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Service

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Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Blackfoot Travel Plan

Lincoln Ranger District, Helena National Forest
Lewis & Clark and Powell Counties, Montana



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**Blackfoot Travel Plan
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Helena National Forest, Lewis & Clark and Powell Counties, Montana**

Lead Agency: USDA Forest Service

Cooperating Agencies: None

Responsible Official: KEVIN T. RIORDAN, FOREST SUPERVISOR
2880 Skyway Dr., Helena, MT, 59602

For Information Contact: AMBER KAMPS, LINCOLN DISTRICT RANGER
1569 Hwy 200, Lincoln, MT 59639
406-362-7002

Abstract: The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Helena National Forest is proposing changes to the existing system of designated motorized public access routes and prohibitions within the Blackfoot travel planning area for wheeled motorized vehicles. The existing system of available public motor vehicle routes and areas in the Blackfoot travel planning area is the culmination of multiple agency decisions over recent decades. Public motor vehicle use of much of this available system continues to be manageable and consistent with the current travel management regulation. Exceptions have been identified based on public input and the criteria listed at 36 CFR 212.55 (2005 Travel Management Rule), and in these cases changes are proposed. The overall objective is to provide a manageable system of designated public motorized access routes and areas, consistent with and to achieve the purposes of Forest Service travel management regulations at 36 CFR part 212 subpart B.

The proposed action would designate motorized and non-motorized routes for non-winter travel on the Lincoln Ranger District and would result in changes to the existing motorized and non-motorized route system. Some roads and trails are proposed for closure and in this case, the proposed action includes proposed levels of closure (storage levels and decommissioning levels, as described in more detail in chapter 2).

Under alternative 2 – proposed action:

- Approximately 98 miles of roads would be closed to public wheeled motorized use (348 miles of National Forest System roads would still be available)
- Approximately 30 additional miles of motorized trails would be designated (92 miles of motorized trails would be available)
- Approximately 51 additional miles of non-motorized trails would be designated (122 miles of non-motorized trails would be available)
- Approximately 2 miles of new motorized trail would be constructed
- Approximately 31 miles of new non-motorized trail would be constructed
- There would be no change to approximately 21 miles of roads currently considered naturally reclaimed/decommissioned per field investigations (roads that are vegetated to the point that they are not drivable and thus are reclaimed on their own , or naturally decommissioned-see table 4)
- Approximately 62 miles acquired through land exchange would be identified for closure, storage or decommissioning.

- Approximately 39 miles not previously part of the road or trail inventory (unauthorized routes) would be identified for closure, storage or decommissioning
- Approximately 133 miles of roads would be stored
- Approximately 8 miles of roads would be decommissioned

We developed alternative 3 to respond to the following key issues: wildlife habitat and security, fisheries and water quality, and quality non-motorized trail system. It takes into account input regarding water quality and fish habitat, wildlife security and wildlife habitat improvements, and enhanced non-motorized recreation opportunities while still providing for a motorized recreational experience.

If alternative 3 were implemented:

- Approximately 139 miles of roads would be closed to public wheeled motorized use (307 miles of National Forest System roads would still be available)
- Approximately 13 miles of motorized trails would be closed (47 miles of motorized trails would be available)
- Approximately 88 miles of additional non-motorized trails would be designated (159 miles would be available)
- Approximately 3 miles of new motorized trail would be constructed
- Approximately 0.5 miles of new road would be constructed
- Approximately 31 miles of new non-motorized trail would be constructed
- Approximately 21 miles of roads would be considered naturally decommissioned per field investigations (roads that are vegetated to the point that they are not drivable and thus are reclaimed on their own or naturally decommissioned-see table 4).
- 67 miles acquired through land exchange would be identified for closure, storage or decommissioning.
- 54 miles not previously part of the road or trail inventory would be identified for closure, storage or decommissioning
- Approximately 75 miles of road would be stored
- Approximately 197 miles of road would be decommissioned

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such a way that they are useful to the Agency's preparation of the EIS. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions. The submission of timely and specific comments can affect a reviewer's ability to participate in subsequent administrative review or judicial review. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to participate in subsequent administrative or judicial reviews.

Send Comments to:

**AMBER KAMPS, LINCOLN DISTRICT RANGER
1569 Hwy 200, Lincoln, MT 59639**

List of Acronyms

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FP	Forest Plan
FS	Forest Service
HUC	Hydrologic Unit Code
LRMP	Land and Resource Management Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFS	National Forest System
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOA	Notice of Availability
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
PDC	Project Design Criteria
PDF	Project Design Features
ROD	Record of Decision
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDI	United States Department of Interior
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Summary of the EIS

Introduction

The Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Helena National Forest proposes to change existing non-winter motorized public access routes and prohibitions within the Blackfoot travel planning area on the Lincoln Ranger District. Consistent with travel planning regulations at 36 CFR part 212 subpart B, the resulting available public motorized access routes and areas would be designated on a motor vehicle use map (MVUM) and the prohibition at 36 CFR 261.13 would take effect. The MVUM would clearly identify roads and trails and their designated motorized uses for forest visitors. Upon publishing the MVUM, public use of wheeled motor vehicles other than in accordance with the designations would be prohibited. We also propose to physically store, decommission, relocate, and construct certain roads and trails as well as to designate a non-motorized trail system as part of this proposal. The area affected includes approximately 238,000 acres of National Forest System lands outside of wilderness on the Lincoln Ranger District. This analysis is focused on non-winter use; travel routes over snow are not included and are being addressed in a separate analysis.

Project Objectives and Development of the Proposed Action

The overall objective of this proposal is to provide a manageable system of designated public motorized and non-motorized access routes and areas that is consistent with Forest Service travel planning regulations (36 CFR 212 subpart B), the 2005 Travel Management Final Rule, and Helena National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as amended (Forest Plan) direction. *(Note: Chapter 1 of the EIS has a detailed discussion of the project objectives and the process to develop the proposed action and alternatives).*

To meet the overall objective, there is a need to:

- Designate public wheeled motorized and non-motorized use for roads and trails
- Mitigate resource concerns associated with certain routes and uses (resource concerns by route are described in more detail in the project record). For off-road motor vehicle use, the objective is to minimize effects as described at 36 CFR 212.55(b).
- Ensure the route system is in compliance with the Forest Plan and Interagency requirements for grizzly bear security and habitat within the recovery zone.
- Ensure the route system provides continued access for resource management needs (e.g. vegetation management and fire).
- Ensure the route system minimizes exclusive use from and to private land and mining claims
- Reduce the complexity of the current travel plan map
- Provide for wheeled motorized vehicle travel for camping and parking associated with camping near designated system routes, including roads and trails (unless signed otherwise) as long as no new permanent routes are created by this activity; no damage to existing vegetation, soil, or water resource occurs; travel off-route does not cross streams; and travel off-route does not traverse riparian or wet areas
- Provide for parking safely next to the side of the road.

We developed this proposal to provide access for recreation, administration, private land and resource use; resource protection; safety of forest users; to reduce or prevent conflicting uses; and to reduce the complexity of existing district transportation system maps.

We used the following sideboards to develop the proposed action:

- Roads and trails currently designated as closed are not assumed to remain designated as closed
- Unauthorized routes (also known as user-created routes) and motorized routes will be identified on existing condition maps and determined “open motorized,” “open non-motorized,” or “closed”
- Consider construction or reconstruction opportunities to provide wheeled motorized use and to better protect resource conditions
- Determine the long-term status of all routes and prescribe closure methods (as site-specific information becomes available) as appropriate, including decommissioning.
- Identify type and season of use (non-winter) for all system roads and trails
- Identify areas where wheeled motorized use would be appropriate as well as the type of use for each area (ATV, motorcycles, etc.)
- Clearly identify roads of open public access for the Washington Gulch/Jefferson Gulch Roads as directed by a recent judicial court summary decision.
- Identify opportunities for a broad spectrum of motorized and non-motorized uses
- Place emphasis on reducing the complexity of visitor maps by reducing the number of different travel restriction types including seasonal restrictions; this will assist in making travel management simple and concise (i.e. current plans have 12-15 different closures); the process needs to be simplified for public understanding and management efficiency
- Continue to coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and private land owners to identify access routes necessary for land management and to reduce or eliminate routes that are not necessary to meet the purpose and need for action or project objectives
- Incorporate collaborative efforts conducted since 2000 and the detailed information gathered into the alternatives
- Allow administrative use for management needs and emergency access on closed routes
- Any existing route not identified as a Helena National Forest (HNF) system route in this travel plan decision would be considered an unauthorized route

Public Involvement and Key Issues

We originally initiated the Blackfoot travel planning process in 2000 by developing a proposed action and asking for public input; but then we put the effort on hold while we completed a Forest Roads Analysis report in 2004. In 2005, the Forest Service issued new travel planning regulations (USDA Forest Service 2005). We re-initiated scoping on a new proposed action in 2010 and issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS in the Federal Register at that time. (*Note: Chapter 1 of the EIS has a detailed discussion on public involvement and the development of Issues*).

We received 336 comment letters in response to this effort. We coded, categorized and analyzed these comments along with the results of continued internal scoping to develop a list of key issues and alternatives for analysis.

The key issues identified included:

- Wildlife (Grizzly Bear, Mountain Goat, Elk) Habitat and Security
- Water Quality and Fisheries
- Quality Motorized Trail/Route System
- Quality Non-motorized Trail/Route System
- Continental Divide National Scenic Trail

Alternatives Considered

A detailed discussion of the alternatives, including the proposed action, project design features and mitigations are in the EIS Chapter 2. Based on preliminary analysis of the alternatives, we identified the potential need for a Forest Plan programmatic amendment regarding the standard for the big game security index (Forest Plan standard 4a) as part of this proposal and issued a corrected NOI on October 1, 2012 with this new information.

Alternatives considered in this analysis include:

Alternative 1 – No Action (No Change): This alternative would defer implementation of the 2005 Travel Management Rule and would not result in a motor vehicle use map. No changes would be made to the existing system of available public motorized routes and areas within the Blackfoot travel planning area.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: This alternative would designate motorized and non-motorized routes for non-winter travel on the Lincoln Ranger District and would result in changes to the existing motorized and non-motorized route system. Some roads and trails are proposed for closure and in this case, the proposed action includes proposed levels of closure (storage levels and decommissioning levels, as described in more detail in Chapter 2). Maps of the proposed action are in Appendix G of the EIS.

Under alternative 2 – proposed action:

- Approximately 98 miles of roads would be closed to public wheeled motorized use (348 miles of National Forest System roads would still be available)
- Approximately 30 additional miles of motorized trails would be designated (92 miles of motorized trails would be available)
- Approximately 51 additional miles of non-motorized trails would be designated (122 miles of non-motorized trails would be available)
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- Approximately 62 miles acquired through land exchange would be identified for closure, storage or decommissioning.
- Approximately 39 miles not previously part of the road or trail inventory (unauthorized routes) would be identified for closure, storage or decommissioning
- Approximately 133 miles of roads would be stored
- Approximately 8 miles of roads would be decommissioned

Alternative 3: This alternative was developed to respond to the following key issues: wildlife habitat and security, wildlife travel corridors, fisheries and water quality, and quality non-motorized trail system. It takes into account input regarding water quality and fish habitat, wildlife security and wildlife habitat improvements, and enhanced non-motorized recreation opportunities while still providing for a motorized recreational experience both on and off the trail. Like alternative 2 – proposed action, alternative 3 would be consistent with travel planning regulations and we would designate the resulting available wheeled motorized access routes and areas on a motor vehicle use map. Maps of alternative 3 are in Appendix G of the EIS

If alternative 3 were implemented:

- Approximately 139 miles of roads would be closed to public wheeled motorized use (307 miles of National Forest System roads would still be available)
- Approximately 13 miles of motorized trails would be closed (47 miles of motorized trails would be available)
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Summary of the Effects of the Alternatives

The effects of the proposed action and the alternatives are summarized in table S-1 that follows. Detailed discussions by resource area are found in the main EIS Chapter 3.

Responsible Official and Decision to be Made

The responsible official for the Blackfoot Travel Plan is the Forest Supervisor for the Helena National Forest. Based upon the effects of the alternatives, he will decide whether to implement the proposed action, no action, or alternative 3, or any combination of the analyzed alternative components considered in this document. He will consider the comments, disclosures of environmental consequences, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies in making the decision, stating the rationale in the Record of Decision (ROD). He will also decide whether a programmatic or other Forest Plan amendment is necessary.

Table S- 1. Alternative comparison by purpose and need, primary components and key issues

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Achievement of Objectives and Purpose and Need			
Provide manageable system of designated public motorized access routes	Alternative 1 would continue to provide a manageable road system and access to the national forest. It would, however, leave a number of miles of road on the ground not considered necessary for the management of the national forest.	Alternatives 2 and 3 provide a manageable system of designated public motorized access routes and provide detailed analysis of every road and trail on the system to determine effective management of that road.	
Designate public wheeled motorized and non-motorized use for roads and trails	Does not designate wheeled motorized and non-motorized use. Retains existing system of roads and trails.	Designates public wheeled motorized and non-motorized use for roads and trails. Allows administrative access.	Designates public wheeled motorized and non-motorized use for roads and trails. Allows administrative access.
Mitigate resource concerns associated with certain routes and uses	Does not provide mitigation for resource concerns	See project design features section in chapter 2.	See project design features section in chapter 2 p. 28.
Ensure route system is in compliance with Forest Plan for grizzly bear security and habitat within the recovery zone	The Forest Plan threshold of 0.55 miles per square mile of road is currently being met under alternative 1.	Open road densities were analyzed for this project. Alternative 2 would reduce open road densities and would be below the Forest Plan threshold of 0.55 miles per square mile of road.	Open road densities were analyzed for this project. Alternative 3 would reduce open road densities and would be below the Forest Plan threshold of 0.55 miles per square mile of road. Alternative 3 would result in the lowest open road density, compared to alternatives 1 or 2.
Ensure the route system provides continued access for resource management needs	Provides for adequate future resource management on the existing road system.	Provides for adequate future resource management on higher maintenance level roads. Segments of new construction are proposed where considered necessary to improve management of the national forest.	Provides for adequate future resource management on higher maintenance level roads. Segments of new construction are proposed where considered necessary to improve management of the national forest.
Ensure the route system minimizes exclusive use from and to private land and mining claims (from Trans report)	Roads (approximately 8 miles) that fail to provide public access to the National Forest due to jurisdictional concerns would	Roads that fail to provide public access are proposed for storage (approximately 8 miles). Placing the roads in storage would prevent certain user groups (private land owners and miners) from having access to the forest that is not given to the public, while retaining	

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
	continue to be open to highway legal vehicles.	those roads for future resource management needs.	
Reduce the complexity of the current travel map	Complexity would not change, with 12 different seasonal restrictions identified for roads. The maps would remain somewhat confusing in regard to allowable use of motorized trails, but System trails, unlike roads, currently have no seasonal use restrictions to complicate the public's understanding and compliance.	<p>Alternative 2 results in a more complex travel plan in regard to trail management, but simplifies it for roads. Alternative 2 would clearly show the trails open to motorized use on a MVUM and more specifically, the type of motorized use, whether 2-wheel motorized or motorized less than 50 inches in width.</p> <p>Designating motorized roads and trails on an MVUM would remove speculation by the public as to the allowable use, and dates of open use.</p> <p>This would be an improvement in comparison to the existing travel plan map though non-motorized trails would not be incorporated into the MVUM.</p> <p>Proposed management of the non-motorized trail system is more detailed under alternatives 2 and 3, therefore the Forest Visitor map would need to be updated under these alternatives to reflect the allowable non-motorized uses of the trails.</p> <p>In addition this alternative also proposes a reduction in the number and types of closure map codes which would result in a simplified motor vehicle use map.</p>	<p>Alternative 3 results in a simplified MVUM. All motorized use would be limited to one time period (July 1 - August 31), and for motorized trails, there would be only one use category (vehicles less than 50"). This would be an improvement in comparison to the existing travel plan map though non-motorized trails would not be incorporated into the MVUM.</p> <p>With respect to non-motorized use, the travel plan is more complex due to the addition of another allowable use category (foot and stock use only). Proposed management of the non-motorized trail system is more detailed under alternatives 2 and 3; therefore the Forest Visitor Map would need to be updated under these alternatives to reflect the allowable non-motorized uses of the trails.</p> <p>In addition this alternative also proposes a reduction in the number and types of closure map codes which would result in a simplified motor vehicle use map.</p>

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Provide for wheeled motor vehicle travel for camping and parking associated with camping near designated system routes	Motorized access for dispersed camping is permitted up to 300 feet from centerline of motorized routes.	Alternatives 2 and 3 would designate areas within 300 feet of a designated system route for off-route wheeled motorized vehicle use for camping or parking associated with camping.	
Provide for parking safely next to the side of the road	Not provided for specifically.	Alternatives 2 and 3 would provide for legal parking within 30 feet of the centerline of designated roads to conduct allowable activities such as picnicking and hiking.	
Primary Alternative Components ¹			
Miles of designated NFS roads (that would be shown on the MVUM (under alternative 2 or under alternative 3))	446	348	307
Miles of designated motorized trails	60	92	47
Miles of designated non-motorized trails	71	122	112
Miles of road storage	0	133	75
Miles of road decommissioning	0	8	197
Miles of new road construction	0	0	0.50
Miles of new motorized trail construction	0	2	3
Miles of new non-motorized trail construction	0	31	31
Total Miles of designated mountain bike routes:	0	89	89
Mountain bike and foot travel (hiking)	0	19	18
Mountain bike, foot travel and horseback riding	0	20	52
Mountain bike, foot travel, horseback riding and motorized trail	0	37	8
Mountain bike, foot travel, and motorized trail	0	1	1
Mixed use along existing road	0	12	10
Changes to CDNST	Mix of motorized and non-motorized use.	No change; mix of motorized and non-motorized use.	Managed primarily for non-motorized use; seasonal motorized use (closed 9/1-6/30)

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
			would be limited to approximately 1 mile of trail and the rest of the trail would be managed for non-motorized use.
Changes to Helmville-Gould Trail	Motorized use only (vehicles less than 50 inches).	No change; motorized use only (vehicles less than 50 inches).	Managed for non-motorized use from its intersection with CDNST to Dalton Mountain.
Changes to Stonewall Trail	Motorized use only (vehicles less than 50 inches).	No change; motorized use only (vehicles less than 50 inches).	Closed to wheeled motorized use from 9/1-6/30 annually.
Key Issues			
Wildlife (See EIS chapter 3 section on Terrestrial Wildlife)			
Elk			
Habitat effectiveness in all eight Elk Herd Units combined (Arrastra Creek, Beaver Creek, Flesher Pass, Keep Cool, Lander's Fork, Nevada Creek, Ogden Mountain, and Poorman): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total miles of motorized routes and route density (mi/mi²) • Open roads per square mile 	884.0 1.1	848.0 1.1 Alternative 2 would result in a 36 mile/square mile reduction in road density and would slightly improve overall habitat effectiveness.	805.0 1.0 Alternative 3 would result in a 79 mile/square mile reduction in road density and would somewhat improve overall habitat effectiveness.
Summer Hiding Cover - Forest Plan standard 3	Forest Plan standard 3 for summer range hiding cover is currently not being met for all elk habitat units under current condition; this would not change with implementation of alternative 1.	No change from existing condition; alternative 2 would not reduce hiding cover.	No change from existing condition; alternative 3 would not reduce hiding cover.
Big game security index (proposed new Forest Plan Standard 4(a) is: <i>When security areas comprise more than 30% of the fall use area of an elk herd unit within the HNF administrative boundary, management activities shall not reduce the amount of security areas from October 15 through December 1 approximate big game rifle season)) to less than 30%. Where security areas comprise 30% or less of the fall use area of an</i>	Proposed new Forest Plan standard for big game security would not be implemented for alternative 1.	Proposed new Forest Plan standard for big game security would be met for all elk herd units in the project area under alternative 2 and 3. In comparison, if the existing Forest Plan standard were used and it were not changed with this decision, only 4 of the 8 herd units in the project would be in compliance with the Forest Plan under each of	

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
<i>elk herd unit (within the HNF administrative boundary) during the general rifle season, management activities shall not result in a further reduction</i>		the alternatives, even with reductions in road densities under alternatives 2 and 3.	
Winter Range (Forest Plan Standard 4(c))	Since travel would be limited to existing designated routes under all alternatives, the availability of winter range and winter range thermal cover would remain unchanged. There would be no new road or trail construction in winter range thermal cover under any alternative.		
Average elk security habitat (percent) for all elk herd units combined (guideline is 30 percent)	38 – Guideline is met across the project area as a whole.	39 – Guideline is met and alternative 2 would increase elk security by approximately 1% across the project area as a whole.	43 – Guideline is met and alternative 3 would increase elk security by approximately 5% across the project area as a whole.
Average elk habitat effectiveness (percent) for all elk herd units combined (guideline is 50 percent)	59 – Guideline is met across the project area as a whole.	59 – Guideline is met and would remain the same as alternative 1 for the project area as a whole. However, habitat effectiveness would increase minimally in 7 of the 8 elk herd unit under alternative 2.	60 – Guideline is met and alternative 3 would increase overall elk habitat effectiveness for the project area by approximately 1%. However, habitat effectiveness would increase in 7 of the 8 elk units and this improvement would be greater than under alternative 2.
Grizzly Bear			
Interagency requirements for grizzly bear: All Grizzly Bear Subunits (Alice Creek, Arrastra Mountain, Red Mountain) Combined (Average for Bear Management Unit): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open motorized route density (OMRD) guideline is less than or equal to 19% of the area. • Total motorized route density (TMRD) guideline is less than or equal to 19 % of the area. • Security core (CORE) habitat guideline is greater than or equal to 68% of the area. 	17 OMRD 21 TMRD 66 CORE	19 OMRD 18 TMRD 70 CORE	16 OMRD 16 TMRD 73 CORE
Interagency requirement guidelines met in subunits?	Guidelines for all three subunits combined are currently being met for OMRD but not for TMRD and CORE; this would continue with implementation of alternative 1.	Grizzly bear habitat would improve through reduced road densities; guidelines for all three subunits combined would be met.	Grizzly bear habitat would improve through reduced road densities; guidelines for all three subunits combined would be met and would improve over the existing condition. Alternative 3

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
			goes further than alternatives 1 or 2 in improving grizzly bear habitat.
<p>Forest Plan standard for open road density in Occupied Habitat met?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest Plan Standard is less than or equal to 0.55 miles per square mile of road 	0.43 – Guideline is met	0.39 – Guideline is met	0.35 – Guideline is met
<p>Grizzly Bear Summary – Forest Plan standard and interagency requirements met?</p>	<p>Open road density would remain at 0.43 miles/square mile and would continue to be in compliance with the Forest Plan; not all interagency requirements for OMRD, TMRD and CORE would be met in individual subunits or in all subunits combined.</p>	<p>Implementing alternative 2 would reduce open road density and would go further than alternative 1 in meeting the Forest Plan standard and interagency requirements; it would reduce open road density by 0.04 miles/square mile. Alternative 2 would improve TRD and CORE in all three subunits compared to the current condition (alternative 1). The least change occurs in the Arrastra subunit while the greatest change occurs in the Red Mountain subunit. The Red Mountain subunit would still have a degraded baseline but ORD, TRD, and CORE would improve.</p>	<p>Implementing alternative 3 would reduce open road density and would go further than alternatives 1 and 2 in meeting the Forest Plan standard and interagency requirements; it would reduce open road density by 0.08 miles/square mile.</p> <p>Alternative 3 does the most to improve conditions for each of the subunits, individually as well as collectively. Both action alternatives meet the guidelines but alternative 3 would result in the lowest open and lowest total road values and the highest core value compared to alternatives 1 and 2.</p>
<p>Mountain Goat</p>			
<p>Mountain goat habitat disturbance/displacement in the Red Mountain and Stonewall areas and the connecting ridgeline</p>	<p>Alternative 1 would not change the existing condition and would not minimize potential impacts to mountain goats; trail #417 would remain open without seasonal restrictions and trail U-330-B1 would remain closed allowing for some limited, infrequent single-track use.</p>	<p>Alternative 2 would reduce the potential for summer motorized use in potential mountain goat habitat but would not be substantially different than alternative 1.</p>	<p>Compared to alternative 1 and 2, alternative 3 would go the furthest in reducing the potential for negative effects from summer motorized use to mountain goats and their habitat primarily by decommissioning trail U-330-B1 from Stonewall Mtn. to Cotter Basin and closing trail #417 (accessing Stonewall Mtn.) seasonally (9/1-6/30) to</p>

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
			motorized use.
Aquatic Species and Habitat (See EIS chapter 3 section on Aquatic Species and Habitat)			
Road sediment reduction estimates resulting from road storage or decommissioning in tons per year	No reduction in sediment	Approx. 13.3 tons per year less than alternative 1.	Approx. 37.9 tons per year less than alternative 1.
Miles of road or trails reclaimed in the 150-foot buffer along streams (riparian habitat conservation areas)	0	Three of the project area hydrologic unit codes (HUCs)—Hamburg, Sauerkraut, and Upper Alice—would have reductions in the miles of road within 150 of streams for a total reduction of 3.2 miles.	Twenty-two of the project area HUCs would have reductions in the miles of road within 150 of streams for a total reduction of 34.4 miles.
Number of road stream crossings and relationship to fish bearing streams	0	Two of the HUCs in the project area (Hamburg and Sauerkraut) would have culverts removed for a total of 17 culverts removed and channels restored.	Twenty of the HUCs in the project area would have culverts removed for a total of 121 culverts removed and channels restored.
Miles of high/moderate risk roads and relationship to fish bearing watersheds	0	Decommissioning of 3.2 miles of roads including roads in Alice, Hamburg and Sauerkraut watersheds are proposed. They are rated high/moderate risk in fish bearing watersheds.	Decommissioning of 121 miles of roads including roads in all of the rated high/moderate risk watersheds and additional fish bearing watersheds listed in Table 5, Chapter 3.
Consistency of alternatives with Forest Plan guidance for threatened, endangered and sensitive fish and aquatic species	The current road system condition and its location have negative impacts to fisheries and aquatic species due to culverts that block fish passage and are at risk for failure, and sedimentation from roads within 150 feet of streams that reduce riparian and floodplain connectivity and function; no improvements would be made under Alternative 1 to bring the road system into compliance with the Forest Plan.	Consistent with the Forest Plan for TES fish and aquatic species	Consistent with the Forest Plan for TES fish and aquatic species

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Quality motorized trail/route system (See EIS chapter 3 section on Transportation and Recreation)			
Miles of roads and routes open for motorized use and relationship to currently-used or popular areas	446 miles roads 60 miles trails	348 miles roads 92 trails	307 miles roads 46 miles trails
Miles of roads available for possible motorized, mixed use	Would not designate roads for motorized mixed use.	Designating NFS roads for motorized mixed use requires an engineering analysis and must be completed by a qualified engineer. Analysis would occur on a road by road basis after completion of the planning process and implemented over time.	Designating NFS roads for motorized mixed use requires an engineering analysis and must be completed by a qualified engineer. Analysis would occur on a road by road basis after completion of the planning process and implemented over time.
Miles of new motorized trail construction	0	2	3
Overall ease-of-use of the motor vehicle use map for motorized users (level of complexity)	Visitor map complexity: See above.	MVUM and Visitor map complexity: See above.	MVUM and Visitor map complexity: See above.
Quality non-motorized trail/route system (See EIS chapter 3 section on Transportation and Recreation)			
Miles of routes open for non-motorized use only and relationship to currently-used or popular areas	71 miles (all mixed non-motorized use).	122 miles of non-motorized use (19 miles foot and mountain bike; 103 miles foot, stock and mountain bike).	159 miles of non-motorized trails (47 miles foot and stock; 18 miles foot and mountain bike; 94 miles, foot, stock and mountain bike). This alternative would close Scapegoat Wilderness portal trails to mountain bikers.*
Miles of new non-motorized trail construction or miles of new non-motorized routes designated on existing routes	0	31	31
Overall ease-of-use of motor vehicle use map and non-motorized trail system for non-motorized users (level of complexity)	Forest Visitor Map: See above.	MVUM complexity and Forest Visitor Map: See above.	MVUM complexity and Forest Visitor Map: See above.
Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (See EIS chapter 3 section on Recreation)			
Miles of motorized routes within the CDNST	17	17	1

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Miles of non-motorized routes within the CDNST	32	32	48
Consistency of alternatives with the intent of the 2009 CDNST Comprehensive Plan and the Forest Plan	CDNST: Somewhat inconsistent with national direction Forest Plan: Inconsistent (RNAs).	CDNST: Somewhat inconsistent with national direction Forest Plan: Inconsistent (RNAs).	CDNST: Somewhat inconsistent with national direction Forest Plan: Inconsistent (RNAs).
Other Resources			
Socioeconomics (See EIS chapter 3 section on Socioeconomics)			
Access to suitable timber land	No change	No perceptible change	No perceptible change
Public access for fuel wood	No change	No measurable change	No measurable change
Fire and Fuels (See EIS chapter 3 section on Fire and Fuels)			
Access for wildfire suppression	No change	Less access and increased response time.	Less access and increased response time.
Cultural Resources (See EIS Chapter 3 section on Cultural Resources)	Alternative 1 does not increase protection of cultural resources by closing numerous open roads and trails but it does provide ample access to cultural resources for purposes of monitoring, scientific investigation and potentially interpretation.	Alternative 2 would close approximately 361 miles unauthorized roads and trails, which would benefit cultural resources over Alternative 1. These closures might constrain some administrative and public access to cultural resources.	Alternative 3 would close approximately 566 miles of unauthorized roads and trails, which would benefit cultural resources over both Alternatives 1 and 2.
Hydrology (See EIS chapter 3 section on Hydrology)			
Sediment delivery from roads to streams	Alternative 1 would not result in a reduction of sediment delivery from roads to streams.	Alternatives 2 would result in a reduction of sediment delivery from roads to streams.	Alternative 3 would provide the greatest opportunity for reduction of sediment delivery from roads to streams within the Blackfoot travel planning area.

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Stream Crossings on closed or partially closed roads	0	17	121
Road miles to be closed within 150 feet of streams	0	3.2	34.4
Modeled sediment delivery reduction for closed or partially closed roads (tons/year)	0	13	38
Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds (See EIS chapter 3 section on Invasive Species)	Alternative 1 would be expected to contribute most to the introduction and spread of invasive species /noxious weeds.	Alternative 2 would be intermediate between alternatives 1 and 3 in spread of invasive species /noxious weeds.	Alternative 3 would be less likely than the other alternatives to promote the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive species / noxious weeds.
Minerals (See EIS chapter 3 section on Mineral Resources)	Alternative 1 is the most favorable for mineral exploration and development activities as it includes the greatest number of open motorized routes.	Alternative 2 is less favorable than alternative 1 but better than Alternative 3 because there are fewer miles of route that would be decommissioned. Specific permitted projects are negatively affected by Alternatives 2 and 3.	Alternative 3 restricts the most miles of routes due to decommissioned routes. Specific permitted projects are negatively affected by Alternatives 2 and 3.
Soils (See EIS chapter 3 section on Soils)	Alternative 1 has about 224 total miles of routes open to wheeled motorized use on sensitive soils within the Blackfoot Project area.	Alternative 2 would have about 222 road miles accessible to wheeled motorized use on sensitive soils, 2 miles less than Alternative 1.	Alternative 3 would result in an approximate reduction of 59 miles of routes open to wheeled motorized use on sensitive soils, with a total of 165 miles of road open.
Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) Plants (See EIS chapter 3 section on TES Plants)	Alternative 1 has the highest potential impact on sensitive plants by having the largest number of miles of routes open to wheeled motorized use. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May impact individuals but would not contribute toward a trend for federal listing or a loss of viability (MIIH) determination for all species 	Alternative 2 has more potential for adverse effects than alternative 3, but somewhat less impact than alternative 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIIH determination for all species 	Alternative 3 has the lowest potential to affect sensitive plant occurrences by restricting motorized wheeled vehicle use. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIIH determination for all species

Comparison Components	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
<p>Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) Wildlife species (See EIS chapter 3 section on TES Wildlife species)</p>	<p>May affect, but not likely to adversely affect grizzly bear and lynx; May impact individuals of 4 sensitive species but would not contribute toward a trend for federal listing or a loss of viability (MIIH) determination for all species; would not impact 2 sensitive species.</p>	<p>May affect, but not likely to adversely affect grizzly bear and lynx; May impact individuals of 6 sensitive species but would not contribute toward a trend for federal listing or a loss of viability (MIIH) determination for all species.</p>	<p>May affect, but not likely to adversely affect grizzly bear and lynx; May impact individuals of 4 sensitive species but would not contribute toward a trend for federal listing or a loss of viability (MIIH) determination for all species.</p>
<p>Roadless Areas (see EIS chapter 3 section on Roadless Areas)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76 miles of motorized routes in Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) <p>71 miles of non-motorized routes in Inventoried Roadless Areas No change to undeveloped characteristics or overall wilderness characteristics in these unroaded areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58 miles of motorized routes in IRAs (an 18-mile decrease) • 89 miles of non-motorized routes (an 18-mile increase) <p>Enhanced undeveloped character, opportunities for solitude and overall wilderness characteristics in these unroaded areas .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 miles of motorized routes in IRAs (a 31-mile decrease) • 95 miles of non-motorized routes in IRAs (a 24-mile increase) <p>Enhanced undeveloped character, opportunities for solitude and overall wilderness characteristics in these unroaded areas and this benefit would be greatest under alternative 3.</p>

¹ this is the cumulative outcome of the proposed changes and past decisions

* Closing the portal trails to mountain bikers would reduce conflict among non-motorized user groups and minimize wilderness trespass from wheeled non-motorized recreationists.