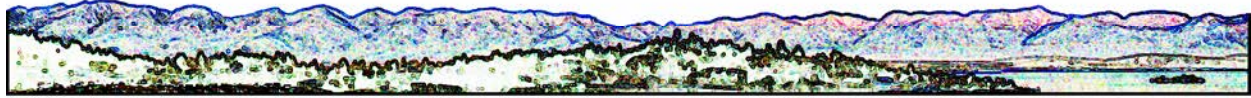


Swan View Coalition

Nature and Human Nature on the Same Path



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Richard Kehr – Swan Lake District Ranger
200 Ranger Station Road
Bigfork, MT 59911

March 6, 2012

Dear Rich;

We appreciate the development of Alt. C in the Island Unit Trails Project, but we urge you to implement a new Alt. D, as described below:

1. We fully support the establishment of the 11.5 miles of Foy's to Blacktail and Lakeside to Blacktail non-motorized trails - and the intent of Alternative C to not increase motorized opportunities in those areas (as Alt. B would).
2. The Island Unit needs more non-motorized trail but not more motorized roads and trails, given the area already has 10.3 miles of trail and 121 miles of roads open to motor vehicles - and no non-motorized trails whatsoever.
3. We appreciate that Alt. C does not reopen closed roads to motorized vehicles areas on the east and west slopes of Blacktail in key elk security areas (as Alt. B would) in order to continue providing elk security. However, we do not support Alt. C's reopening of 21 miles of roads elsewhere to motor vehicles because they also were previously closed to protect wildlife and other forest resources.
4. We do not necessarily object to Alt. C's dual designation of 18 miles of currently open road as OHV trails, provided they are adequately marked and managed to protect public safety and natural resources - and provided this indeed serves to reduce unlawful OHV use elsewhere in the Island Unit.
5. As a more balanced measure, we urge the Forest Service to develop and implement a new Alternative D, per the above, which would result in 11.5 miles of non-motorized trails and 28 miles of motorized trails without reopening closed roads or building new connectors between them. This remains generous to motorized vehicles compared to non-motorized uses, especially given 121 miles of road are currently and would remain open to motor vehicles.

Sincerely,

Keith J. Hammer - Chair