



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

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Decision Released on Bruce Creek to Alpine 7 to Napa Point Motorized Trails Project

A decision has been made for the Bruce Creek to Alpine 7 to Napa Point Motorized Trails Project on the Spotted Bear and Swan Lake Districts of the Flathead National Forest. The decision will close 19.7 miles of system trail on National Forest System lands to wheeled motorized use. These trails include sections of erosive soils and steep terrain, and are located in areas where improvements to grizzly bear security are desired. The trails are located in the Southern Swan Crest area approximately nine miles southeast of Bigfork and about two miles west of the Spotted Bear Ranger Station.

Spotted Bear District Ranger Debbie Mucklow said, “Both Swan Lake District Ranger Steve Brady and I put a lot of time and thought into this project.” Approximately 125 individuals or representatives of interest groups provided comments on this project and many expressed strong opinions for either leaving open or closing the trails to motorized use. Mucklow added, “As stewards and managers of multiple-use public lands, it is challenging to balance what the public wants while responsibly managing the natural resources.

Mucklow and Brady said that the decision will reduce the potential for user safety conflicts on specific portions of the trails while leaving logical and manageable trail systems in place. This decision will 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.

The specific trails affected by this decision 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.

The Bruce Creek to Alpine 7 to Napa Point Motorized Trails Project Decision Memo is available at www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead or from the Spotted Bear and Swan Lake Ranger Stations. The decision is subject to administrative appeal.

For more information, contact Mucklow or Project Leader Dale Luhman at 406-387-3800.

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