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United States Department of the Interior



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Denver Federal Center, Building 56, Room 1003
Post Office Box 25007 (D-108)
Denver, Colorado 80225-0007

September 6, 2006

9043.1
ER 06/697

Lesley W. Thompson, Forest Supervisor
Lewis and Clark National Forest
1101 15th Street North
Great Falls, Montana 59401

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Due to difficulties in accessing the document on the Internet, the following comment was not received in time to be included in our letter of August 31, 2006, which should be discarded and replaced with this one.

The Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Little Belt, Castle, and North Half Crazy Mountains Travel Management Plan, Lewis and Clark National Forest, and offers the following comment.

SPECIFIC COMMENT

Page 243, Potential for Displacement of Wildlife, Chapter III. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences, Section Wildlife and Fish

The text here and in previous discussion mentions that noise from motorized vehicles can have various physiological effects including high energetic demands (page 227) on wildlife. Specifically mentioned are wolverine and lynx. However, the effects of noise on mammalian endocrine disruption were not mentioned.

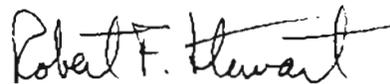
Recent research (Creel et al., 2002) addresses potential stress caused by snowmobiles by monitoring fecal glucocorticoid (GC) levels in both elk and wolves. These data found rises in GC concentrations correlated with snowmobile usage. The potential significance of this research is that elevated GC levels are associated with physiologic suppression of mammalian immune systems and reproductive hormones. It is possible that endocrine disruption from noise also occurs among smaller mammals.

REFERENCE

Creel, Scott, Fox, Jennifer E., Hardy, Amanda, Sands, Jennifer, Garrott, Bob, and Peterson, Rolf O. 2002. Snowmobile Activity and Glucocorticoid Stress Responses in Wolves and Elk, Conservation Biology 16(3):809-814.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft EIS. If you have any questions concerning this comment, please contact Lloyd Woosley, Chief of the USGS Environmental Affairs Program, at (703) 648-5028 or at lwoosley@usgs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert F. Stewart". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Robert F. Stewart
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: Dick Schwecke, ID Team Leader



Robert_F_Stewart@ios.
doi.gov

09/06/2006 04:04 PM

To: comments-northern-lewisclark@fs.fed.us
cc: lwthompson@fs.fed.us, dschwecke@fs.fed.us
Subject: LBCC Travel Plan DEIS - Revised DOI Comments (Virus checked)

Revised Department of the Interior comments on the subject document are attached.

If you require paper-copy or word processor version, please so advise.

(See attached file: LBCC Travel Plan DEIS - Revised DOI comments.pdf)

Robert F. Stewart
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August 31, 2006

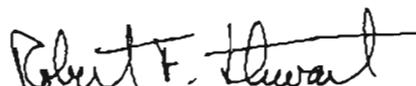
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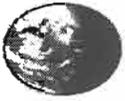
Dear Mr. Thompson:

The Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Little Belt, Castle, and North Half Crazy Mountains Travel Management Plan, Lewis and Clark National Forest, and has no comments.

Sincerely,


Robert F. Stewart
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: Dick Schwecke, ID Team Leader



Robert_F_Stewart@ios.
doi.gov

08/31/2006 02:40 PM

To: comments-northern-lewisclark@fs.fed.us
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