could be better used on other FS projects.

Hal Herring, Augusta

The unique, pristine, and fragile nature of this magical place will best be honored if travel beyond the existing roads occurs only by traditional and historic means--on foot or horseback.

Doug "Doc" Hammill

Badger-Two Medicine property owner near East Glacier

Cities (and even villages such as Augusta) are full of motorized noise; it is worth keeping some areas free of it, and this is such a place. We humans can choose to live in cities and can adapt to them, but the animals can't. There are fewer and fewer areas for them, and the interface area of coexistence is becoming narrower. ORV intrusion would tip that fragile balance. Unlike traditional horse and foot use, ORVs are so intrusive and destructive that they preclude other use and enjoyment of the area.

--Augusta resident

Off-road motorized use can create conflicts with wildlife, private landowners, hikers, horseback riders and the fragile landscape. ... Alternative 3 of the proposed Forest Service Travel Plan, promotes traditional uses of this landscape, such as foot and horse travel, while allowing motorized travel on main access roads to trailheads. Alternative 3 is the most visionary alternative for keeping the Rocky Mountain Front a treasure for future generations.

Mary Fay, Great Falls

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