



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Spotted Bear  
Ranger District  
(406) 758-5376 summer  
(406) 387-3800 winter

10 Hungry Horse Drive  
P.O. Box 190340  
Hungry Horse, MT 59919

**File Code:** 1950

**Date:** April 17, 2009

In this letter, we are announcing a final decision has been made for the Bruce Creek to Alpine 7 to Napa Point Motorized Trails Project. This decision closes approximately 19.7 miles of system trail on National Forest System lands to wheeled motorized use. These trails include: Bruce Creek Entry #82A (on closed Road 2827), Bruce Creek #82, Bunker Creek #101 (upper portion), Bunker-Alpine Connect #101A, Alpine 7 Trail from its intersection with the Bunker-Alpine Connect #101A south to Napa Point Trail #31, and Napa Point #31. These trails are located in the Swan Crest area south of the Jewel Basin Hiking Area and north of the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

These trails include sections of erosive soils and steep terrain, and are located in areas where there are desired improvements to grizzly bear security. This decision would move the Flathead National Forest toward grizzly bear security objectives for the area and would reduce ongoing and potential user/resource conflicts related to tread and switchback rutting. Further, the decision would reduce the potential for user safety conflicts on specific portions of the trails while leaving logical and manageable trail systems in place that would not inherently lead to confusion for various types of trail users. The combination of these circumstances led us ultimately to the decision to close these trails to wheeled motorized use.

We received many comments during the planning phase of this project. In fact, about 125 individuals or representatives of interest groups provided comments on the environmental assessment. Many of these comments were well-thought out and expressed strong opinions for either leaving open or closing the trails to motorized use. We spent a lot of time going through each individual comment and fully considering them as we made our decision. Appendix A of the decision notice (which is enclosed with this letter) provides a summary of the comments and our responses. Within the rationale section of the decision, we mentioned the challenge in coming to a decision we know will not be favorable to many of the commenters.

Copies of the Decision Notice can be obtained at the Hungry Horse Ranger Station at 10 Hungry Horse Drive, Hungry Horse, Montana 59919 (406-387-3800), at Spotted Bear Ranger Station (55 miles south of Hungry Horse on the East Side Reservoir Road 38, 406-758-5376) after May 15th, and the Swan Lake Ranger Station, 200 Ranger Station Road, Bigfork, MT 59911 (406-837-7500). For those of you who have access to a computer, we will have the entire document on the Flathead National Forest website at: [www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead/nepa/nepa](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead/nepa/nepa). You then navigate to the Bruce Creek to Alpine 7 to Napa Point Motorized Trails Project Decision Notice document. The project file is available for review at the Hungry Horse Ranger Station, through May 15. After May 15 it will be available at the Spotted Bear Ranger Station.

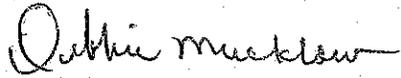


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Debbie Mucklow, Spotted Bear District Ranger, and Dale Luhman, Project Leader, are the primary contacts for the Bruce Creek to Alpine 7 to Napa Point Motorized Trails Project. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact either of them at 406-387-3800. You may also write to the above address. Thank you for your interest and involvement with the Bruce Creek to Alpine 7 to Napa Point Motorized Trails Project.

Sincerely,



DEBBIE MUCKLOW  
Spotted Bear District Ranger



STEVE BRADY  
Swan Lake District Ranger