

**In The Matter Of:**

*FLATHEAD NATIONAL FOREST PLAN REVISION and  
NORTHERN CONTINENTAL DIVIDE GRIZZLY AMENDMENTS*

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*OBJECTION RESOLUTION SESSION*

*Vol. 3*

*April 13, 2018*

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*Goodman Reporting*

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Flathead National Forest Plan Revision and Northern  
Continental Divide Grizzly Amendments

Objector Resolution Meetings

Held April 13, 2018

Hilton Garden Inn, 1840 U.S. Highway 93, Kalispell, MT

SWAN VALLEY MANAGEMENT AREA 6c

KRAUSE BASIN

WINTER TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

A P P E A R A N C E S

Chip Weber: Forest Supervisor - Flathead National Forest

Leanne Marten: Norther Region Forester/Forest Plan

Reviewing Officer

Ginny Tribe: Facilitator

OBJECTORS AND INTERESTED PERSONS

Sheri Burden, Edd Blackler, Anne Dahl, Sharon Lamar, Paul

McKenzie, Gary Wolfe, John Larson, Norma Linsky, Anna

McCabe, Bill McCabe, James Nelson, Chris Gotschalk, Brian

Peck, David Covill, Allison Flint, Sarah Lundstrum, Amy

Robinson.

1 Friday, April 13, 2018 - 9:35 a.m.

2 SWAN VALLEY MANAGEMENT AREA 6c

3 MR. WEBER: Good morning, everyone. I'm  
4 Chip Weber. I'm the forest supervisor on the Flathead.  
5 I'm the deciding official on the plan. To my left is  
6 Leanne Marten. She's the reviewing official for these  
7 objections.

8 Welcome. Welcome to the Flathead National  
9 Forest, welcome to Kalispell. We actually got a little  
10 sunshine today. So I wondered what that strange orb in  
11 the sky was. Glad to have you here. I'm going to just  
12 talk to you briefly. Ask that if you have your cell  
13 phones, if you could put them on stun, please, so we can  
14 have our conversation be uninterpreted. And a little bit  
15 about safety. If there's something like a fire or an  
16 emergency, if you'd exit out that door behind you and  
17 meet in the parking lot, get as far away from the  
18 building as you can safely but don't get into the traffic  
19 or anything. So meet out there.

20 We're on the third day of these meetings, and  
21 I'm saying this each day because we tend to have a new  
22 set of folks show up. But the way I'm going into these  
23 meetings is really with an attitude of curiosity,  
24 learning. We're at a point where we have another chance  
25 to make the analysis or the plan decision better. And

1 that's the goal of the objections process is really for  
2 us to listen and find ways to do that when we can. So I  
3 appreciate all the hard work that you've done to date. A  
4 lot of you have had your ores in the water on this since  
5 we started some time ago. And I appreciate how much  
6 effort that takes and the time you took to come here and  
7 help us today.

8 I'm going to start off by introducing my team  
9 and -- or having them introduce themselves. And we'll  
10 start with Joe Krueger.

11 MR. KRUEGER: Morning. Thank you all for  
12 coming. Joe Krueger, Flathead National Forest Plan  
13 division team leader.

14 MS. MOORE: Good morning. I'm Marsha  
15 Moore, recreation wilderness planner on the team.

16 MS. TRECHSEL: Hello. I'm Heidi Trechsel  
17 the vegetation specialist on the team.

18 MS. KUENNEN: Reed Kuennen, wildlife  
19 biologist on the team.

20 MR. SMITH: Raymond Smith, regional  
21 coordinator for fields objections and litigation down in  
22 Missoula, Montana, and up here for the week.

23 MS. RUSHO: Nancy Rusho. I do objections  
24 and appeals in the Washington office.

25 MS. AKE: Kathy Ake, I'm the GIS specialist

1 on the team.

2 MR. WEBER: Thank you. I did --

3 MS. TRIBE: We have a couple people over  
4 here.

5 MS. ALLEN: I'm Stacy Allen. I'm the  
6 writer/editor for the team.

7 MS. PEEL: Timory Peel, regional planner.

8 MR. WEBER: Sorry about that. And Rob in  
9 the back.

10 MR. CARLIN: Rob Carlin, staff officer of  
11 the Flathead natural resources planning and fire.

12 MS. TURK: Janette Turk, public affairs  
13 office for Flathead.

14 MR. WEBER: Well, thank you. I did forget  
15 to mention one other thing. There's a comfort station  
16 out the doors to your left. Just go just barely across a  
17 threshold and it will be off on your left.

18 MS. TRIBE: Is that like a restroom?

19 MR. WEBER: And now to really class myself,  
20 I'm going to turn this over to Leanne.

21 MS. MARTEN: Thanks, Chip.

22 Good morning, everyone. I'm Leanne Marten.  
23 I'm the regional forester here in the northern region.  
24 And for this process I'm the reviewing officer of Chip's  
25 draft decision and the draft revision for the forest plan

1 here in the Flathead. Glad to see everyone here this  
2 morning and welcome back to people who were here earlier  
3 in the week. It's great to see and meet some new people  
4 here this morning as well.

5 Before I go over the overview and how I'm  
6 looking at this and my intentions, I thought we'd do  
7 introductions. So I'm going to start with folks on the  
8 phone. Do we have any objectors or interested parties  
9 for the Swan Valley Management topic joining us via phone  
10 this morning? And if so, could you please introduce  
11 yourselves? So I didn't hear anybody else as an  
12 objector/interested party, unless you were still on mute.  
13 If so, please speak up as we go around here.

14 I'll start the room if you've joined us at the  
15 table. If you could introduce who you are and just who  
16 you represent. So Edd, can we start with you?

17 MR. BLACKLER: Edd Blackler. I'm just here  
18 to observe and speak for myself.

19 MS. BURDEN: Sheri Burden. Same thing, I'm  
20 here to speak for myself and the Swan Valley.

21 MS. LAMAR: Sharon Lamar. I'm from the  
22 Swan Valley, and I'm a citizen.

23 MS. DAHL: Anne Dahl from Swan Valley as a  
24 citizen.

25 MR. WOLFE: Gary Wolfe, part-time resident

1 of the Swan Valley and speaking as an individual citizen.

2 MR. MCKENZIE: Paul McKenzie with F.H.  
3 Stoltze Land and Lumber Company as interested party on  
4 this issue.

5 MS. MARTEN: Wonderful, thank you. And we  
6 have just a couple people observing in the audience. If  
7 you guys don't mind just introducing yourself so folks  
8 get a feel for who's here just observing.

9 MS. FOX: Marla Fox. I'm with WildEarth  
10 Guardians observing this morning.

11 MS. EISEN: Hilary Eisen. I'm with Winter  
12 Wildlands observing this morning.

13 FROM THE FLOOR: Chas/Chad (inaudible),  
14 Forest Service.

15 MR. LARSEN: John Larsen, just representing  
16 myself.

17 MR. SEVERS: Corey Severs, Forest Service,  
18 observing.

19 MS. MARTEN: Wonderful. Thank you very  
20 much, everyone, and welcome.

21 As Chip mentioned, we're on our third day of  
22 meetings, and I'm really looking forward to the dialogue  
23 here this morning. And for some of you, this will be a  
24 repeat. But for folks that I haven't had the opportunity  
25 to visit with yet, I thought I'd share just a little bit

1 of how I'm viewing this and what I hope to get out of it  
2 and also just emphasize this isn't about what I need out  
3 of this. This is about us together. So we want to make  
4 sure we're meeting your needs as well. The last couple  
5 days and today will be no different. One of my basic  
6 philosophies is I kind of go with the flow. So if we  
7 need to change things or tweak things in our process,  
8 we'll do that as we need to within the sidelines. This  
9 is a structured process, so there's some sidelines,  
10 obviously, that I have to stay in adherence to. But we  
11 can make sure it works for all of us together.

12           The one thing we will do is we will stay on  
13 time for the topics, because we have folks that have been  
14 coming and going for the three days and we want to make  
15 sure we honor their time and commitment. We have an hour  
16 scheduled for this topic. If we get done early, we will  
17 take a longer break. But we will end at the end of the  
18 hour so we can move on to the next topic, which is Krause  
19 Basin on the agenda.

20           A couple things, and I think this morning's  
21 topic is definitely one of many through the week we've  
22 talked about where there's just a lot of values out  
23 there. And every one of us as individuals and  
24 organizations have different values. And the one thing  
25 that I've been trying to emphasize throughout the week is

1 my intent is never to ask any of you to change your  
2 values. I respect all the values that are coming forward  
3 through this process through the last several years and  
4 definitely throughout this week. And I want to just  
5 honor those, respect them. And what I'm really trying to  
6 focus in on and the intent is to learn to make sure that  
7 I'm understanding your views from your perspectives.  
8 I've read them. I have a good feel for what came in  
9 writing.

10 But what I'm learning through the last couple  
11 days is through the dialogue amongst yourselves, as well  
12 as just some curiosity and inquiry from me, I'm seeing  
13 things and hearing it a little differently and have some  
14 real clarity on some of the things that I thought I  
15 understood that you submitted in writing that I didn't  
16 quite have the full understanding on and to use that  
17 information after today to really formulate my decision  
18 on the objections and the response to you as the  
19 objectors that you'll get in writing for all of your  
20 issues as well as my response to Chip as the deciding  
21 official from that.

22 I'm not making any decisions this week.  
23 Because some of this I'm also have to process, as you can  
24 imagine. Ginny mentioned that we have Bambi here who's  
25 recording this, court reporter. So those transcripts,

1 when we get them back from Bambi, will help refresh and  
2 have a good record for all of us on the discussions that  
3 have taken place. I also have several folks with the  
4 team that are taking notes on my behalf. And so to stay  
5 active and really present, you won't see me taking a  
6 bunch of notes. But it's not because I'm not paying  
7 attention by any means. I have a lot other folks helping  
8 me with that and to try and capture things in addition to  
9 Bambi's transcript that we'll be receiving from that  
10 standpoint.

11           The other thing is the whole intent of this,  
12 and you folks have been engaged for years on this  
13 process, so I just want to echo Chip, thank you and thank  
14 you for staying engaged and being here today and  
15 continuing with this. We all value these public lands.  
16 I have the privilege and honor of helping manage them on  
17 your behalf. They are not my public lands, they're our  
18 public lands. And I truly take that to heart in  
19 everything that I do. And this is just one aspect of it  
20 with the Flathead plan revision that on how we're going  
21 to move forward into the future for ourselves and future  
22 generations.

23           When I come down to the briefing papers and we  
24 get into that part of it, the briefing papers -- and it  
25 says it on the top but I always like to re-emphasize

1 it -- these are just a starting point. You're not going  
2 to see every aspect of the issues or your objections  
3 reflected here. And due to time and the vast  
4 amount -- we had over 74 objectors -- the vast amount of  
5 issues we received, we're not able to have a dialogue and  
6 have a meeting on every single issue. What you will see  
7 in my resolution letters back to you is a response to all  
8 the issues. They will not be itemized and verbatim.  
9 Many of them are similar so you'll see some grouping in  
10 my response. But you will get a response to all the  
11 issues that were brought forward, even if they weren't  
12 part of the agenda over the last couple of days including  
13 today.

14 As time allows, we have also been -- we want to  
15 make sure all the interested parties and objectors do  
16 have a say and then the observers in the audience if we  
17 have time. Ginny's been helping us just to make sure we  
18 have some voices in the room, if there's something else  
19 that folks want to make sure that we're aware of or that  
20 I hear from them personally today.

21 So with that I'm going to pause and ask, if  
22 there are any questions on what I may have said or the  
23 process or just how we're moving forward?

24 And Chip just reminded me, I had asked for  
25 objectors or interested parties who may be on phone. Do

1 we have any anybody on the phone or any folks on the  
2 phone that are observers today? And if so, would you  
3 mind introducing yourselves? (No response.)

4 MS. SUTTON: Jodie Sutton from the  
5 Washington office administrative review.

6 MS. MARTEN: Good morning, Jodie. And I  
7 think that may be it for this morning, so thank you.

8 So Ginny, I'll turn it over to you for some  
9 facilitation and we'll move forward.

10 MS. TRIBE: Thank you. This has been an  
11 interesting two days so far and now third day. And we  
12 were talking this morning with all the hullabaloo that  
13 goes on in the world, it's refreshing to be talking about  
14 things that really matter so, again, thank you for  
15 coming.

16 The way this is set up, according to the  
17 regulations, is that the people who have filed objections  
18 or who have filed as an interested party are those with  
19 standing. So it doesn't mean we don't respect the people  
20 in the audience who have come to observing, but those are  
21 the official kinds of discussions we'll have today. I  
22 would ask you -- I don't know if you saw Bambi raise her  
23 hand when Ray slowly said what he did, and that's because  
24 she's trying to capture it.

25 And you look pretty cheerful today, Bambi.

1           THE REPORTER:  It's early.

2           MS. TRIBE:  So if you wouldn't mind when  
3 you speak -- Sheri, you already know you've done this  
4 before -- say your name -- Edd, you did it before, Paul  
5 you did -- say your name, use the mic if we need it.  I  
6 don't know if we will this morning with the fewer number  
7 of people, but use the mic if you need it.  But each  
8 time, even though it's tedious, say Gary Wolfe and then  
9 make your comment, if that's okay.

10           My role here is to sort of make sure we stay on  
11 time, keep it focused, help us not go into the weeds.  
12 And I think we've done pretty well.  We've tried to sort  
13 of tease out some things sometimes, but if it's all  
14 right, if you'll give me permission, I'm going to try to  
15 poke a little bit here and there when it seems like we  
16 need a little more discussion.

17           The session is not a consensus-building  
18 session.  It's not to come to agreement on something.  
19 It's not a decision-making session as Leanne said, and  
20 it's not a session for you to restate your objection and  
21 read your rationale.  We already know that.  
22 That's -- these folks have looked at it over and over  
23 again.  It's to promote dialogue with the Forest Service  
24 but also among yourselves.  Because when they can  
25 hear -- for example, yesterday, Edd, when you spoke and

1 then someone else spoke or Paul spoke, they get a better  
2 picture of the issue when they see different opinions or  
3 sides related to an issue. So if it feels like they're  
4 not always in the conversation, it's because they also  
5 want to hear your conversation among yourselves.

6 Does that work okay? Again, as Chip said,  
7 please turn off any electronic -- anything that might  
8 ring. And if you need to take a call, please go out in  
9 the hall to do it. Or rather than having a side  
10 conversation with the person next to you, feel free to go  
11 out in the hall and have that. If you don't, I might  
12 help you with that.

13 The last thing that I would encourage, and  
14 we've had just wonderful conversation, is to remember  
15 that when people are civil, they're more likely to have  
16 good conversation. We're not looking for agreement.  
17 We're looking for good conversation. So does that work  
18 for you? You all right?

19 Paul, did you get any sleep? We don't know if  
20 Paul stayed over in the chairs because he's been here  
21 every day.

22 And Edd, thanks for coming back.

23 For those of you that are brand new, here we  
24 go.

25 And we have two minutes until the agenda says

1 we would start the discussion so I think we're okay. If  
2 anybody comes in, we'll bring them to the table. Here  
3 you go.

4 MS. MARTEN: Thank you very much, Ginny.  
5 So the way I thought I would start, and I've done this on  
6 the other topics through the week, is I'm not going to  
7 read the briefing paper. You guys have that in front of  
8 you. But I'm going to paraphrase on my understanding of  
9 at least a portion of the issue and the objection  
10 regarding the Swan Valley management. We have some  
11 proposed remedies. And then I've got a couple questions  
12 to maybe just get the dialogue and start the dialogue  
13 here this morning from that standpoint.

14 And I will tell you that on Monday I met up  
15 with many of the staff in here from the Forest to go out  
16 to Swan Valley, specifically to get some kind of feel for  
17 on the ground and a visual of the Elk Creek area. Now,  
18 with the weather and the snow, we didn't quite get back  
19 in there as far as you guys live there so you know what's  
20 still out there on the ground. But it was a beautiful  
21 day, and I think I could get out in the field, which is  
22 always a wonderful day, and also get feel for the country  
23 and the visuals and the community and just refresh my  
24 memory on the beauty of the Swan Valley. And then I also  
25 spent some time over on the Krause Basin for the topic

1 that's coming up next. And that helped me just  
2 understand, I think, a little bit more on what I was  
3 reading and what was being shown on maps from that  
4 standpoint.

5           When I read through the objections and was  
6 working with folks, you know, there's a lot of history in  
7 the Swan Valley and there's a lot of passion for folks  
8 that live there as well as many others that enjoy part of  
9 our beautiful Flathead National Forest. The things I  
10 read and the paraphrasing that I would say are some of  
11 the main objectives are regarding the forest plan and  
12 Chip's draft decision and the allocation of the 6b, 6c  
13 management areas, which is your moderate to low intensity  
14 versus your intention on vegetation management.

15           And I know Sharon happened to be here the other  
16 day and some of this came up indirectly on other topics  
17 on what it meant to have intense management and how you  
18 folks are viewing that could or could not result on  
19 activities on the ground from that. And then  
20 specifically there were some sections up in Elk Creek,  
21 and I have to get my glasses and make sure I have the  
22 right numbers, sections 3, 4, 5, 9, and part of 10 were  
23 very specific ones that I think, Mr. Wolfe, you had in  
24 your objections and a few of the others on some real I'll  
25 just say place-based site concerns based on the history

1 of those sections through Legacy lands, previous  
2 agreements, previous understanding for how those lands  
3 would be managed, both how they were managed in the past  
4 by previous owners and then, when they came into National  
5 Forest system, the Forest Service's ownership through  
6 Legacy programs on that.

7 I'm going to pause there. Again, that was my  
8 paraphrasing. I know there's a lot of variables with  
9 that. But in a general sense, is that an accurate  
10 understanding on my part on the basic of some of the  
11 concerns and interest for this objection and this topic?

12 MS. LAMAR: Basically.

13 MS. MARTEN: I'm getting nods, Jodie, if  
14 you're on the phone.

15 MR. WOLFE: This is Gary Wolfe speaking. I  
16 would say that I read through the briefing paper, and I  
17 thought it did a very good job of capturing the essence  
18 of my specific objection to this. And I think you have  
19 articulated that quite well. And you know, there are a  
20 couple things that weren't captured here, but I'll bring  
21 those up when we're discussing it.

22 MS. MARTEN: Wonderful, thank you.

23 Go ahead, Anne.

24 MS. DAHL: Anne Dahl. I don't know if we  
25 may be opening this up again, but you mentioned that

1 there were a lot of previous understandings among the  
2 agencies about how lands would be managed. But that was  
3 all foundational from a lot of community consensus  
4 building work. And I want to make sure that gets  
5 included.

6 MS. MARTEN: Absolutely, yeah. It  
7 definitely was not just amongst agencies. It was with  
8 the community and I'll just say collaborative effort as  
9 things were going through various processes through the  
10 years. Thank you. Appreciate that clarification.

11 So I thought a good place to start, and it's  
12 outlined in the briefing paper, but there were a couple  
13 remedies that, Mr. Wolfe, I think you brought forward and  
14 others have talked about, specific to those sections up  
15 in the Elk Creek area. And if you guys are okay, I'll  
16 just refer to the Elk Creek area versus the numerical  
17 sessions? Is that -- okay, that works.

18 And for those looking at the briefing paper,  
19 there's a little map on there of those sections as well  
20 as some other designations regarding Elk Creek and that  
21 portion of Elk Creek which in the proposed Forest Plan  
22 and Chip's draft decision is wild and scenic  
23 river -- eligibility for wild and scenic river in some of  
24 the corridors and some other things there that we put in  
25 there because one of the things that visually was helping

1 me not only on the ground but on the map but what other  
2 management things overlay on top of the vegetation  
3 management of 6b or 6c designation. For instance, when  
4 you have an eligible wild and scenic river, you have a  
5 quarter mile on each side of the river that have specific  
6 forest fine components regarding management that would or  
7 would not be allowed within that corridor, those type of  
8 other activities. So that's what that map was showing up  
9 there, just I had asked a couple questions and was trying  
10 to get little bit of a visual from that standpoint.

11 So the proposed remedy -- one proposed remedy  
12 that was out there that I'd like to discuss was to have,  
13 for those sections in that Elk Creek area, have the  
14 designation of 6c, which is high-intensity vegetation  
15 management intensity, have that actually change to 6b  
16 which is moderate-intensity for vegetation management on  
17 that.

18 And one of the questions I'd like to explore is  
19 can you help me understand how you see the distinct  
20 difference between if it went from a 6c to 6B for those  
21 sections, how that, in your view, is different on the  
22 ground on what could potentially occur, vegetation  
23 management, and what the result would look like or be in  
24 your view on the ground at the 6c level versus the 6b.  
25 I'm trying to get a better feel on how you view the

1 difference between those two, an actually on-the-ground  
2 difference for those sections, what that means to you.

3 MS. DAHL: Anne Dahl again. It's hard to  
4 know exactly what is meant by those, you know, intensive  
5 or moderate or low-intensity management. But I've seen  
6 in the Swan what I think has been called  
7 moderate-intensity management where much of the  
8 ecological value remains. And these projects have been  
9 something to be proud of.

10 When I see what Plum Creek did, which is  
11 certainly intense-management, you know, we can't go back  
12 to that ever. And there are areas probably in the Elk  
13 Creek watershed because of its rich diversity of wildlife  
14 and water quality could use the low-intensity management  
15 instead of moderate.

16 MR. WOLFE: Gary Wolfe speaking. And from  
17 my perspective, I'm a wildlife biologist by training and  
18 have worked in the wildlife conservation profession for  
19 forty-plus years. And I look at it very much from a  
20 wildlife habitat perspective. And just very  
21 subjectively, I think that moderate-intensity vegetation  
22 management is more consistent with protecting the  
23 ecological integrity of the landscape, from a wildlife  
24 perspective, than high intensity. And again, as a  
25 citizen when I hear high-intensity vegetation management,

1 I think about a focus on logging, timber harvest, high  
2 intensity as opposed to a moderate-intensity vegetation  
3 management plan that has broader objectives, objectives  
4 such as fish and wildlife habitat.

5           And the sections that we're talking about in  
6 this particular area, the Elk Creek sections, have long  
7 been documented as having extremely high fish and  
8 wildlife values. So I think those really be the driving  
9 factor for the management of that area as opposed to some  
10 sort of a high-intensity vegetation management which,  
11 from a public perception, is often associated with  
12 high-intensity timber harvest. So I think wildlife  
13 should really be the driving factor here.

14           And I like the fact that we're talking going  
15 from high intensity to moderate versus from high to low.  
16 Because as is pointed out in the plan, these sections do  
17 border private land. And we do have to be cognizant of  
18 the fact of the urban-wildland interface. And as is  
19 acknowledged in the Forest Service information here, the  
20 moderate intensity does provide the flexibility for  
21 timber management in that urban-wildland interface to  
22 lower the fire danger. So I think those perspectives,  
23 the human aspect of it in terms of protecting the  
24 adjacent private lands from fires, could be accomplished  
25 by 6b. And I think that that also then lets people know

1 that this is really focused more on finding that balance  
2 between fish and wildlife and human values as I would  
3 interpret a high-intensity vegetation management. So I'm  
4 sorry for the long-winded response there.

5 MS. TRIBE: We have an hour.

6 MR. WOLFE: And again, I think we're  
7 responding from the standpoint of citizens as opposed to  
8 the technical perspective of how a professional forester  
9 would interpret high-intensity versus moderate-intensity.  
10 But to me, moderate-intensity recognizes other values  
11 more than a high-intensity designation would.

12 MS. MARTEN: Very helpful, thank you. So  
13 if I could ask a follow-up question with that. And Anne,  
14 you brought up just a little bit, but can you help me  
15 understand, without going into all the details, but help  
16 me understand the history. I know we had some things  
17 between the agencies' agreements and, of course, that  
18 went into Legacy. But Anne, you mentioned specifically  
19 making sure understanding the community and understanding  
20 on the community's part as we went through some of the  
21 history and the change of ownership. So can you help me  
22 just understand from the community perspective what the  
23 thought process was and what the understanding for these  
24 lands were going into and through some of those Legacy  
25 proposals and some of that?

1 MS. DAHL: Anne Dahl. I'll start but  
2 Sharon can take over. Both Sharon and I were both  
3 involved with the Elk Creek conservation project,  
4 generally speaking, since about 1990. And that's when a  
5 group called the Swan Ecosystem Center ad hoc committee  
6 began working with Plum Creek and the Flathead forest on  
7 that land exchange in the upper reaches of --  
8 two-and-a-half sections in the upper reaches of Elk Creek  
9 were exchanged for land on the other side of the Valley.  
10 So that was the beginning of the process.

11 And I don't want to say what I said in my  
12 objection letter. But from then on, because of the high  
13 values, wildlife and fish values, and the fact that it's  
14 a fabulous timber growing area, that is a very important  
15 watershed in the Swan Valley -- several, but probably  
16 could be thought of maybe as the most important in a lot  
17 of ways. We went on to, before the Montana Legacy  
18 Project begin, finding ways to acquire or protect those  
19 lands in a process that went on from the late 1990s  
20 until, really, 2011 when I think section 3 finally became  
21 Forest Service. That was a citizen-braced process all  
22 that time. And it resulted in the Elk Creek Conservation  
23 Area, the collaborative work with the tribes. I talk too  
24 much. Let's let Sharon.

25 MS. LAMAR: Sharon Lamar. I think I'm

1 dating myself here, but in 1994 in an EIS statement, the  
2 biologist spoke way better than I could about the value.  
3 And let's see if I can find it in my notes. He said "Elk  
4 Creek is the single most important bull trout spawning  
5 stream on the Swan River drainage." And you know, the  
6 local folks were very aware of that. And we worked with  
7 the late, great Bud Moore. And I sure wish he were  
8 around today to speak for this, because he worked  
9 tirelessly, as did a lot of other citizens with the  
10 ad hoc committee.

11           And it was a time of what were called the  
12 timber wars where the environmentalists and the loggers  
13 kind of, you know, butted heads. And that little group  
14 in Swan Valley got the loggers and the environmentalists  
15 to sit down at a table together and come to consensus.  
16 And we had a facilitator who helped us with that. And  
17 the consensus was we need to protect these Elk Creek  
18 sections. And we met with Plum Creek and we asked Could  
19 we buy -- this was way before they got into real  
20 estate -- Could we buy -- Is there some way we can  
21 fundraise and buy these sections? Absolutely not. That  
22 was the message we received from them after meeting with  
23 them. And so then we went to the next step. How about a  
24 land exchange? And we did, we worked with the Forest  
25 Service and achieved that. We exchanged land in the

1 Squeezer Creek area. And that was controversial in  
2 itself. But we think we achieved what we had hoped to in  
3 preserving those lands around Elk Creek. And so yes, we  
4 do -- we cherish those lands, as we do all of our lands  
5 in the Swan Valley.

6 MS. MARTEN: Sure.

7 MS. LAMAR: And you had asked about the  
8 difference between intensive and moderate. And I spoke  
9 to that on Wednesday. But when I hear "intensive," a red  
10 flag is raised. Because the property that borders my  
11 land that I own has been intensively logged by Plum  
12 Creek. So I think I have a picture of that. So it's  
13 hard to put into words but -- and again I might be dating  
14 myself. But you know, the word "clear-cut" comes into  
15 mind when I speak of -- think of intensive logging. And  
16 when I think of moderate to low-intensity logging, I  
17 think of what we had talked about as stewardship logging.  
18 Which I like that term "stewardship logging," being good  
19 stewards of the land. And that is what Bud Moore would  
20 say. We need to be good stewards of the land.

21 And these lands around Elk Creek are so diverse  
22 and rich, not only for bull trout but many other species  
23 of wildlife. And they're worth having a discussion about  
24 and doing the best we can to manage those lands. That's  
25 basically what I wanted to say. I hope I covered it.

1 MS. TRIBE: So Leanne, you asked a minute  
2 ago about to help you understand how people saw the  
3 difference between moderate and intensive. And Anne  
4 spoke to it.

5 And one of the things you said, Anne, was there  
6 have been projects done under the moderate designation  
7 that we could really be proud of and they protected  
8 ecological values. I wondered if you might be able to  
9 describe one of those, either actually or hypothetically,  
10 so that you had some -- that would help these guys have  
11 some picture of what is viewed on the ground as moderate  
12 versus intense. And is that asking -- would that be hard  
13 to do?

14 MS. DAHL: I'll try. I wish I could  
15 remember some of the names of the timber sales that  
16 actually went through, made it through the litigation  
17 process. Some in the Meadow Smith area, which is on the  
18 east side of the Valley. And I wish Kvande Anderson were  
19 here, our local logger, because he worked on some of  
20 those projects. And when you walk through there now, you  
21 see a forest. There's a diverse forest. There's a lot  
22 of larger timber still there that still shade covers and  
23 that you can see that it's got lots of different habitat  
24 types in localized areas where there are many species of  
25 wildlife, and it's also opened up the canopy in a lot of

1 places enough that a fire would likely be able to burn  
2 through at a lower intensity than if it were a dense  
3 forest canopy. So there's another one on the west side  
4 of the Valley that was called Hemlock Elk -- it's right  
5 in my neighborhood -- where there still are large, huge  
6 large trees still standing. And in fact, in that case, I  
7 would call that high-moderate logging because it looks  
8 like a fire had gone through and taken everything but  
9 these big trees. And I wonder if that's pushing the edge  
10 of moderate towards intensive. But you still have that  
11 forest overstory there. And I know it will be a lot  
12 safer for my neighborhood if a fire were to run through  
13 that particular area.

14 MS. TRIBE: Does that help kind of -- a  
15 view of what it would look like in the eyes of, as you  
16 guys said, we're here as lay people.

17 MS. MARTEN: Yes, extremely helpful.

18 And if I could, Paul, I was curious if you  
19 wouldn't mind, from your perspective when you think  
20 intensity and moderate, the difference you see there and  
21 how you view that on the ground, or what that may or may  
22 not do should the proposed recommended go from 6c to 6b.  
23 What are your thoughts on that?

24 MR. MCKENZIE: Sure, I'd love to be able to  
25 give people a little perspective here. First and

1 foremost, I think there's two different objections or two  
2 proposed remedies that I think are very different. One  
3 mentions changing all land use designations within the  
4 Swan Valley from 6c to 6b. And the second is talking  
5 about these five sections that are right here. And I  
6 think if you had the time and effort to do a place-based  
7 negotiation you might find a resolution that makes sense  
8 for everybody.

9 I just wanted to bring a little perspective to  
10 the definition of high-intensity management as applied by  
11 the Forest Service. So if you look at the forest plan  
12 right now at 440,000 acres of suitable timber base or so  
13 that are being proposed and the annual timber harvest  
14 that you have proposed, if you look at it from a  
15 productivity standpoint, that equates to 18 board feet  
16 per acre per year is the productivity level that those  
17 lands, the suitable timber base, has to be managed in  
18 order to meet your goal of timber harvest; okay?

19 In comparison, we have a lot of School Trust  
20 lands in the Swan Valley. They have a sustained yield  
21 management program not dissimilar to the State. Their  
22 goal is for managing their lands, productivity wise,  
23 sustained yield wise as roughly 150 to 170 board feet per  
24 acre per year. So that's ten times. And I would think  
25 that a lot of the School Trust land management that goes

1 on you have a lot of community involvement in that. And  
2 I think a lot of that would probably be characterized as  
3 the moderate to high-level of intensity. Speaking for  
4 you, that's the way I would look at it. And then in  
5 comparison, let's look at the industrial timber lands.

6 If Stoltze Land and Lumber owned those lands in  
7 the Valley, looking at productivity of those lands, we'd  
8 be managing for an annual productivity in that 250 to 300  
9 board rate. So that would be probably considered a  
10 high-intensity management even though our management  
11 shoots to balance all times. So I just wanted to give  
12 you a perspective of where you're at at 18 board feet per  
13 acre versus the State at nearly ten times that versus --  
14 you know.

15 And so that just gives you -- so from my  
16 perspective, high-intensity management on Forest Service  
17 lands is not the same at high-intensity management land  
18 on what people might consider, even the previous owners  
19 of those lands.

20 That being said, the difference between 6b and  
21 6c that I see is that under 6c it's the only land use  
22 designation that the Forest has that says that fiber  
23 production to meet the needs of society should be one of  
24 the considerations that are taken into account when we  
25 manage these lands. All the other ones don't have that

1 in there. 6b is within the suitable timber base, but  
2 it's not one of the considerations as far as why we  
3 manage those lands; okay? I think that's important.  
4 When you look at your plan, you're down to 257,000 acres  
5 out of 2.5 million that are managed with at least one of  
6 the objectives being fiber for the needs of society. Two  
7 of these sections were purchased through the Forest  
8 Legacy program. One of the key components of the Forest  
9 Legacy program is that those stands need to stay in  
10 management for multiple-use management but also to meet  
11 the needs of society for the production of fiber.

12 So I think you look at the map and you look at  
13 the amount of riparian management zones that are in this,  
14 when you start talking about projects, I think you're  
15 going to find that the level of management of these areas  
16 is going to be relatively low, low to moderate, when you  
17 add all the other constraints that you're going to have  
18 to consider.

19 From my perspective, you know, I have to defer  
20 to some of the local place-based folks on some of the  
21 issues on those four particular segments there. I guess  
22 my feeling is is that your concerns would be certainly  
23 addressed through the project level analysis, if there  
24 were ever a project proposed in there. This is a  
25 10,000-foot planning level document. From my

1 perspective, keeping it in 6c keeps the door open for the  
2 range of management activities that your professionals  
3 might need to consider in context of all the other  
4 concerns, if you were to put a project on the ground in  
5 this area.

6           Like I say, certainly, these four or five acres  
7 are one issue. But if you were to try to expand this to  
8 looking at the entire Swan Valley, I think it's extremely  
9 important that the majority of the acreage that you have  
10 designated as 6c in the Swan Valley stay as 6c from a  
11 planning designation, knowing that at the project level,  
12 all the other considerations, all the other constraints  
13 that you're going to have in land management will apply.  
14 And the actual level of management that gets done on the  
15 ground might be less.

16           So it's always easier to manage less  
17 intensively than what your forest management plan says.  
18 But it's very difficult and, quite honestly, prohibitive  
19 to try to manage up from there. So even if you have a  
20 small area, 15 acres within this larger area that needed  
21 a high level of treatment to meet a resource objective  
22 which might be even a wildlife or a fuels management  
23 objective, you might be limited by your Forest Plan if  
24 you do it at a lower level. So that's our perception.  
25 It's a consideration we hope you would think about as you

1 make your decision.

2 MS. MARTEN: Wonderful; thank you.

3 So go ahead, Gary.

4 MR. WOLFE: Just a quick follow-up on that.  
5 And actually, you did an excellent job of framing what I  
6 was trying to say earlier, in terms of my perception.  
7 The 6c, the high intensity, to me, talks about fiber  
8 production being an important objective. Whereas 6b, the  
9 moderate fiber production is not a primary objective  
10 there and management to achieve other natural resource  
11 values and recreational values are really the driving  
12 force there. So that was a good way to help me better  
13 articulate my impression of it.

14 And I guess what I would say is that looking at  
15 the history and just building upon what was said earlier,  
16 I got involved as a professional on this project back in  
17 2005 when Bud Moore placed a conservation easement on his  
18 80-acre Coyote forest. And at the time, I was executive  
19 director of the Vital Ground Foundation, which is a land  
20 trust that is focused on wildlife habitat. So we worked  
21 with Bud Moore on a conservation easement on his Coyote  
22 forest which lies in section, I believe, 26 and borders  
23 section 35. So again, in that Elk Creek area, his  
24 property bordered Elk Creek just a little farther  
25 downstream. So that was my first professional

1 involvement.

2 Anne Dahl was executive director of the Swan  
3 Ecosystem Center at the time. And there was a group  
4 called the Swan Lands Coordinating Council that brought  
5 together the timber industry, the agencies and the  
6 conservation organizations, again, to collectively talk  
7 about management of Swan Valley lands. And out of these  
8 earlier efforts in the 1990s, with Bud's involvement with  
9 conservation and ecosystem management on his property,  
10 this whole concept of the Elk Creek Conservation Area  
11 arose. And that was a very specific initiative to  
12 acquire and manage for its fishery and wildlife values  
13 sections 3, 9 and 35. And this was prior to the Tribe  
14 and the Swan Ecosystem Center actually acquiring section  
15 35. I mean, this whole concept of an initiative was born  
16 out of a community-based effort that involved community  
17 folks and conservation organizations and agencies saying  
18 Hey, these three sections are special. They have  
19 extremely high fish and wildlife values.

20 So Swan Ecosystem Center had the lead on that.  
21 They produced a brochure called a Elk Creek Conservation  
22 Area. I submitted an electronic copy of that with my  
23 objection. I meant to give you a hard copy to give you  
24 and I walked out and left it next to my empty coffee mug.  
25 So that shows that this is a long history of looking at

1 those three sections there in the special values.

2           Vital Ground at the time said Boy, we're  
3 working on conservation habitat, conservation easements  
4 in the Swan Valley. We bought into the Elk Creek  
5 Conservation Area. We became a fundraising partner with  
6 the Swan Ecosystem Center and helped to raise, literally,  
7 tens of thousands of dollars for this through private  
8 fundraising efforts. In fact, I remember one grant  
9 specifically was a hundred thousand dollar grant we  
10 brought into that project that went into the Swan  
11 Ecosystem Center for that. So there is a long, long  
12 history of a community-based effort to recognize these  
13 unique values of the Elk Creek Conservation Area, again,  
14 3, 5, and 35.

15           And I think it's just really important in the  
16 Revised Forest Plan for that Forest Plan to recognize all  
17 the community based effort that has gone on for years and  
18 years and incorporate that into the forest plan. Because  
19 there's been hundreds of hours of work going into this  
20 with a lot of consensus that these are important special  
21 sections.

22           And when we look at the map that you've  
23 included here showing the overlay of the designation of  
24 Elk Creek as eligible for wild and scenic river  
25 designation, I mean, there's not an awful lot of area

1 left in those to focus on fiber production.

2 The one thing that wasn't captured in the  
3 summary that was in my specific objection was the south  
4 half of section 4. The north half of section 4 is  
5 private land. The south half of section 4 is national  
6 forest. That south roughly one-third has one of the most  
7 incredible stands of old-growth larch that I've seen in  
8 the Swan. And I know in my initial comments to the  
9 forest plan and in my objection, I think it's important  
10 to recognize the value of those old-growth stands and  
11 manage them for old growth, again, as opposed to managing  
12 them for fiber production. Because it is a pretty unique  
13 area.

14 Anne, you're familiar with it. You're familiar  
15 with it. So it's a special place there.

16 So that was why I included section 4 in my  
17 objection as well, the old-growth component there again  
18 borders Elk Creek.

19 MS. MARTEN: So one of the questions I have  
20 and, Paul, you brought it up and I'm curious what folks's  
21 thoughts are -- and let me back up a minute. So Paul, I  
22 think you're separating out there's a couple different  
23 issues or objections just in the bigger picture and one  
24 was definitely the Elk Creek area. And then another one  
25 is definitely there were some objectors and some comments

1 regarding the Swan Valley and 6c designation and some of  
2 the other wildland-urban interface areas of the Swan  
3 Valley versus 6b. So I'd like to tease that out a little  
4 bit. Understanding the place base in the Elk Creek, I'm  
5 wondering is the concern at least from the folks here, is  
6 the concern with the 6c, 6b, again, the level of  
7 intensity? Part of what I hear is for several folks when  
8 they hear intense management, they're thinking industrial  
9 lands which is, you know, they have a different objective  
10 and as, Paul, you very nicely outlaid some of the  
11 differences when it comes to industrial versus State  
12 trust lands versus how we're using all the same term  
13 meaning something different on the objective and outcome  
14 on the ground.

15           Is that the concern is that intense would be  
16 clear-cut, nothing left, on those other lands in the Swan  
17 Valley, or is there something more there that I just need  
18 to have a better understanding on that bigger picture?

19           MS. DAHL: Anne Dahl again. I recognize  
20 the fact that even with moderate intense logging you  
21 might have a 20-acre clear-cut in a collapsing lodgepole  
22 stand. But when I think of intense management, I look,  
23 as I often do, at Google Earth and I can see that there  
24 are large swaths of land where wildlife can't use in the  
25 winter because of the -- especially this winter. There's

1 just not enough cover. There's no cover to prevent so  
2 much snow and thermal cover that's needed. So I -- I  
3 think of moderate management as taking into account all  
4 of the uses of a region of land and making sure that you  
5 don't focus on one value only.

6 MS. MARTEN: So let me tease that out just  
7 a little bit. So if it's under 6c, which is your  
8 intense -- and I know there's more words that go with  
9 that but I'll just summarize with intense -- do you see  
10 where as it's written and as we have described it that  
11 it's the fiber component and we aren't taking into  
12 account anything else? And then I'm going to swap that.  
13 If it's under 6b -- and I don't know, Paul, if this is to  
14 you or to others or Edd -- if it's 6b that we're taking  
15 into account only the wildlife and aquatics and we aren't  
16 thinking about the fiber? Is it either or? Is that how  
17 it's reading and how some of the interpretation?

18 MS. DAHL: I'll go ahead, Anne Dahl, and  
19 just say if we describe from the, as you say, the 10,000-  
20 foot level that the primary goal is fiber, then I'm  
21 afraid in the future people may not see the whole. And  
22 I'll let others speak. I'd like to hear what Paul and  
23 others have to say.

24 MS. LAMAR: Sharon again. Anne's comment  
25 about ground cover for wildlife is key when you're

1 talking about -- in my mind, when you're talking about  
2 intensive versus moderate or low intensity. If something  
3 has been intensively managed, I picture no ground cover  
4 for wildlife protections. And that's, again, a  
5 layperson's viewpoint. I'm not a forester. And  
6 considerations for erosion. If something's been  
7 intensively managed, I picture erosion possibly happening  
8 and that there's been a lot of restoration going on in  
9 the Swan because of past practices. When I think of  
10 moderate, I think of something that has been acceptable  
11 to most people in the public, both sides probably.

12 MS. MARTEN: Very helpful; thank you.

13 MS. TRIBE: Edd, you had your hand up.

14 MR. BLACKLER: I would just make a couple  
15 of observations in regards to the level of intensity of  
16 management. In my mind, the more higher intensity  
17 invasion of the area, in my mind, translates to a larger  
18 impact on the wildlife and it also incorporates a  
19 followup on the recreational uses. And when there's high  
20 intensive management which, to me, translates to more  
21 roads, more access, more possibility of erosion which has  
22 a negative effect on the wildlife, it also -- the  
23 after-effect draws more motorized uses. Which that,  
24 again, has a negative effect on the entire area and the  
25 wildlife that are there.

1           So the fact that this particular area and all  
2 along the Swan Front is such an incredible habitat for  
3 wildlife and for the opportunity for limited recreation  
4 which in, my mind, is hiking, solitude, leading through  
5 to the Bob Marshall and so forth, those opportunities  
6 that are -- we're so lucky to have in our state, that the  
7 rest of the nation that also owns the national forest has  
8 an opportunity to come and be here and utilize it. And  
9 they will come. And they are coming in greater, greater  
10 numbers. So it would behoove us to do everything we can  
11 to make sure that we are protecting that aspect of our  
12 area of the national forest.

13           So I am strongly supportive of what we're  
14 hearing here, if the minimum intensity to utilize in  
15 those national forests to create a protective area. And  
16 you've already seen the excellent work of the community  
17 to work toward that goal to conserve what we have. So it  
18 would be my hope that the Forest Service would tie into  
19 that concept and in your designation of what you want to  
20 do there, keep it minimal.

21           MS. TRIBE: Thank you, Edd.

22           Go ahead, Anne, then we'll go to Gary.

23           MS. DAHL: I would just like to add onto  
24 that is one of the things I'm a little concerned about is  
25 if we delist the grizzly bear, which I see coming in the

1 future, it may mean a lot more road building in the Swan.  
2 What has curtailed or held the road building in check is  
3 the grizzly bear. So once that protection for the  
4 grizzly bear, whatever, is missing, if we call it  
5 intensive-management area designation, then that may  
6 translate into more road building, which does always  
7 translate into erosion into streams, more people  
8 accessing with four-wheelers and so forth.

9 MS. TRIBE: So you're talking about the  
10 protections that come with the endangered or threatened  
11 species, when that goes away.

12 MS. DAHL: Thank you for saying it better.

13 MS. TRIBE: I just wanted to be sure we  
14 were clear.

15 Gary.

16 MR. WOLFE: And I just wanted to call your  
17 attention, again, to the map that's on the briefing  
18 document and speak specifically to the adjoining private  
19 lands. Because I know the Forest Service is very  
20 cognizant of the adjoining private lands and the impact  
21 of the forest plan on those. And I would like to point  
22 out that in section 4, one of the sections we're talking  
23 about, 360 of those acres are private acres, half of  
24 those have been protected by conservation easements. Up  
25 in section 34, which borders section 3, 160 acres have

1 been protected with conservation easements and there's  
2 another 160 acres that is very close in terms of  
3 negotiations with the private land trusts that's going  
4 under conservation easement. In section 35, which is  
5 part of the community forest there, has a timber  
6 management plan that specifies that it's a pretty  
7 moderate harvest on that timber management plan, again,  
8 recognizing the fish and wildlife values.

9           And the comments I was going to make on the  
10 conservation easements in section 4 and section 34, those  
11 two, the timber management plans on those lands that are  
12 protective conservation easements, again, are moderate  
13 intention plans with the goal of managing the Forest for  
14 the fish and wildlife values. So again, I believe that a  
15 6c (sic) designation for the area that we're talking  
16 about here would be very compatible with the adjoining  
17 private lands and the Forest management practices of  
18 those private landowners. So I don't think there would  
19 be a push back from those private landowners with that  
20 type of an approach.

21           And Anne, you were engaged in and very involved  
22 in the development of the management plan in section 35.  
23 I don't know whether you wanted to comment on that in any  
24 more depth, but I know there was a lot of discussion  
25 about how to manage the timber on section 35.

1 MS. DAHL: It was a long and difficult  
2 conversation, especially working with the tribes.  
3 They're very wonderful to work with, I don't mean to put  
4 it that way. But they were insistent that we go through  
5 a checklist, kind of a flow chart, question-answer. Will  
6 wildlife benefit? Will fish benefit? And you have to  
7 work your way down. And if you get to the point where  
8 we're going to harm anything, then we won't act. So to  
9 make a management decision, you start with this process  
10 of thinking about the wildlife, thinking about the whole  
11 forest and working your way down and then saying Yes, we  
12 can't harvest this area because it won't harm anything  
13 and it may even benefit. It was a hard collaborative  
14 head-butting discussion that went on for quite a while.

15 MS. TRIBE: Gary.

16 MR. WOLFE: And what may be my last  
17 comment, Gary Wolfe again, I haven't mentioned it  
18 specifically, but Elk Creek is probably the single-most  
19 important bull trout spawning tributary in the Swan  
20 drainage, which you're very aware of.

21 MS. MARTEN: Uh-huh.

22 MR. WOLFE: I also spent some time on the  
23 fish and wildlife commission. And what I came to realize  
24 there is the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and  
25 Parks places such high value on the Elk Creek drainage

1 that it is closed to any type of fishing year round.  
2 That's how sensitive they believe Elk Creek is from a  
3 bull trout perspective. So again, when we've got an area  
4 that Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks feels is so  
5 important that they do not allow any fishing at all and  
6 in the forest plan that has been identified as being  
7 eligible for a consideration for wild and scenic river  
8 designation, I personally don't think high intensity  
9 vegetation management is consistent with either one of  
10 those. And again, another reason why I recommended the  
11 moderate intensity.

12 MS. MARTEN: And Paul, you've been  
13 squirming a little bit over there, so I'm presuming that  
14 means you're ready to jump in with something.

15 MS. TRIBE: And you didn't move over at  
16 all.

17 MR. MCKENZIE: Once again, my comments are  
18 really geared towards the larger picture and not  
19 specifically the Elk Creek drainage. It occurs to me  
20 that once clarification under 6c fiber production is not  
21 the primary or only driving management consideration.  
22 It's just the only one that has it as a management  
23 consideration; okay? Big difference there. All the  
24 other conditions and requirements of the forest plan  
25 apply to those acres just like they do all other acres in

1 a project. That's why you're at 18 board feet per acre  
2 and not 170 or 300.

3 A lot of those acres in Swan Valley are  
4 checkerboard lands that were previously under industrial  
5 ownership that have received heavy management in the  
6 past. That has some folks might bear some negative  
7 impacts, but there also are some beneficial impacts as  
8 well there.

9 There are infrastructure in place. The roads  
10 that are there are there. There's been good, even-aged  
11 management that's been started in some of those areas  
12 that makes sense to continue, under a different  
13 management scheme than maybe previously. But why not  
14 utilize the infrastructure that's already there to  
15 continue to manage those lands for fiber production as  
16 one of their objectives? Knowing that all the other --  
17 the wildlife habitat, all that kind of stuff, is going to  
18 be considered at the project level. Quite honestly, by  
19 doing that, you're going to allow a lower level  
20 management on other acres; all right?

21 This is the trade-off. You can manage more  
22 acres less intensively or you can manage fewer acres more  
23 intensively. So that's one of the challenges that all  
24 land managers have to deal with. I would argue that  
25 we're already at 90 percent of the acres on the Flathead

1 National Forest are managed with other resources, first  
2 and foremost. And then that leaves us with ten percent  
3 or less, just gross acres, that are managed with some  
4 consideration for the Forest Service's responsibility to  
5 meet the demands of society for fiber. It's just that  
6 simple.

7           The Swan lands are highly productive in many  
8 ways, for wildlife, for clean water, for habitat, but  
9 they also grow trees very well. And you can do both, as  
10 has been demonstrated multiple times on private lands. I  
11 have 10,000 of my lands under a conservation easement.  
12 And guess what? It's managed for grizzly bear, it's  
13 managed for timber production, managed for clean water  
14 including the water supply for the City of Whitefish.  
15 The productivity of my land is way higher than 1,800  
16 board feet and I'm still meeting these other objectives.

17           So I just really encourage you to not back away  
18 from keeping the door open for your opportunities. It's  
19 not going to necessarily drive the on-the-ground  
20 management of every acre. But if you put a land use  
21 designation on these lands that's too restrictive to  
22 start, you've taken a whole bunch of options off the  
23 plate in consideration for your professional managers to  
24 consider at a professional level. So keep your door  
25 open. It doesn't mean that just because it's 6c that

1 you're going to be growing trees and nothing else there.  
2 But it gives you the opportunity to use all the tools in  
3 your toolbox.

4 MS. MARTEN: Thank you.

5 I know that we're just about out of time so I  
6 want to make sure, Sheri, you haven't had an opportunity  
7 to put a voice in the room. Is there anything else you'd  
8 like to add or say?

9 MS. BURDEN: I appreciate all the views. I  
10 don't come with the background that some of the other  
11 folks here have. We moved to the Swan in 1980. We moved  
12 here because here's clean air and there's clear water and  
13 wildlife, and we just appreciate what we have. I have  
14 seen the logging in the past. I don't know enough about  
15 in the high intensity but, to me, that's a red flag just  
16 because of what I've seen. I think this area of Elk  
17 Creek, you know, we went for a ski there this winter.  
18 It's just beautiful. It needs this protection of a lower  
19 intensity.

20 MS. TRIBE: Gosh, that was only  
21 thirty-eight years ago. You've only been there  
22 thirty-eight years, a newcomer.

23 MS. MARTEN: Well, thank you. And I really  
24 appreciate all of your voices in the room. It's always  
25 fascinating to me how one word can mean so many different

1 things to so many different people. And I am thinking of  
2 the word "intensity" versus "moderate" versus "low." And  
3 it's just all the different perspectives and lenses you  
4 can see that through on that. So it's very helpful for  
5 me just to hear your perspectives, your voice in the  
6 room, the different views specific to Elk Creek area and  
7 that very special area as well as the special areas  
8 throughout the Swan Valley which are one of many across  
9 the Flathead and our public lands. So thank you for your  
10 time and for continuing with that dialogue. And I know  
11 you guys have been at the table together on many things  
12 throughout the years and you'll continue to do that, so  
13 just thank you very much for that as well.

14 With that, I think what I'll do is turn it over  
15 to Ginny because we'll have a little bit of break and  
16 then the Krause Basin is the topic on the agenda. And I  
17 know we have some other players that will be coming to  
18 the table and some of you may be at the table for that  
19 one as well. But again, thank you very much. Appreciate  
20 it. Appreciate your interest and your continued  
21 involvement.

22 MS. TRIBE: Thank you. One of the things I  
23 wanted to make sure that I think everybody in the room  
24 would know is that this was an interesting discussion  
25 that brought not opposing, necessarily, points of view.

1 We heard a lot of information about real site specific  
2 areas, but also the comments that -- I'm not trying to  
3 create commonality here -- I just think that the comments  
4 that Paul brought in thinking about a large landscape and  
5 what happens when you do things sort of under a  
6 particular umbrella. I thought those were -- that's  
7 probably the first time we've really had that kind of  
8 discussion in these three days about looking at it from  
9 two perspectives, not opposing, but both of them very  
10 interesting points. So -- and Edd, thank you again for  
11 coming back today.

12           So we're going to break for ten minutes. Will  
13 the people who are at the table leave the table, get a  
14 fresh glass -- a clean glass, and then the people who are  
15 here for Krause Creek who are either objectors with  
16 standing or interested parties with standing come to the  
17 table at 11:00; thank you.

18           (Proceedings in recess from 10:49 a.m. to  
19 10:59 a.m.)

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1 Friday, April 13, 2018 - 10:59 a.m.

2 KRAUSE BASIN

3 MR. WEBER: Welcome. My name's Chip Weber.  
4 I'm the Forest supervisor on the Flathead National Forest  
5 and deciding official for the forest plan revision. To  
6 my left is Leanne Marten who is the regional forester and  
7 the reviewing officer for this.

8 Really glad that you came here, got here  
9 safely. Talk about a couple things real quickly for  
10 safety. If there's any kind of an incident, fire or  
11 anything, please exit out those doors and gather in the  
12 parking lot but get away from the building, per se, and  
13 gather where you can safely in the parking lot and we'll  
14 tie in with you there.

15 The comfort station, aka restroom, aka a whole  
16 lot of other things, is if you go out the door --

17 MS. TRIBE: I didn't know what that was.

18 MR. WEBER: -- and make a left, then it's  
19 just down a hundred feet or so, you'll make another left  
20 and you'll see it right there.

21 This has been a good week. And I went into  
22 this week thinking about how I was going to make the most  
23 of this time. And I guess the description I used this  
24 morning, some of you heard, is to go into it with  
25 curiosity. And for me it's about listening and learning.

1 You'll see me taking some notes. Those are really to  
2 prompt me to remember the tones, the conversation or the  
3 things that I really want to consider, but I'll also rely  
4 on the verbatim notes that we're getting from Bambi here.

5 So I do appreciate all the work that it took to  
6 get to this point and all the work that each of you have  
7 done to look at the proposed decision and draft decision  
8 and be thoughtful about it. And that's my intent as  
9 well.

10 I do want to introduce our team or have them  
11 introduce themselves. And Joe's in the back, so I'll  
12 start with Marsha.

13 MS. MOORE: Good morning. I'm Marsha  
14 Moore, recreation wilderness planner on the team.

15 MS. TRECHSEL: Hello. I'm Heidi Trechsel  
16 the vegetation specialist on the team.

17 MS. KUENNEN: Reed Kuennen, wildlife  
18 biologist on the team.

19 MR. SMITH: Raymond Smith, regional  
20 coordinator for fields objections and litigation down in  
21 Missoula, Montana, and up here for the week.

22 MS. RUSHO: Nancy Rusho. I do objections  
23 and appeals in the Washington office.

24 MS. AKE: Kathy Ake, I'm the GIS specialist  
25 on the team.

1           MR. KRUEGER: Joe Krueger. I've been the  
2 interdisciplinary team leader for this fabulous team  
3 here.

4           MR. WEBER: In the back.

5           MS. TURK: Janette Turk, public affairs  
6 officer for the Flathead.

7           MR. CARLIN: Good morning. Rob Carlin.  
8 I'm the staff officer in the Flathead forest for the  
9 natural resources planning and fire program.

10          MS. PEEL: Timory Peel, regional planner,  
11 Missoula.

12          MS. ALLEN: Stacy Allen, I'm the  
13 writer/editor for the team.

14          MR. WEBER: Also, if you have not done so  
15 already, if you could turn your cell phone down or to  
16 stun or whatever you call it so we can have an  
17 uninterrupted conversation, I'd appreciate that.

18                 With that I'll turn it over to Leanne.

19          MS. MARTEN: Thanks, Chip, and welcome  
20 everyone. It's great to see you here this morning.  
21 Before we jump right into the topic for Krause Basin, I  
22 thought it might help you to get just a feel for how I'm  
23 approaching this and what I'm hoping we can get out of it  
24 and maybe a little bit of what I'm not asking from you at  
25 this time.

1           So as Chip mentioned, my name's Leanne Marten,  
2 and I'm the regional forester for the northern region.  
3 For this process I'm the reviewing officer. So I'm  
4 reviewing all the objections that came in on the proposed  
5 forest plan and Chip's draft decision. We had over 74  
6 objectors and, as you can imagine, a whole spectrum of  
7 issues and objections that came up. And we've spent the  
8 last two days and then today on various topics and issues  
9 that came up from those objections. Not all of them by  
10 any means. However, all of them will be addressed in my  
11 letters back to you all as objectors on how your issues  
12 were reviewed and any resolution or any potential  
13 instructions to Chip on how to address those objections.  
14 You will not see them all verbatim because there are many  
15 similar ones, so they may be grouped when they come in  
16 the letters.

17           One of the things and the topic we just ended  
18 with and definitely the one today, this morning, that  
19 you're at the table on, all of the objections and all the  
20 issues that came up are very much tied into people's  
21 values. And one of the things I am not asking any of you  
22 or your organizations, and never would, is to change your  
23 values from that standpoint. I respect everybody's  
24 values. They all definitely play into the management of  
25 our public lands. I have the privilege and honor of

1 managing these public lands on your behalf. They're not  
2 mine, they're ours. So I just thank you for that and  
3 just the ability to respect everybody's values as we move  
4 forward and we discuss this topic. Because I know  
5 there's a lot of passion. And I love to see that passion  
6 from everyone. But the passions may not be the same or  
7 for the same reasons from that perspective.

8           So the intent today is to really help me get a  
9 view through dialogue amongst us and amongst yourselves  
10 on, really, what I think I understood I read in the  
11 written objections. I'm going to focus it in a little  
12 bit with a couple key points and a couple proposed  
13 remedies and really just need to make sure I'm not  
14 missing something or if I'm misconstruing or  
15 misrepresenting something that may be a part of your  
16 objection, by all means, please correct me on that. I  
17 want to make sure everybody has a voice at the table. So  
18 we'll do a quick round of introductions here for folks  
19 here at the table. We may have a couple that joined us  
20 via phone that are objectors or interested parties as  
21 well. And Ginny will help facilitate to make sure we  
22 have all the voices in the room.

23           You won't hear a decision from me today. I  
24 haven't been making any decisions all week, however, you  
25 will receive in the near future my resolution in my

1 letters to help you out in that. And there's a couple  
2 reasons for that. Part of that is I just need time to  
3 continue processing. I don't want to short side or not  
4 really have an opportunity to think about things that the  
5 dialogue has maybe brought forth and then that bigger  
6 picture. But it's also because many of these tie into so  
7 many things that are part of the objections, I want to  
8 make sure that I'm taking the time needed to understand  
9 that bigger picture while valuing your input and your  
10 thoughts and really give it the due diligence.

11 As you see in the room here I've had a great  
12 team of folks helping me. One of the process things that  
13 I've had a couple people ask me about is the folks that  
14 put a lot of staff work and review the objections and  
15 help keep me briefed on them were not all the same people  
16 who worked on the plan. They were definitely part of it,  
17 but I actually asked for some folks that had not been  
18 involved within the region or on the forces to come in.  
19 So I had some folks from outside and other regions come  
20 in and help review the objections received and really  
21 take a look at the plan and Chip's drafted decision and  
22 really have some fresh eyes on it. Because we're all  
23 human. There's things as we get going that we see it one  
24 way and it's hard to pull back. So that's also part of  
25 the assistance that I've asked for on that. So it's been

1 a real comprehensive review process and this is an  
2 integral part today in the dialogue that I look forward  
3 to having here over the next hour.

4 We will keep to the time frame from that  
5 because, just like you folks, we've had people coming and  
6 going over the last three days and we want to honor that  
7 so we can stick to the schedule and the agenda time start  
8 per topic because we have one more this afternoon on  
9 winter travel and travel management that I want to honor  
10 those folks's time as well.

11 So any questions just on that or the process or  
12 the intent today? Not hearing any.

13 So let me do a quick round. Let me ask for  
14 folks on the phone. Is there anybody that joined us via  
15 phone that's either an objector or interested party for  
16 the Krause Basin topic here this morning? And if so,  
17 would you please introduce yourself? It does not sound  
18 like anybody's on the phone. If you were introducing  
19 yourself, we didn't hear you. So you may have been on  
20 mute and, if so, please speak up.

21 Otherwise, I'm going to start around the table.  
22 Edd, would you mind introducing yourself? And if you  
23 guys do this, say your name and then who you're  
24 representing, if you're representing an organization or  
25 yourself as a citizen.

1                   MR. BLACKLER: I'm Edd Blackler, and I'm  
2 here as an observer and representing myself basically.

3                   MS. MCCABE: Anna McCabe, and I'm  
4 representing myself. And I live adjacent to Krause  
5 Basin.

6                   MR. MCCABE: Bill McCabe. I'm representing  
7 myself and I live next to Krause Basin and use it daily  
8 throughout the year.

9                   MR. LARSON: I'm John Larson. I live very  
10 near Krause Basin. You can probably throw a rock into  
11 Krause Creek from my property. And I'm representing  
12 myself.

13                  MR. GOTSCHALK: Chris Gotschalk,  
14 representing myself and live in Ferndale.

15                  MS. LINSKY: I'm Norma Linsky, and I'm  
16 representing myself and I recreate at Krause Basin. I  
17 live in Kalispell.

18                  MR. PECK: Brian Peck. I'm representing  
19 myself and Keith Hammer from Swan View Coalition.

20                  MS. MARTEN: If we do have anybody joining  
21 via phone, Bambi is a court reporter. So Chip mentioned  
22 earlier but we will get transcripts of the last three  
23 days and when they're available they'll be posted so you  
24 folks will get that. I have a lot of folks around me who  
25 are taking great notes. So if you're wondering why I'm

1 taking no notes, it's because it really helps me to be  
2 present and be part of the dialogue and have really  
3 active listening, not writing things down. It doesn't  
4 mean I'm just going to have it go in one ear and out the  
5 other. I've got other folks helping capture and I'll be  
6 relying on Bambi's transcript to help spark memories and  
7 get some of the specifics down on that part of it.

8           So the other thing I'd mentioned is as we go  
9 around, if you could please, for Bambi's sake and for the  
10 record, just state your name when you begin to talk that  
11 will just help and trigger it. I know it can be a little  
12 awkward as Ginny will say, but it does help us just  
13 capture as we go through.

14           So Ginny, did I forget anything.

15           MS. TRIBE: We might want to see who's in  
16 the audience.

17           MS. MARTEN: If we could, just real quick,  
18 see who's here observing in the audience.

19           And Marla, can I start with you over against  
20 the wall there?

21           MS. FOX: Marla Fox, WildEarth Guardians,  
22 observing.

23           MS. EISEN: Hilary Eisen, Winter Wildlands  
24 Alliance, observing.

25           MS. MARTEN: I know these folks are just at

1 the table. If you could just introduce so we know.

2 Sheri, can we start with you?

3 MS. BURDEN: Sheri Burden, just observing,  
4 Swan Valley.

5 MS. DAHL: Anne Dahl, observing from Swan  
6 Valley.

7 MS. LAMAR: Sharon Lamar, observing.

8 MR. WOLFE: Gary Wolfe from Swan Valley,  
9 observing.

10 MR. SCEVERS: Corey Scevers, Forest  
11 Service, observing.

12 MS. MARTEN: Thank you very much. So let  
13 me jump in and see if I can start us off here. So  
14 everyone has received the briefing paper in front of you.  
15 And let me explain what the intent of those have been  
16 throughout the week. It's just as a starting point and  
17 to just start the dialogue. It is not and was not  
18 intended to be all encompassing of everything that you  
19 guys shared through your objections or your interests.  
20 It's a couple things to try and just help narrow down and  
21 a starting point for me to summarize what I think I  
22 understand some of the key objections are, what I am  
23 hearing as potential remedies and, again, is just a  
24 starting point for dialogue. So if you're not seeing  
25 something there that you want to make sure is out in the

1 room, by all means, please voice it.

2 Please don't feel a need to repeat everything  
3 you have in your objections you wrote in, though, because  
4 I do have those and I do have those that have been  
5 summarized and I've read them and I'll have those to go  
6 back to. If it's really important, by all means, make  
7 sure you work that in, but don't feel a need to repeat  
8 everything you wrote in because I do have all that and  
9 have been reading through those as well.

10 So with Krause Basin I will say I was, Monday,  
11 earlier this week before we started the meetings, I did  
12 spend a day out in the field with folks from the Forest.  
13 And one of the areas I asked that I'd like to at least go  
14 get a feel for was Krause Basin because I'd never been  
15 there. Now, with the weather I didn't get clear up into  
16 the Basin and do all that. But I did at least go see the  
17 proximity to the trailheads and the community and just  
18 get a better visual for myself on what many of you were  
19 describing, you live right next to it, you recreate in  
20 there, the trails and trying to get a better feel for  
21 that. And I look forward to spending more time in the  
22 Swan Valley and Krause Basin area in the future. But  
23 it's one of the things where I did that just to help me.  
24 Now, like I said, that just helped me get a little bit of  
25 visual. So as you're talking, I may have a few questions

1 to help me get oriented and a better feel for how you may  
2 be seeing things. I truly want to see things through  
3 your lens not through just my lens. That's not the point  
4 of this. I need to see it from your perspective as best  
5 I can on that.

6 So with that in mind and when I read the  
7 objections, there's several things with the Basin. And  
8 it has a long history there in previous decisions that  
9 have been made, previous agreements working with the  
10 community and different organizations and a very valued  
11 place on the Flathead National Forest. I'll paraphrase a  
12 couple key things that I could use some help with from  
13 you folks today, at least as a starting point.

14 A couple of the key objections are we  
15 definitely have some different views and values on even  
16 the use of the Basin for motorized recreation. And I  
17 have folks that would prefer not to have any motorized  
18 recreation there for several different reasons. It could  
19 be for the grizzly bear, their own preference on the type  
20 of recreation, noise. There are a lot of different  
21 reasons for that. But I'll just paraphrase a desire not  
22 to have motorized recreation at all in the Basin.

23 Through the objections, there's also if we have  
24 motorized, there's the 13 miles of trail, there's some  
25 history there on previous understanding of agreements for

1 the 13 miles of trail and whether or not those are  
2 allowed to stay motorized and, if they are, whether or  
3 not they're signed or not signed on the type of use and  
4 then, of course, you work into that some of the seasons  
5 of use. And then there are concerns from the standpoint,  
6 and I think, John, you handed me a map right before we  
7 started here that I'll have as part of the record, of  
8 there's the 13 miles of trail, the core trails I'll call  
9 them from previous decisions and activities, and then  
10 there's a whole bunch of other trails that have been  
11 created out there by various uses over the years that are  
12 not part of what some of the previous decisions have  
13 referred to as those 13 miles on that. And that's all  
14 really general big picture from that standpoint.

15 So with just that in mind, what would help me  
16 would be to have a little bit of dialogue on where you  
17 folks are, what you see as potential remedies, and just  
18 making sure I'm not totally missing, knowing there's a  
19 lot more behind even what general objections I just  
20 summarized, what I may be missing from that. And I'm  
21 going to start out with a couple questions and see if it  
22 might tease out and some of the dialogue.

23 I'm going to start out with the assumption, and  
24 it doesn't mean this is going one way or the other, these  
25 are for dialogue purposes. Say the 13 miles stayed the

1 13 miles with the use as it currently is right now, just  
2 as a starting point. And the reason I need that just as  
3 a starting point is I'm really having a hard time when it  
4 comes to the signage part of the objections that came up  
5 and signing, not signing.

6 I think in my mind, and this may be totally  
7 wrong, it's all tied into whether or not you would even  
8 like to have motorized use in that area. And then Well,  
9 if there's even some, if you sign it, you're going to  
10 have even more people come is one perspective. And then  
11 on the flip side, if you sign it, you may keep the  
12 user-made other trails that are not desirable out there  
13 from occurring. So I got both sides there.

14 So I know that's a lot there, but I'm hoping  
15 can you folks just help me on where you're coming from  
16 with that and just help me understand a better  
17 perspective, a little bit of the history there and where  
18 you're at today with even signage and then also how that  
19 ties into how you see the use in there.

20 MS. TRIBE: John, you want to start?

21 MR. LARSON: Sure, I'll start out. John  
22 Larson. And the map that I showed you is my most  
23 accurate representation of what's actually there. You  
24 have kind of this mythical 13 miles. You can't find most  
25 of them. But this is basically what's out there on the

1 ground.

2           Concerning signage, well, my concern is that we  
3 don't have motorized use in that area, period. But given  
4 that, if you have signage, you know, that would help  
5 direct people to different parts of the trail. If  
6 they're not using it for motorized use, it could be, I  
7 think, a suitable kind of focused recreation area.

8           But if you're coming in and you're looking at  
9 developing something akin to Big Mountain ski area or  
10 some of these big developed campsites along Hungry Horse  
11 Reservoir, that's not going to fit in that area. You  
12 don't have enough room. For one, you'd have to  
13 dramatically improve that parking area. You'd have to  
14 put some toilet facilities in and so forth as well as  
15 signage.

16           Given that, you know, it could be suitable for  
17 horses. I'm seeing more horses back in there. A few  
18 years ago I saw some mountain bikes, but they've kind of  
19 disappeared. The signs that I do see in there, even  
20 those areas that the trails that are mapped there,  
21 there's not a lot of ATV or motorcycle use there, yet. I  
22 mean, you do see occasionally some signs where they've  
23 been there usually in inappropriate seasons and  
24 inappropriate areas. There's a whole network of trails  
25 that are developed closer to the road between the

1 trailhead and the entrance to some of these trails that  
2 you see on the map where it adjoins the road. And so  
3 that would be good to eliminate. But like I say, I'm in  
4 favor of -- you know, you could sign it, but just don't  
5 allow motorized use.

6 MS. MARTEN: So John, let me tease out just  
7 one thing. When you used the -- if it went to something  
8 like the Big Sky (sic) area, when you read in Chip's  
9 draft decision in the proposed plan this area being part  
10 of a focused recreation area, is that what you envision  
11 that means, that it means even more use and more  
12 development? Is that how you interpret and read what was  
13 described in Chip's decision?

14 MR. LARSON: Clearly. The idea of a  
15 focused recreation area, to me, indicates that a lot of  
16 people are going to be using that and recreating in the  
17 area. And I guess I don't have a problem with folks  
18 using that area. I mean, it's a marvelous area. I'd  
19 like to keep it to myself, but that's not the best thing.  
20 But you know, I just think it's a mistake and it doesn't  
21 fit with the resource base in that area.

22 MS. MARTEN: Very helpful, thank you. So  
23 other thoughts.

24 Go ahead, Bill.

25 MR. MCCABE: I'll just say my biggest

1 concern is the motorized use. And I'm not against  
2 motorized use at all. I actually own two snowmobiles.  
3 But I use my snowmobiles to go up Strawberry Lake Road  
4 and Peters Ridge Road where they're allowed to access in  
5 the back country skiing in the area and then we park the  
6 snowmobiles and hike from there.

7 I guess my point that I just want to bring up,  
8 I think it's July 1st through September, the motorized  
9 use is currently allowed. And it's just my experience we  
10 hike, bike, use the trails every day in there. And the  
11 motorized use, it's just a real free-for-all approach in  
12 there. I've lived there since 2015. And I mean, the  
13 motorized use, as soon as the snow is gone, the trails  
14 are as fresh as can be, just real muddy, and they're in  
15 there many times a week with total disregard to the  
16 privilege they're given to be in there two months, which  
17 I think they're very lucky to have that, because it's a  
18 really neat area.

19 The trails are getting damaged just because  
20 they're in there at the wrong time of year when the  
21 trails are too wet. And they just have -- it's just a  
22 real free-for-all approach. They're going off the  
23 trails. They're just ruining the trails. They leave  
24 trenches right up the existing trails, then it rains and  
25 then it erodes. And again, it's not an attack on

1 motorized use. It's just a disrespect of the area and  
2 the rules. And I live right next door to Krause Basin  
3 and I hear it out of season. I knew when I brought my  
4 property that they had those two months and I was good  
5 with that. But now I can hear it in early as April, May,  
6 June. It happens daily there's motorized use.

7 MS. MARTEN: So let me ask you this, Bill,  
8 and I'm not sure if this is a question you can  
9 necessarily answer. But if the usage stayed as is and  
10 people were using it and respecting the trails or there  
11 was some help with I'll just say signs for just one tool  
12 to help with that, would that maybe not meet a hundred  
13 percent of your desire there but would that help  
14 eliminate some of the concerns that you're seeing on the  
15 ground as well as the use outside of those seasons and  
16 some of that?

17 MR. MCCABE: There's a sign right there  
18 were you pull off Foothill Road right to the main  
19 trailhead. I mean, it's right there and it doesn't do  
20 anything.

21 MS. MARTEN: Doesn't work.

22 MR. MCCABE: The last ones, the DNRC put up  
23 many signs, and it was probably a week and they were all  
24 shot up and torn down. So as far as signage, I think  
25 signage could help but I just don't think they're going

1 to last very long in that area, just in the past from  
2 what I've seen.

3 MS. MARTEN: So part of what I hear as the  
4 underlying concern you have is What can we do to have the  
5 confidence that even if we allow some continued usage,  
6 that it would be implemented and effective? And how  
7 could we enforce or ensure that you don't continue to  
8 have some of the folks that are doing it outside the  
9 seasons are doing it in a way that, from your  
10 perspective, is irresponsible for the resources. Is that  
11 fair?

12 MR. MCCABE: Yeah. It needs to be  
13 enforced. And we've tried to do it since 2015, but it's  
14 just not getting done.

15 MS. MARTEN: Thank you, very helpful;  
16 appreciate that.

17 Norma, thank you. We know Norma needs the mic.

18 MS. TRIBE: You know, Bambi gets really  
19 crabby.

20 MS. LINSKY: My children will tell you that  
21 I do not have a soft voice.

22 THE REPORTER: Good thing I'm not your  
23 child.

24 MS. LINSKY: Well said. You know, I did  
25 owe the remarks that I've heard so far. I personally am

1 not an ATV owner. I don't have any motorized use in the  
2 back country. And I feel sometimes like I've been run  
3 over. I agree about the trails. You know, this year,  
4 July the 1st may not have snow free, just bog mud trails.  
5 So that's going to be a real problem.

6 But I'm concerned about the watershed. There  
7 are three forks of Krause Creek that start up high, and  
8 there have been a lot of studies about the off-trail use.  
9 And it only comes from trail use with motorized vehicles.  
10 And I think one ATV is like 400 soldiers marching through  
11 an area. They have really run havoc with the creeks that  
12 come through there. And then what happens is the  
13 landowners downstream, when it's not forest land, and  
14 what that's done to the plain and what it's done going  
15 into Echo Lake. So you can't just look at what happens  
16 in the Forest. It's got -- you have to consider what  
17 happens downstream from the Forest.

18 I agree that the signage is not going to stop  
19 anyone from doing whatever they want, especially on a  
20 wheeled vehicle. I'm not going to be able to stop them.  
21 I have to just get out of the way. I understand that the  
22 Forest Service does not have the policing to change  
23 anything in the Forest. There just aren't enough  
24 personnel to go in there.

25 And I know -- I hike with Keith Hammer, and I

1 know that he has taken pictures and sent them time after  
2 time after time for the abuse of what happens with  
3 motorized vehicles. I have no problem with both  
4 motorized vehicles or snowmobiles going up Peters Ridge  
5 Road or Strawberry Lake Road to get to the back country.  
6 I think that's great. I drive up there to the trailheads  
7 in the summer. In the winter I start at the bottom.

8 But I just want the watershed to be considered  
9 as well; thank you.

10 MS. MARTEN: Thank you, Norma. Go ahead,  
11 others.

12 MR. GOTSCHALK: Chris Gotschalk, concerned  
13 citizen. I ditto what Bill and Norma and John have said  
14 regarding motorized vehicles.

15 I guess I come at it as the perspective of  
16 being sort of vehemently opposed to motorized recreation  
17 in just about every form. I consider vehicles to be just  
18 sort of a conveyance to get you to a point where you can  
19 start to recreate human powered and quietly. This is not  
20 my typical role. I'm usually behind the scenes voter,  
21 donate, you know. But I can see now how important it is  
22 to get involved.

23 And it's my understanding that the Forest  
24 Service did actually sort of promise to restrict  
25 motorized vehicle use in the Krause Basin area years ago.

1 I would like to see that upheld. I'd also like to see  
2 snowmobiles and any sort of snow conveyances also  
3 included in that.

4 I do agree with Bill. I think that it's  
5 appropriate on Peters Ridge Road and Strawberry Lake  
6 Road, as a compromise, just to get people to trailheads.  
7 That seems like a reasonable use. But yeah, just going  
8 crazy off in Krause Basin is really not the right use.  
9 If you spend any time at all in that area, you realize it  
10 is a beautiful really spectacular spot and is only  
11 appreciated on foot going slowly, looking around.

12 A couple of just final points. In this  
13 briefing paper, I notice that some words that were a  
14 little concerning and that was that decisions are based  
15 on demand. And I would suggest that that sort of idea  
16 has to change in time. I think that we may have  
17 already -- we've got this growth-based economy. We have  
18 to accommodate as people grow. More demand, more  
19 accommodation. I think there needs to be restrictions on  
20 that, and I think it's already almost too late for that.  
21 We can't grow forever. And I think now or yesterday  
22 would have been a good time to put some limits on that.

23 Motorized vehicles just cannot continue to  
24 encroach on everywhere that they may want to go or  
25 everywhere that is convenient.

1           And then I guess -- well, I guess that's  
2 essentially my feelings about it. I just find that  
3 particular area to be really spectacular and I think  
4 should be protected for quiet recreation.

5           MS. MARTEN: So Chris, if I could ask a  
6 question, and it could be for you or anyone else, Brian  
7 and Edd and others. So one of the things the decision on  
8 demand, and I thank you for your perspective on just how  
9 those words are and just a quick reminder the briefing  
10 papers are just to start dialogue on that part, and it  
11 worked; right? So here's a question that I'm struggling  
12 with and one of the things I'm just curious what  
13 anybody's thoughts are.

14           You know, we have over two million acres on the  
15 Flathead National Forest. And across the region, I'm  
16 honored to manage over 25 million acres of your public  
17 lands. And one of our biggest challenges, and you folks  
18 know this, is you enjoy -- you want to have areas you can  
19 go ride your snowmobiles or go hike or go ski or the  
20 various uses out there and how you -- I'll use the term  
21 "balance" but not meant that it's going to be equal  
22 balance everywhere.

23           So looking at that bigger picture and beyond  
24 the Krause Basin, do you just have thoughts on that on  
25 how the Krause Basin and whatever management for

1 recreation enjoyment is allowed there versus allowing  
2 some other places for folks that enjoy seeing the land  
3 riding a snowmobile versus hiking or may not be able to  
4 hike and use -- need a motorized. I'm just kind of  
5 curious what your thoughts are, how you see that as a  
6 bigger level or if you have a perspective as a bigger  
7 level beyond Krause Basin. And if not, that's okay. I'm  
8 just curious.

9 MR. GOTSCHALK: No, no, I just kind of feel  
10 like we are -- you've heard this expression before. We  
11 are kind of at a tipping point. I think the general  
12 feeling that people have about what is appropriate to do  
13 should change. I really -- I don't think that you should  
14 be burning fuel for fun. I think you should be burning  
15 fuel to get to fun but not for fun.

16 MS. MARTEN: Okay; thank you. Appreciate  
17 it.

18 MS. TRIBE: Norma, you were ready to speak  
19 too. And then if it's okay, let's just see if we can  
20 catch everybody on this one. And you'll end up last  
21 here, Brian. So we'll go this way.

22 MS. LINSKY: Norma Linsky again. Your  
23 question about, you know, the entire forest or the  
24 ecosystem, you know there are a lot of old logging roads  
25 that are no longer in use. They're not in wilderness

1 areas. They haven't got the historical value that Krause  
2 Basin has. Five hundred and twenty miles of old logging  
3 roads, I think, have been inventoried in the Forest. I  
4 may be incorrect about the amount. Why not take out the  
5 culverts and fix the slumping roadbeds to preserve the  
6 fisheries and bring that -- bring those roads available  
7 to recreationists, whether they're mountain bikers or  
8 some places could be motorized vehicle use. So there are  
9 places in this forest that exist now which could be  
10 developed for other uses besides quiet recreation.  
11 That's one of my thoughts. And I can't remember what  
12 else I was going to say.

13 MS. TRIBE: It will come to you. We're not  
14 finished yet.

15 MS. LINSKY: Thank you.

16 MS. TRIBE: Do you want to pass it on to  
17 John, please.

18 MR. LARSON: John Larson. You mentioned  
19 the balance, and there's a lot of places as was pointed  
20 out, that you can accommodate, I think, motorized  
21 recreation. I too would support the idea of the two  
22 roads, the Strawberry Lake Road and the Peters Ridge Road  
23 remaining open early, seasonally, when there's no  
24 resource damage.

25 There was a point made also about the resource

1 damage. You go up there and a lot of these trails -- I  
2 actually own an ATV. I formerly owned a motorbike, a  
3 trail bike. And from my experience, there's areas that  
4 are just too steep in this area where the roads exist,  
5 the existing trails. They're too steep. They have  
6 stream crossings that are going to cause resource damage.  
7 You can't get up there in a vehicle without causing  
8 resource damage.

9           The other main concern is wildlife  
10 displacement. You know, there's a small elk herd there.  
11 There are grizzly bears in there. There are wolves in  
12 there. There are wolverines in there. As Chris pointed  
13 out, it's just a marvelous place. And if you allow more  
14 intensive motorized recreation, you're just going to  
15 displace all those wildlife populations and basically  
16 eliminate that habitat from their potential to occupy it.

17           There is one error in the briefing paper. It  
18 says there's no stands in the area dominated by western  
19 hemlock. I beg to differ. There is at least one really  
20 nice area. It is adjacent to State land. It extends up  
21 from the bottom of Krause Creek in two directions. It is  
22 dominated by western hemlock. It's a beautiful little  
23 grove in there.

24           MS. MARTEN: Okay.

25           MR. LARSON: I have more but I'll defer.

1 MS. TRIBE: I would appreciate that, John,  
2 then that way other people -- we're heading up to 20  
3 minutes left.

4 So Bill, did you want to....

5 MR. MCCABE: The only other thing I was  
6 going to add is in motorized use, there's currently a  
7 weed problem in the area, too, and the motorized use  
8 definitely stirs that up.

9 MS. MARTEN: The noxious weeds and the  
10 issue there. Thank you, Bill.

11 Anna, please.

12 MS. MCCABE: Anna McCabe. I have a  
13 question for every single person in this room, if that's  
14 okay. And just a raise of the hand would be fine. Who  
15 in this room would like to see motorized use in the  
16 Krause Basin area? Just raise your hand if you would  
17 like to see motorized use in the Krause Basin area.

18 MS. TRIBE: So Anna, I'm going to give  
19 people permission not to have to make that indication  
20 unless they want to.

21 MS. MCCABE: Sure.

22 MS. TRIBE: No one expected to have to come  
23 here and vote on a particular thing. I don't want to  
24 offend you, but I think it's very hard to ask people to.

25 MS. MCCABE: Sure. I'm just curious if

1 anyone is, and may or may not, but that's what I'm  
2 confused about.

3 MS. MARTEN: Well, here if I could, Anna,  
4 just real quick, and I'm not sure, but even if people in  
5 here would have raised their hands if they had chosen to.  
6 I can tell you I received objections, I received written,  
7 folks that are not here today that do have a different  
8 perspective that would like to continue to see some  
9 motorized use in the Krause Basin.

10 MS. MCCABE: That's what I'm curious about.  
11 Out of your 74 objectors, are there a lot of people that  
12 are wanting to see motorized use?

13 MS. MARTEN: I don't know numbers, because  
14 that isn't how I view it from that standpoint.

15 MS. MCCABE: Sure.

16 MS. MARTEN: Honestly, in some ways my job  
17 would be easier if it was a vote because things would be  
18 a lot more straightforward black and white, and it's not.  
19 So I don't know the numbers, but I can tell you that  
20 throughout history and definitely on this plan and  
21 throughout the plan revision, that has been a strong  
22 voice as well as not wanting to have motorized use and  
23 things in between.

24 MS. MCCABE: Well, I live adjacent to  
25 Krause Basin and I recreate there every single day of the

1 year. There's six inches of fresh snow. I was out there  
2 this morning. Two weeks ago I was recreating in Krause  
3 Basin and saw fresh wolverine tracks. It's a very  
4 special place. There's grizzly bears. There's  
5 wolverines. There's definitely a hemlock grove that is  
6 very precious to our forest. And I would like to see it  
7 stay -- remain that way.

8 I am definitely not against motorized use for  
9 certain people. Everybody likes certain things. We're  
10 all different, and that's what makes this planet so  
11 wonderful.

12 A bigger level for motorized use like your  
13 question stated was my thought is above Lakeside below  
14 Blacktail Mountain, that, to me, would be a better forest  
15 recreation area for the motorized use because there are a  
16 lot of logging roads, it ties all the way to Herron Park  
17 and you have Blacktail and you have cross-country skiing.  
18 Krause Basin is a very tiny space. To try and put your  
19 resources there for a forest recreation area seems  
20 pointless. There's definitely not 13 miles of trails. I  
21 know the trails like the palm of my hand. So I think you  
22 would have a difficult time with that.

23 I also am curious, the Forest Service, in  
24 general, is on a tight budget and has lack of money and  
25 resources. And so I find it difficult to see them make a

1 presence there when they currently -- I will contact the  
2 Forest about some illegal use and nothing gets done. So  
3 I have a hard time seeing that this would be now a forest  
4 recreation area and we're going to sign and we're going  
5 to enforce when there's no one there now, even when we're  
6 calling upon them.

7 I don't want my property value to go down with  
8 the noise of the motorized use. That's a big concern for  
9 me. As my husband mentioned, the weeds are really,  
10 really bad, and so I'm battling a whole row, several  
11 acres long, of weeds that are trying to come onto my  
12 property because they're so bad on the public land. And  
13 I don't want the noxious weeds on my property or on the  
14 public land.

15 As far as signs, I'm very much against the  
16 signs marked on the ground. I do not want to see that.  
17 Unfortunately, people in our community have destroyed all  
18 of the signs that have been put up in the area by the  
19 DNRC. I am happy to show you photos of this. And many  
20 of the Forest Service signs that you have put up on the  
21 alpine trail and at trailheads, they're brand-new ones  
22 last year, they're beautiful by the way, have been  
23 destroyed. So I think marking the trails would be a big  
24 mistake. It would be a waste of time and money.

25 MS. MARTEN: Thank you. Very helpful;

1 thank you.

2 MS. TRIBE: Thank you, Anna.

3 Edd, do you want a little exercise? You can  
4 either walk it to Brian or you can pass it down.

5 MS. MARTEN: Go ahead, Edd.

6 MR. BLACKLER: Well, I participated in the  
7 Noisy Face decision at the time when we worked together  
8 with the community of people to try and determine what  
9 would be the best, most practical use of certain areas  
10 along the entire face there. And it was an unfortunate  
11 compromise, I think, that actually allowed the indication  
12 that there might be 13 miles that could be used by  
13 motorized at a certain time of year. That probably  
14 should never have happened. But it was an unfortunate  
15 compromise.

16 I think that right now, the challenge that you  
17 have as Forest Service management is to take a look at  
18 the escalation of users and the kinds of uses that are  
19 out there and take a serious look at -- the first thing,  
20 safety issues, and conservation issues. What kind of use  
21 contributes to the degradation of the area? And we  
22 recognize the value of this area, in particular, because  
23 of what we see there; all of the things that you've  
24 heard, the wildlife, the stream flow. And then we need  
25 to make -- we can't be nice to everybody, like I told you

1 the other day. You've got to separate. You've got to  
2 say Okay, we're not taking away some use from somebody by  
3 saying this is only for this. But everyone has to accept  
4 the fact that it has to get divided up in a sensible and  
5 logical way.

6 You can't have motorized vehicles and horse  
7 riders and hikers utilizing the same area. That's just  
8 not safe. It's crazy. And it's nothing against  
9 motorized people. If they get their excitement going  
10 down the trail looking at the front wheel, that's fine.  
11 But there should be a certain area where that can happen.  
12 And by allowing motorized use, per se, it's, in fact,  
13 declining any other use. Once -- I know as a horseback  
14 rider, when I know that a certain area is going to be  
15 contaminated by motorized people, I'm not going there.  
16 That just cut me out right away. So those are the kinds  
17 of decisions you have to look at. And for Krause Basin,  
18 that is an area that needs to be nonmotorized.

19 And I don't know what you're going to do about  
20 the signs, but you have to upgrade the enforcement to  
21 establish that and make some fines and say You guys can't  
22 be here. Thanks.

23 MS. TRIBE: Thank you, Edd. I didn't want  
24 to cut you off, but I wanted to make sure that Brian had  
25 an opportunity to speak.

1                   MR. PECK: Yeah, I've only got about an  
2 hour.

3                   MS. TRIBE: Well, we'll manage your  
4 comments.

5                   MR. PECK: Okay. Brian Peck. I noticed in  
6 the briefing paper that it says "Forest plan grizzly bear  
7 direction no longer requires the closure of roads or  
8 trails to public motorized vehicle use." This is the  
9 issue I brought up yesterday where I think the forest  
10 plan has gotten ahead of its skis a bit. That's only  
11 true if the Conservation Strategy has been passed, and it  
12 hasn't. That's only true if grizzlies have been  
13 delisted, and they haven't been. That's only true if  
14 lynx have been delisted, and they haven't. So I'm  
15 concerned that the Forest not continue to do that. We'd  
16 all love to obey the laws we would want to obey and just  
17 look the other way on the others, but you've got to work  
18 with the laws you've got, not the ones you wish were  
19 there.

20                   So given the fact that grizzlies are still  
21 listed, the 1988 Noisy Face agreement, which said No  
22 signs in this area, that's still in effect. That's not  
23 discretionary; it's not up to me. That's an agreement.  
24 That was a binding agreement as part of a jeopardy  
25 decision of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. So signs

1 aren't supposed to be there.

2           Amendment 19 to the forest plan is still in  
3 effect. It hasn't gone anywhere, probably won't for some  
4 time. And that says that all of the motorized trails in  
5 Krause Basin, legally have to be closed. It's not  
6 discretionary. I would agree that if folks want to keep  
7 motorized on the two roads, the Peters Road and the  
8 Strawberry Road, I haven't heard a lot of objections to  
9 that, snowmobiles, in the winter, but in terms of  
10 motorized use in there, it's not supposed to be  
11 occurring. And marking of trails is not supposed to be  
12 occurring.

13           And the only other thing I would say, because I  
14 know you've got Keith's resolution paper, is that way  
15 back in 1970, the Forest Service themselves for Krause  
16 Basin said This is a special area. There's not a lot of  
17 hemlock left. And they mentioned that it's because of  
18 our logging in other areas. And they said We should be  
19 protecting this. We should be taking care of it. We  
20 can't have roads everywhere, and the implication was And  
21 we can't be logging harvesting everywhere either. So I  
22 would suggest, along with the no motorized in there, the  
23 no signing in there, this is an area probably where the  
24 chainsaws need to take a rest. This is an area where  
25 there shouldn't be logging, there shouldn't be harvest,

1 there shouldn't be precommercial. It's not really needed  
2 in these hemlock stands. I'll leave it at that.

3 MS. TRIBE: Brian, thank you very much.

4 MR. PECK: I'm sorry I didn't talk for an  
5 hour.

6 MS. TRIBE: So we've got about eight, nine  
7 minutes left.

8 Leanne, did you have any other things that  
9 people could help you with or you want to hear about?

10 MS. MARTEN: Well, first of all, thank you  
11 everyone. Very helpful and appreciate just hearing it in  
12 your own words and I'll just say the passion that's  
13 evident. It's evident in writing but even more so when  
14 I'm able to interact face-to-face. So really appreciate  
15 that.

16 The only other thing that I'm wondering, and  
17 this is just a curiosity to folks that live, and I'm  
18 looking at Bill and Anna and maybe those that live close  
19 to Krause Basin and all of you enjoy it. From the  
20 standpoint of I'll just say user -- my terminology,  
21 folks, is going to be bad -- I'll just say user education  
22 or when you're visiting with other folks and you're out  
23 in Krause Basin and you see something that you know is  
24 not supposed to be occurring there. And you guys are  
25 very passionate and interact with people on a regular

1 basis. Has that been very successful in the past when  
2 visiting with folks and having them understand what is or  
3 isn't allowed or maybe a trail that's there that actually  
4 isn't supposed to be there because it was made by  
5 somebody using it inappropriately? Any luck from the  
6 citizens there or any efforts there in partnerships with  
7 others in trying to help on just the awareness of that  
8 area and your passion there? I'm just curious, has the  
9 community had anything or what your thoughts are there.

10 MS. MCCABE: Well, I'm sure you've read my  
11 notes. I have a whole computer file of photos and GPS  
12 coordinates -- I only gave you a small portion of  
13 them -- of motorized use in the Krause Basin area that  
14 was out of season. So it wasn't July and August. As a  
15 woman, I'm now in the back country, so to speak, front  
16 country, with usually it's kind of a scarier dude. And  
17 they're doing something on an ATV or a motorized  
18 something and I run into them back there. And so a lot  
19 of times they have a gun. And you know, it's kind of a  
20 fine line what you say to them.

21 MS. MARTEN: Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

22 MS. MCCABE: But I do voice my opinion and  
23 say -- or not opinion but tell them they're in -- it's  
24 illegal for them to be where they are right now. And I  
25 try and get their license plate. I obviously take a GPS

1 coordinate. And if I can, I snap a photo. But it's not  
2 putting me in a good situation. And I want to work with  
3 the Forest, but at the same time I've got to think of my  
4 safety.

5 MS. MARTEN: Yes, and I'm not asking you to  
6 put yourself in any kind of situation. I was just  
7 curious as a community.

8 MS. MCCABE: I think as a community we're  
9 all just doing that if we're out there. The ATVers I  
10 don't really -- from the talk I have with them in the  
11 field, I get the feeling they're just like Eh, nothing's  
12 going to happen to me. It might be a little slap on the  
13 wrist, so they just go on, and then I just go on.

14 MR. MCCABE: What's happened is for years  
15 and years and years when we've come across these  
16 situations, Anna has everything documented, which is  
17 great, but we always contact the Forest Service --

18 MS. MARTEN: Thank you for doing that.

19 MR. MCCABE: But the thing is it's very  
20 frustrating, because I do it by phone and then that leads  
21 into emails, and it just never goes anywhere. They say  
22 they're going to come out. I offer to go in late to work  
23 to schedule a time with them, and they just never follow  
24 through with anything. And it's very frustrating when  
25 the tracks are fresh, the new trails, the brush is

1 freshly cut and just littered everywhere. It's  
2 been -- I'm kind of over it, to be honest with you. It's  
3 not working. It's almost, I feel, like a waste of my  
4 time to contact them because nothing is getting done.

5 MS. MARTEN: Thank you. And the reason I  
6 ask that question is -- and just hearing your answer, it  
7 again gives me a different perspective on even your  
8 starting point on when you wrote your objections and the  
9 history there, the lens you're seeing it through, the  
10 experiences you've had that obviously has led to some  
11 frustration. So it just puts a bit more context on the  
12 written to help me out there. So if folks are wondering  
13 why am I asking that when we're talking forest planning,  
14 again, I'm trying to hear it through your lens and your  
15 experiences as much as I humanly can to make sure I'm not  
16 missing something when we're looking at your objections.

17 MS. MCCABE: And I would love to -- I know  
18 you're busy. But if you ever did want to come back to  
19 Krause Basin so we could show you some of the damage,  
20 you'll be able to see it even now with the snow and just  
21 see the area so you can understand more of where we're  
22 coming from, too, I think that would help.

23 MS. MARTEN: Appreciate that. Thank you  
24 very much on that part.

25 Go ahead, Bill, and then I'll make sure Edd has

1 a chance before we honor folks's time.

2 MR. MCCABE: One quick thing Anna and I  
3 discuss all the time, like the motorized community, we  
4 both feel they're very lucky to have the privilege to be  
5 in there and they abuse it. They go out of season.  
6 Rules are rules. They definitely abuse their privilege  
7 and, therefore, they've done it for too long where that  
8 privilege in a way, in my opinion, I think it should be  
9 taken away. Because they're just not respecting the area  
10 and the rules of the area.

11 MS. MARTEN: Appreciate that. And one of  
12 the things I will say, and that's not to say that you're  
13 wrong or your perspective is wrong so please don't  
14 interpret it that way, is one of my challenges and Chip's  
15 and others, is sometimes that may only be only one or two  
16 people.

17 The majority of our folks, regardless of how  
18 they're using the Forest, are out there trying to do it  
19 in a very stewardship manner on that. And I know  
20 sometimes we oftentimes have to really make sure that  
21 we're representing everybody's view, understanding not  
22 everybody. But as you guys know, sometimes it takes one  
23 or two people and that, unfortunately, can put a  
24 categorization on a whole group of users on that. And  
25 that's just one of the challenges. So I'm not trying to

1 dispute what you just said by any means or your opinion  
2 or values there. I just express that because that is a  
3 real challenge that I know I personally have in the  
4 position I'm in. And we will continue to work through  
5 that part.

6 So I want to make sure, Edd, you have a chance.  
7 Is there something additional?

8 MR. BLACKLER: I was just going to mention  
9 one of the things that I have seen up on Crane Mountain  
10 that I've appreciated was when Dale Jorgensen was the  
11 trail manager for the Swan, I know he spent quite a lot  
12 of time and effort putting his trail people to dropping  
13 down actual physical barricades to inhibit the off-trail  
14 use that -- illegal use. And sometimes when the signs  
15 don't work and get all shot up, at least I was glad to  
16 see that he was putting some effort together to  
17 discourage the illegal use that was going on. So that's  
18 something the Forest Service can consider to do a little  
19 more of.

20 MS. MARTEN: I appreciate that. And I'm  
21 unfortunately going to have to wrap this up with time  
22 about the time Ginny stood up. But what I do want to say  
23 is, as we close here and give folks a chance for lunch  
24 for those that may be coming back to the travel  
25 management time, once again, thank you very much.

1 Chris, you mentioned this isn't something  
2 you're normally at, sitting at the table. So I just want  
3 to say thank you to you and everybody else. Because I  
4 know that it takes time. It takes time out of your busy  
5 lives and schedules and you're very passionate about  
6 this. There were some other voices and perspectives that  
7 didn't happen to be here today. But they've been part of  
8 the process from that standpoint as well. So just thank  
9 you for staying engaged. I don't -- like I mentioned,  
10 I'm not having any decisions at this time. But the one  
11 thing I will tell you is regardless of how the Plan comes  
12 out, working locally with the community, please don't  
13 give up on us at the agency working with us and continue  
14 to work together even if it hasn't gone the way you would  
15 hoped it would go. I just ask bear with us and let us  
16 continue to work on those relationships as well locally,  
17 aside from any of the planning efforts. Because it's all  
18 about how we work together from that perspective. And  
19 this is a great dialogue, extremely helpful from my  
20 perspective.

21 MS. TRIBE: Leanne, John had one last  
22 thing.

23 MS. MARTEN: Oh, I'm sorry, John.

24 MR. LARSON: One last thing, you know, kind  
25 of lost in the conversation we have been focusing on

1 Krause Basin. My recommendation would be to close  
2 motorized use for both the Strawberry Lake trail and the  
3 Peters Ridge trail. Because there you're fighting the  
4 same issue. You're fighting the switchbacks cut, you're  
5 fighting the resource damage.

6 MS. TRIBE: John, thank you for making sure  
7 that got said.

8 Again, take an hour for lunch. I don't know if  
9 you're coming back. If you're not an objector or an  
10 interested party with standing, you won't be at the table  
11 but we'd love to have you observe if you're going to come  
12 back. We're going to start at one o'clock.

13 (Proceedings in recess from 12:00 p.m. to  
14 1:00 p.m.)

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1 Friday, April 13, 2018 - 1:00 p.m.

2 WINTER TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

3 MS. TRIBE: Chip, if you wouldn't mind  
4 starting, that would be great.

5 MR. WEBER: Good afternoon. I'm Chip  
6 Weber. I'm the Forest supervisor on the Flathead and the  
7 deciding official on the forest plan. To my left is  
8 Leanne Marten, my boss, the regional forester who is the  
9 reviewing official for this objection process.

10 Welcome to Flathead National Forest and welcome  
11 to Kalispell. And some of you are hearing this for the  
12 multiple times that you've heard it. But since we have  
13 some new folks, I say it every time.

14 Couple things, safety, if we should have a fire  
15 or anything like that and have to exit the room, if you  
16 go out through those double doors and out into the  
17 parking lot and away from the building we'll gather there  
18 to check and make sure everybody's okay. Restrooms, also  
19 known as comfort stations, are if you go out the door and  
20 to the left, they're about a hundred feet down, you'll  
21 cross another threshold and they're on your left.

22 MS. TRIBE: I like to say to him then that  
23 means restrooms.

24 MR. WEBER: Yeah.

25 So first of all, I want to start by thanking

1 you. A lot of you have been working on this with us  
2 since the beginning. And you know, it takes some effort  
3 and it takes some dedication, and I really appreciate it.  
4 I think our Plan is better with each of these steps  
5 because of the participation that we've seen. And it  
6 feels like a long haul and it sort of is, but I'm proud  
7 of the work that we've done together.

8           And then just a little bit about the way I  
9 think about this week. And at the beginning of the week  
10 I sort of was thinking Okay, how do I go into this from  
11 my position as mostly listening and taking notes and  
12 stuff. And I think curiosity is the word I've used to  
13 characterize it. And it really is, for me, a week of  
14 learning, understanding. I can read the paper on these  
15 objections, but the people make it real and always add  
16 some depth and understanding for me. So that's what I'll  
17 be doing. You'll see me taking notes here and those are  
18 mostly the notes for myself.

19           We do have a court reporter here, Bambi, who's  
20 taking it word-for-word. And that record will be  
21 available to us and you. But I'm taking notes to sort of  
22 prompt myself as I'm trying to remember the discussions  
23 here. So really appreciate it, again. I would ask, if  
24 you haven't done so, that you dim your cell phone or  
25 whatever it is you do to make it not ring loud when we're

1 here. And if you need to take a call, take it outside or  
2 something. But really want to maintain the focus in here  
3 and appreciate that in advance. So I'll turn it to  
4 Leanne -- oh, almost forgot again.

5 I want to introduce our team, too, or have them  
6 introduce themselves.

7 MR. KRUEGER: Joe Krueger, forest managing  
8 team leader.

9 MS. MOORE: Marsha Moore, recreation  
10 wilderness plan.

11 MR. KUENNEN: Reed Kuennen, wildlife  
12 biologist on the planning team.

13 MR. SMITH: The table's getting thinner.  
14 Raymond Smith, appeals, objections and litigation  
15 coordinator, Washington.

16 MS. AKE: Kathy Ake, GIS specialist on the  
17 team.

18 MR. WEBER: In the back.

19 MS. TURK: Janette Turk, public affairs  
20 officer, Flathead National Forest.

21 MR. CARLIN: Rob Carlin, staff officer,  
22 natural resources planning and fire.

23 MS. PEEL: Timory Peel, regional planner.

24 MS. ALLEN: Stacy Allen, writer/editor for  
25 the Plan revision team.

1 MR. WEBER: Thank you.

2 MS. MARTEN: Thanks, Chip, and good  
3 afternoon everyone. While we're doing introductions, we  
4 had just two other people that are observing here in the  
5 back. So if we could just have them introduce  
6 themselves. Corey?

7 MR. SCEVERS: Corey Scevers, Forest Service  
8 observer.

9 MR. NELSON: I'm Andy Nelson, Hungry Horse  
10 Glacier View Ranger District.

11 MS. MARTEN: Welcome; thank you. And we  
12 also have....

13 FROM THE FLOOR: Chad (inaudible), Forest  
14 Service, observing.

15 MS. MARTEN: Thank you. I'm going to  
16 continue with introductions before I talk a little bit  
17 about how I see this afternoon and some of what I'd like  
18 to get out of it and then what hopefully you get out of  
19 it. So I'm going to start with the phone. Do we have  
20 any objectors or interested parties on the phone this  
21 afternoon for the topic of travel management?

22 MS. FLINT: Yes. This the Alison Flint  
23 from The Wilderness Society.

24 MS. MARTEN: Good afternoon, Alison.  
25 Anybody else as an objector or interested party on this

1 topic on the phone?

2 How about anybody who's on the phone just  
3 observing this afternoon?

4 MS. SUTTON: Leanne, this is Jody Sutton  
5 from the Washington office, the administrative review  
6 staff.

7 MS. MARTEN: Thanks, Jody.

8 MS. WARREN: This is Nancy Warren. I am a  
9 contractor that has been helping with the NCDE  
10 amendments.

11 MS. MARTEN: Thank you. Anybody else on  
12 the phone? Great.

13 If we could just start with you, David, we can  
14 introduce who's at the table here as well on the topic,  
15 your name and who you're representing.

16 MR. COVILL: My name is David Covill, and  
17 I'm with the Flathead Snowmobile Association.

18 MS. FOX: Hi, Marla Fox with WildEarth  
19 Guardians.

20 MS. EISEN: Hilary Eisen with Winter  
21 Wildlands Alliance.

22 MS. LUNDSTRUM: Sarah Lundstrum with the  
23 National Parks Conservation Association and also the  
24 Whitefish Range Partnership.

25 MS. ROBINSON: Amy Robinson with Montana

1 Wilderness Association.

2 MS. MARTEN: Wonderful. Thank you,  
3 everyone, and, again, thank you for taking time out of  
4 your busy schedules to be here with us this afternoon.

5 As Chip mentioned, I'm Leanne Marten, and I'm  
6 the regional forester here in the northern region. And  
7 for this process I'm the reviewing officer for Chip's  
8 draft decision and for the revision efforts here on the  
9 Flathead.

10 I'll talk a little bit about what I'm hoping to  
11 get out of this afternoon, how I'd like to structure the  
12 dialogue and then we'll just jump right into it and see  
13 how it goes and kind of go with the flow here.

14 So first of all, one of the things that all  
15 topics for the last several days have shown up in over 74  
16 objections filed on the revision. And as you guys can  
17 imagine a whole spectrum of issues. Travel management  
18 was definitely one of them, but there's a lot of  
19 different points to the travel management that you will  
20 not see on the agenda today and we probably won't have  
21 time to get into in the dialogue. But I just want folks  
22 to know that those are being reviewed and they will be  
23 part of the response that you'll receive from me all  
24 issues that were brought forward from that perspective.

25 To determine what would be on the agenda was

1 actually extremely difficult because of the shear number  
2 of issues. And the way we did that is we had a lot of  
3 work done here on the Forest. I asked for a team of  
4 folks to help review all the objections that had not been  
5 involved with the revision, so some people outside the  
6 region, the Washington office, some others came in to get  
7 a third eye and fresh set of eyes on the revision, the  
8 objections. And from that we narrowed it down to the  
9 last three days on these topics that were ones that I'm  
10 hoping to get more dialogue and some more understanding  
11 on making sure I'm understanding where you're coming from  
12 in the written objections I've reviewed and some context  
13 behind that dialogue amongst us and then amongst  
14 yourselves. And I can tell you that's been invaluable  
15 throughout the last three days on all the topics and has  
16 really helped me add some new information as well as some  
17 potential remedies that you folks have been bringing up  
18 that could be considered.

19           You're not going to get a decision from me  
20 today. I need time to process through some things that  
21 are being brought up as well as just put the whole  
22 perspective and the whole big picture together. But  
23 again, you will receive a written response from me in the  
24 near future on that standpoint.

25           There's a lot of values that are associated

1 with everything we do on public lands, and many of you  
2 have heard me say this the last three days and in other  
3 arenas. But I feel like it's very much an honor and  
4 privilege that I personally have to manage your public  
5 lands and my public lands on your behalf. You know,  
6 they're not mine, they're the Forest Service's, but we  
7 have the honor of managing on behalf of the public that  
8 we serve.

9           And the public we serve has a whole different  
10 range of how they'd like to see that management and the  
11 uses occur on their lands. And I would never ask anybody  
12 to change their values. All values are highly respected.  
13 They're all very important and they're very diverse from  
14 that. So I'm really looking forward to the mutual areas  
15 that we might be able to keep moving forward and have a  
16 supportive decision on how we're moving forward on the  
17 Flathead National Forest specifically for the topic today  
18 from there.

19           So as we go into this, the one thing I would  
20 ask is as I go through and I'm asking questions and I'm  
21 going to start off using the briefing paper that y'all  
22 have, it's just a starting point. It's to spark  
23 dialogue. I can tell you for those that might have been  
24 sitting and observing the last topic, there were a couple  
25 things in there that definitely sparked a little bit of

1 dialogue. There was disagreement on the wording, and  
2 that wasn't intentional, but it served its purpose. So  
3 please don't think this is meant to be all encompassing  
4 or a hundred percent right on with every word. But it  
5 was a starting point for me to kind of grasp and get some  
6 of what I think I'm hearing as some of the objections, my  
7 understanding of those. And if it's incorrect on your  
8 view or what you were hoping I would understand from your  
9 written objections, I need to know that. Because I don't  
10 want to be reading into something or misreading something  
11 and being in a totally different spot than what you were  
12 intending on what you're trying to bring forward as  
13 concerns you may have. And that goes the same for any  
14 potential remedies and thought processes on what would  
15 help you feel a little more confident or a little bit  
16 more comfortable with how we're moving forward. It  
17 doesn't mean you agree, but at least there may be some  
18 middle ground there.

19           So before I jump in, I want to see if there are  
20 any questions on the process and how we got here.

21           And then, Ginny, if there's anything I forgot  
22 from a facilitation standpoint, I want to make sure to  
23 give you an opportunity as well.

24           MS. TRIBE: Any questions? You okay? I  
25 would just remind people that Bambi is doing verbatim

1 notes for the meeting and so it's really helpful for her  
2 if you'd say your first name or name every time you  
3 speak. It gets kind of tedious, after a while people  
4 just start to say Hilary here, if you speak more than  
5 once. So she needs to have you do that in a sort of slow  
6 way so she can make the record or keep track of who's  
7 doing it.

8 I remind you, again, about cell phones and that  
9 this is not a consensus-building process. This is not a  
10 decision-making process. And this is not a session where  
11 you restate your objection and your rationale. Leanne  
12 and Chip already have that. So truly, this is an  
13 opportunity to try to have some discussion between you  
14 but also among you. Because when she hears different  
15 sides or explanations of an issue, when they hear that  
16 discussion among you, it helps them further understand  
17 the issue. Not sides, but it's just interesting to hear  
18 you talk about the issues as well. So you okay? Sound  
19 all right? Okay. And you'll see that if Bambi cannot  
20 hear you, she will let you know. So there are mics there  
21 in case you need them.

22 MS. MARTEN: Thanks, Ginny. And Alison on  
23 the phone there, we'll try and remember to periodically  
24 make sure we're getting your voice in the room as well.  
25 And if we forget, please interrupt us so we don't miss

1 just because you're on the phone here. And thank you for  
2 logging in via the phone as well.

3 So let me just paraphrase, and that's all it  
4 is, my understanding of some of the basic issues -- I say  
5 "basic" although it's very complex -- just the overall  
6 foundation of some of the issues I'm hearing on winter  
7 travel management with Chip's draft decision and the  
8 forest plan as written. And again, this is not trying to  
9 take away from the complexity or a lot of the subpoints  
10 that I know you guys have submitted in writing. But  
11 there definitely is some core difference of thought and  
12 opinion on the use of amendment 24 in the new forest plan  
13 and implementing it and whether or not it meets the  
14 requirements of the Travel Management Rule, particularly  
15 subpart C.

16 So that is a core issue that was brought up,  
17 both sides of it. It does not meet the Travel Management  
18 Rule and requirements of subpart C and, therefore, the  
19 Forest needs to move forward with implementing and  
20 adhering to that Rule across all areas on the Forest for  
21 winter motorized travel management.

22 And then on the other side of it is that people  
23 agree that it does and the areas that need to be moved  
24 forward for more site-specific implementation are the  
25 ones that propose newer areas allowing winter motorized

1 travel based on some different allocations in the  
2 proposed plan and Chip's decision. So you've got the  
3 whole Rule part and whether or not how it's being  
4 interpreted and applied as one part of the objection.

5           There's some concern and some desire, I will  
6 say, between the remedies as well as the issue, to have  
7 some kind of timeframe on when the Forest would move  
8 forward with any further, be it a whole new set on one  
9 hand implementing subpart C, however you define what that  
10 implementation should be, all areas on the Forest or just  
11 the new areas on that.

12           And then there was also some concern that the  
13 six-mile area in the Tuchuck-Whale recommended wilderness  
14 area in the North Fork geographic area, that the six-mile  
15 area was removed from having any kind of motorized  
16 over-snow vehicle use in that area. I'm going to start  
17 there. And Joe, correct me if this is wrong, but that's  
18 a misunderstanding on the six-mile area, Marsha and Joe;  
19 correct? As written, and Chip, your draft decision does  
20 not remove that from having winter travel.

21           MR. WEBER: The six-mile.

22           MS. MARTEN: The six-mile area on that part  
23 of it. And Dave, I think Mark was here the other day, we  
24 were trying to clarify that. But I just want to make  
25 sure -- I think your organization brought that up as a

1 concern. And that was some misinformation. Go ahead.

2 MR. COVILL: Dave with Flathead Snowmobile  
3 Association. No, my understanding was that the six-mile  
4 access and the majority of the six-mile area is still  
5 open and accessible, per the current restrictions, as far  
6 as dates and things like that. My concern -- and I don't  
7 remember exactly how I worded it, but I think I meant an  
8 area in the six-mile area. Because that's how you access  
9 the Sullivan Creek and can't remember the name of the  
10 other creek drainage that is going to be affected, taken  
11 out of an area that was open to snowmobiling and going to  
12 be added into, I believe, a wilderness designation.

13 MS. MARTEN: Okay. So that helps clarify  
14 what your concern really was. It wasn't the whole  
15 six-mile, it's that portion that currently is being used  
16 to access some other areas that, as proposed, would no  
17 longer allow the over-snow motorized.

18 MR. COVILL: That is correct.

19 MS. MARTEN: Okay; very helpful, thank you.  
20 I appreciate that clarification.

21 So let me start with a couple questions. And I  
22 need some help, without getting -- trying not to get too  
23 far in the weeds which may be easier said than done on  
24 some of this. But I'm trying to get a feel for folks  
25 that objected and have a different perspective on the use

1 of moving forward amendment 24 and your perspective from  
2 the Travel Management Rule subpart C. And the reason I  
3 want to tease it out just a little bit is I'm curious if  
4 we -- and I'm going with the hypothetical here just to  
5 try and frame the question.

6 How would you see the analysis being done  
7 different if amendment 24 of the analysis used there was  
8 not used as a starting point as we move forward with  
9 winter travel management in the proposed forest plan?  
10 What do you see is missing from analysis that was done  
11 previously in decisions previously met? And I'll ask two  
12 parts. What do you see missing and what isn't being met,  
13 and is it truly something missing, i.e., is there a  
14 potential impact you feel wasn't disclosed or -- or -- or  
15 and/or is it you disagree with decisions that were made  
16 in amendment 24 and you'd like to have that reopened for  
17 public engagement and more opportunity from that  
18 perspective? And that doesn't mean -- it doesn't have to  
19 be either/or, but I'm just trying to get a perspective  
20 from that.

21 So I'll put that out in the room for anybody  
22 who'd like to start and just help me -- I'm just trying  
23 to see it through your lens.

24 MS. EISEN: This is Hilary with Winter  
25 Wildlands Alliance, and I'll start. So we're one of the

1 organizations that feels that amendment 24 does not  
2 comply with the Travel Management Rule. And part of it  
3 is very process based and so the forest plan, I think,  
4 lays out very clearly this is a programmatic decision.  
5 This is a forest planning decision. It's not site  
6 specific. It's not granular. You know, site-specific  
7 determinations are made down the road. And the forest  
8 plan lays that out very clearly. I couldn't agree more.  
9 But then it says Well, amendment 24, though, that's a  
10 travel management decision and travel management  
11 decisions are site-specific, granular. If you look at  
12 the Travel Management Rule and the court cases that have  
13 followed from that, you know, it very specifically says  
14 that travel management decisions need to be site specific  
15 and they need to be granular.

16 And in writing my objection, I went back and  
17 looked at -- and also when I wrote my comments  
18 earlier -- but I went back and looked at the EIS for  
19 amendment 24 to double check that I wasn't missing  
20 something. And it doesn't talk about being granular and  
21 being site specific. It says it's a programmatic  
22 decision.

23 It says a lot of the same things that the  
24 forest plan decision says around what the forest plan  
25 says as far as like This is why we'll need to do

1 site-specific planning to finish these decisions, whether  
2 it's a change in motorized suitability or whatever.  
3 Amendment 24 says those things but frames it as And we're  
4 done. So there's sort of an inconsistency there. And I  
5 look at that and think that the forest plan is correct  
6 that programmatic decisions are not site-specific  
7 decisions and travel management requires specific  
8 granular decisions but amendment 24 doesn't get there.  
9 And I go into all sorts of detail in my comments but I  
10 don't want to repeat myself. But that's sort of the  
11 basic overarching issue there is that what's missing is  
12 site-specific, granular analysis. Amendment 24  
13 identifies suitability but it doesn't get to that  
14 designation level.

15 So as far as the second part of your question  
16 is what specifically do we want to change or what do we  
17 disagree with, I think parts of the Forest are a little  
18 bit more specific. You know the Whitefish Range, those  
19 decisions are more granular. Other parts of the Forest  
20 it's very broad suitability. I don't personally have  
21 like a specific I don't want to see snowmobiles in this  
22 area where they're currently allowed. It's more that I  
23 want to see the Forest Service go through that process of  
24 actually looking at the issue more carefully before just  
25 making broad suitability decisions. So I think focus

1 that has a more local perspective may have specific  
2 disagreements, but from sort of our national organization  
3 perspective, it's more about the process and less....

4 MS. MARTEN: Okay; that's very helpful,  
5 thanks.

6 Others?

7 MS. FOX: Marla Fox with WildEarth  
8 Guardians. To add on to what Hilary was saying, the  
9 amendment 24 amended the 1986 forest plan and made those  
10 suitability determinations for like much of the Forest.  
11 Like Hilary said, the Whitefish Range had some more  
12 specifics that were agreed to by parties in collaboration  
13 and through settlement. But it designated over 780,000  
14 acres as open to OSV use.

15 Since that 2006 amendment to the 1986 forest  
16 plan, we've had the 2015 Winter Travel Planning Rule  
17 which, number one, switches from an  
18 open-unless-designated-closed approach, to a  
19 closed-unless-designated-open. So to say that  
20 amendment 24 -- it complies with the Travel Management  
21 Rule without going back and assessing it here -- so I  
22 read the first part of our briefing paper. The first  
23 paragraph says amendment 24 is not open to objection.  
24 But to the extent that this new revised forest plan is  
25 adopting amendment 24 and choosing not to adopt other

1 amendments, that's a very specific decision to carry  
2 those suitability determinations forward. So that's one  
3 problem that I see.

4           And number two, what I see is that it doesn't  
5 make designations. It doesn't make the area route and  
6 trail designations that demonstrate compliance with  
7 minimization criteria that look at new science since 2006  
8 about wildlife and habitat on the Forest and what those  
9 needs are. And we went into detail about impacts to  
10 early -- or late OSV season use and early grizzly bear  
11 den emersion and how that's not really analyzed. And the  
12 biological opinions follow this thread, this theme of the  
13 forest plan is a programmatic decision. Great. But then  
14 it's also trying to tie in Oh, but wait, we're done with  
15 subpart C because we have amendment 24. And that just  
16 seems to try to have it all when the Forest Service  
17 hasn't gone through the process. And in light of a lot  
18 of this new information it hasn't analyzed those impacts.  
19 So I think it's both a process question but also a very  
20 big substance question. And so we have major concerns  
21 about both of those.

22           MS. MARTEN: Thank you very much. Very  
23 helpful to hear how you're viewing this. And I guess,  
24 Marla, maybe a question for you because Hilary sparked  
25 it, is there something from you or the organization

1 you're representing, is there any place based concerns?  
2 I don't know if that's the right way of wording it, but  
3 it sounds like from the process bigger picture and based  
4 on what you see as being missing, you don't have the  
5 information you feel you need to maybe even answer this  
6 question.

7 MS. FOX: Right. So that wasn't open;  
8 right? It was part of the forest plan revision they said  
9 Well, we're just going to adopt amendment 24. Or we  
10 tried different ways of articulating it, you know,  
11 baseline information, having -- okay, where do the OSVers  
12 really go? Where is the known grizzly bear denning  
13 areas? One area that isn't described in the plan but  
14 would be a concern to us is the security core grizzly  
15 denning areas.

16 So that would be an important area for us that  
17 would be an area that we want at least seasonal  
18 restrictions. We're not trying to eliminate snowmobile  
19 use across the Forest. And one thing we see what  
20 happened with a site-specific winter travel planning  
21 process is you would get -- number one, you would get  
22 clarity to the public that you're actually designating  
23 winter travel management on the Forest so people  
24 who -- if you read the forest plan or the EIS, it was not  
25 clear that it's done or that it's being done or that

1 there might be some changes. It was very -- like I  
2 couldn't quite tell what was happening.

3 And so winter travel planning would, number  
4 one, bring out those interests on all sides and give  
5 everyone that opportunity to be a part of the process.  
6 But number two, it would allow for those site-specific  
7 details to come out and demonstrate compliance and  
8 minimization criteria and get updated information in the  
9 record.

10 MS. MARTEN: That helps me.

11 MS. EISEN: This is Hilary again kind of  
12 following up on that because Marla's response got me  
13 thinking. And as far as sort of specific concerns, place  
14 based concerns, without going through winter travel  
15 planning, we haven't had an opportunity to look at those  
16 issues. The Forest hasn't presented sort of here are the  
17 potential impacts or here's -- we've been working on a  
18 forest plan on the Flathead here which we're looking at  
19 much broader issues than site-specific winter travel  
20 planning. So I think without going through that winter  
21 travel planning process, it's hard to pinpoint specific  
22 issues.

23 One thing when we work on winter travel  
24 planning elsewhere that we often are asking the Forest  
25 Service are you -- because the subpart C rule requires a

1 closed and less designated open framework for winter  
2 travel management, we look at that as you have to justify  
3 the others that you're opening not justify the areas  
4 you're closing. And part of that making sure that you're  
5 designating areas that make sense for snowmobile use.  
6 That they're places that actually get snow. Are they  
7 places that have terrain that's suitable for riding? You  
8 know, if it's steep cliffs with really, really thick  
9 trees and gets three inches of snow, why are you  
10 designating that for snowmobile use because it may very  
11 well be that that area has some other value that would be  
12 better managed for. So those are the sorts of issues  
13 that we'd love to explore on the Flathead but we haven't  
14 had the opportunity to do so yet.

15 MS. TRIBE: You want to check with the  
16 phone?

17 MS. MARTEN: Yes; thank you.

18 So Alison, I think you were the only one on the  
19 phone that's an objector/interested party. So we'll  
20 start with you. And if anybody else joined us, please  
21 introduce yourself. But any thoughts or anything you  
22 want to make sure is in the room?

23 MS. FLINT: Yeah. You know, Leanne, I  
24 don't need to take more time. I think from my  
25 perspective we concur with pretty much everything Marla

1 and Hilary have said; that primarily for us it's a  
2 process issue and that I see confusing language about  
3 whether, you know, that granular implementation,  
4 site-specific planning has been done across the Forest,  
5 and we want to make sure that it has been done and that  
6 the Forest takes a serious look at where existing  
7 decisions that were made to amendment 24 might be  
8 adequate and also where they're not. And so until we  
9 have that process, I don't think, you know, I'm prepared  
10 at this point to say that we disagree with X or Y or Z on  
11 the ground, though certainly there may be substance  
12 issues that come up. So I don't think I need to take  
13 more time. But I agree with everything Hilary and Marla  
14 said.

15 MS. MARTEN: Thank you very much.

16 Anybody else joined us on the phone that's an  
17 objector or interested party? Thank you.

18 And so others in the room? Other perspectives,  
19 other items you want to make sure.

20 Go ahead, David.

21 MS. TRIBE: David, I was going to see if  
22 Sarah and Amy have anything to say just because they  
23 haven't yet. Not on this? Okay.

24 MS. ROBINSON: I can pitch in.

25 MS. TRIBE: You know, I can always count on

1 Amy.

2 MS. ROBINSON: I'll come with something  
3 here. Let's see, just real briefly here, Leanne, from  
4 MWA perspective, of course I wasn't with MWA when the  
5 settlement agreement occurred and such. But from our  
6 perspective certainly had more site-specific routes and  
7 play areas developed in the Whitefish Range really  
8 specifically with the snowmobile club. And so I guess  
9 what I'm saying is much more specific in the Whitefish  
10 Range than the rest of the Forest.

11 Amendment 24, from my perspective, kind of  
12 applies kind of more of a blanket over-the-snow approach  
13 in the Swan Range specifically. And in certain areas  
14 along the Mission Mountains you inquired about certain  
15 site-specific areas. And so yeah, I see a real blanket  
16 approach in Swan Range specifically, say on the west  
17 flank of the range where it's, as Hilary said, heavily  
18 timbered, very steep, and the Forest Service is saying  
19 Hey, we should make that over-the-snow. And I'm thinking  
20 Well, that doesn't really realistically seem like the  
21 best area. So could use more site-specific analysis  
22 there.

23 And then in the Mission Mountains, I'm thinking  
24 again about the Sunset Ridge, which we commented on, and  
25 there's some over-the-snow open area there which I think

1 could use further analysis. So just some suggestions  
2 there specific examples.

3 MS. MARTEN: Thank you very much.

4 And David, you had the mic.

5 MR. COVILL: David, Flathead Snowmobile  
6 Association. A comment about the change from looking at  
7 the Forest as open-unless-closed versus  
8 closed-unless-opened. If you're going to do  
9 site-specific analysis, then isn't that kind of  
10 redundant? If it's closed unless opened and then you  
11 have to do site-specific analysis, isn't that like  
12 analyzing it again to see if it could be opened or not?  
13 It just seems -- it seems -- I'm all for site-specific  
14 analysis as long as you can make a recommendation -- as  
15 long as somebody can make a suggestion or a  
16 recommendation that said Hey, this area would be great  
17 for snowmobiling and not have it immediately shot down  
18 because Oh, well, it's not on the map, it's closed unless  
19 opened. Because conditions on the Forest change.

20 One perfect example is the McGinnis Creek  
21 Drainage. That used to be heavily timbered, very thick,  
22 you could get off the road about ten feet and that was  
23 it. Well, there was a fire that went through there.  
24 Now, there's hundreds and hundreds of acres of very  
25 suitable and snowmobile area that, without some

1 flexibility to say Hey, this is now could be looked at as  
2 suitable snowmobiling area, it's going to remain closed.  
3 And in addition to that, areas that we have traditionally  
4 had for snowmobiling in the Canyon Creek area, areas that  
5 are on the winter travel map as play areas, well, twenty  
6 years ago they were play areas. Now they're forests with  
7 trees too close together for even snow bikes to go  
8 through. So if as conditions on the Forest change we are  
9 tied to a rigid rule-making system that doesn't allow for  
10 some flexibility, then there's going to be frustration  
11 and there's going to be noncompliance with what the  
12 regulations are.

13 One of the things over the last five years that  
14 I've been president of the snowmobile association that's  
15 been kind of frustrating for me is when I talk to various  
16 Forest Service personnel or people that have been  
17 involved in the snowmobiling association for twenty-five  
18 or thirty years and I say Well, why can't we do this? or  
19 Why can't we do that?, they say Oh, that's amendment 24.  
20 It's done, can't do it. And Forest Service isn't going  
21 to let us do that. Or you talk to the Forest Service and  
22 they say Well, we can't do that. It's just a blanket  
23 Can't do that. Not that Well, maybe we can look into it.  
24 It's like No, can't do that.

25 You know, things twenty-five years ago were

1 different than they are today. And things five years  
2 from now are going to be different than they are today.  
3 And when this process started five years ago, things were  
4 different than they are today. So it's kind of like  
5 shooting at a moving target. And without the ability to  
6 adjust your aim, you're always going to be missing the  
7 target.

8           As far as the process discussion about whether  
9 we're amendment 24 or we're Travel Management Rule  
10 subpart C, that kind of gets into the weeds of let's open  
11 our eyes and look at what's out there in the Forest and  
12 say This makes sense, This doesn't make sense. And I'm  
13 all for having site-specific or area-specific meetings  
14 and hearings and approvals or disapprovals for what's  
15 going on as far as winter management. I'm a -- I've  
16 always thought of myself as a conservationist. I love  
17 the outdoors. I love the wildlife. It's not -- I don't  
18 think it's an either/or thing.

19           I think we can utilize the public lands for  
20 everybody's enjoyment and the wildlife's livelihood. So  
21 the point I'm trying to make is I think we need to have  
22 some flexibility and maybe, as far as Forest Service  
23 personnel, the idea or the ability to open up dialogue  
24 and say Maybe we can change this. And if there was  
25 a -- I think a lot of -- this is just my personal

1 observation.

2 I think a lot of Forest Service personnel are  
3 gun shy of opening up a can of worms, and they don't want  
4 to have the hassle. And I get that; I understand that.  
5 But by the same token, I think everybody would benefit,  
6 not just individual user groups, but I think the  
7 community as a whole would benefit from greater  
8 flexibility and more access to various parts of the  
9 Forest.

10 MS. MARTEN: Thanks, David.

11 Sarah, you had your hand up.

12 MS. LUNDSTRUM: Yeah, Sarah Lundstrum. I  
13 wanted to touch on because Dave brought up McGinnis  
14 Creek. The Whitefish Range Partnership, thanks to Robbie  
15 Holman and the wonderful job he did representing  
16 snowmobiling in our partnership, brought up the fact that  
17 play areas and routes are closing because trees are  
18 growing in or for whatever reason. So through the  
19 negotiation of our agreement, we did find places in the  
20 North Fork that we recommended that the Forest Service  
21 look at as opportunities for increased snowmobiling and  
22 actually brand-new areas. And the McGinnis Creek area is  
23 one of them.

24 That being said, we were also very careful when  
25 we drew our lines around the Tuchuch-Whale recommended

1 wilderness that we made sure that we weren't affecting  
2 the agreement already made in amendment 24. So it's sort  
3 of the trade-off for the conservation community  
4 supporting increased snowmobiling in that area was the  
5 recommendation of Tuchuck-Whale as a recommended  
6 wilderness and we were very careful to make sure the  
7 snowmobilers didn't lose any rideable areas there. So I  
8 just wanted to say we did recognize that and we did try  
9 to find places like McGinnis Creek that weren't open but  
10 could be opened in the future.

11 MS. EISEN: This is Hilary again. And  
12 actually I agree with a lot of what David said as far as  
13 things have changed since amendment 24 was put in place.  
14 And that's why we believe that there's a need to do  
15 winter travel management. And just like trees have grown  
16 or trees have burned or whatever, things have changed on  
17 the Forest, and snowmobiling opportunities have changed  
18 along with that. Wildlife have also changed on the  
19 Forest. Grizzly bear populations have grown, species  
20 have been listed and delisted and whatever over time.

21 And we think forest planning is sort of this  
22 great first step in thinking about planning on the Forest  
23 where you set -- you guys already know this -- but you  
24 set the big picture, the 30,000-foot view of how you're  
25 going to manage your forest. And then you go in and your

1 travel plan should be revised more than every thirty  
2 years. I's a more flexible document. It fits within the  
3 larger framework of the forest plan, but it's something  
4 that you tweak from time to time as conditions change.

5           So we see this as Okay, you do a forest plan,  
6 you set suitability for your forest as to what areas,  
7 broadly speaking, are suitable for winter travel, and now  
8 you can go in and do a winter travel plan where you look  
9 at specifically What are we going to designate as open,  
10 and maybe ten years from now, trees have changed again  
11 and you go and you say Okay, well within the area you  
12 said are suitable, we're going to take a second look at  
13 what we're going to designate as open and maybe these  
14 trees grew or these trees burned and we're going to  
15 switch it all around within that larger framework.

16           So we certainly support being aware and  
17 responsive to changing conditions, as long as that's done  
18 within the legal framework and the framework of the  
19 forest plan.

20           MS. MARTEN: So let me tease it out a  
21 little bit on one of the other points with a lot of that  
22 great dialogue. And thank you. It is very helpful to  
23 hear different perspectives and some common areas there  
24 as well.

25           When a couple places brought up the scheduling

1 and teasing out a schedule and wanting to see more of a  
2 schedule. And everybody has their own ideas on the ideal  
3 schedule and what you'd like to see and how quick or when  
4 it would be started. And I'm just curious on what  
5 folks's thoughts were on that. What it is that you feel  
6 that would meet that is not being met right now as Chip's  
7 decision is drafted -- as drafted. It obviously -- I  
8 picked up you feel like that's a need that isn't being  
9 met. But I'm curious what's underlying some of that and  
10 then, also, how that would look in your mind, include a  
11 schedule. What does that look like from your  
12 perspective?

13 MS. FOX: Marla Fox. So I think, number  
14 one, it would be clarifying in the decision and the  
15 analysis that site-specific winter travel planning is  
16 still needed. Perhaps not on the Whitefish Range, and  
17 you could write it that way, because it sounds like there  
18 was site-specific travel planning done there. But to  
19 clarify that in this decision would be step one. That  
20 would be like the very bottom. Like that is the one  
21 thing that we would really want, at least WildEarth  
22 Guardians. And I'll let other people speak.

23 But then, number two, the next very least would  
24 be we need to do winter travel planning. And then number  
25 three, if you really want to go for the big guns, it

1 would be some kind of a time objective, like in a plan  
2 component objective. It wouldn't have to be standard and  
3 guideline, because obviously that sets up the Forest for  
4 failure. But if it says, you know, within ten years,  
5 within five years, whatever. I think some of the really,  
6 really big ones Hilary can get to would be like within  
7 one year; right.

8 MS. EISEN: This is Hilary. Yeah, one year  
9 initiating travel planning when you've just kind of maybe  
10 like Whoo, we're done with forest planning, maybe give  
11 yourself a couple more years. But I think having some  
12 sort of timeline is really important I think for all user  
13 groups, whether it's me at Winter Wildlands or David over  
14 at the snowmobile club. The forest plan sets out  
15 different changes in suitability including areas that are  
16 not currently suitable but would be suitable in the new  
17 plan, and then you have to do site-specific planning to  
18 actually open those. Well, if he wants to go riding in  
19 these areas before they fill in with trees again, you  
20 have to actually do that travel planning so that he can  
21 go use them.

22 MS. TRIBE: You guys are moving right  
23 along.

24 MS. EISEN: There's other areas that are  
25 currently suitable for over-snow vehicles that the US

1 forest plan say they would not be once you use them  
2 site-specific. And maybe Amy wants to get a wilderness  
3 bill through in her lifetime. So there's all sorts of  
4 reasons to be timely. And we, I think, have all  
5 seen -- and nothing against the Forest Service, but if  
6 you don't have a deadline, you don't get things done.  
7 And if you can set some deadlines for yourself in the  
8 forest plan then we, as a public, feel much better about  
9 the plan actually meaning something instead of it just  
10 being good intentions.

11 MS. TRIBE: So might there be some criteria  
12 that would trigger a talk about scheduling? You said  
13 Well, Sarah's worried about getting some wilderness  
14 done -- I mean, Amy's worried about getting some  
15 wilderness done before she isn't here anymore. Or you're  
16 talking about let these guys have a breather, et cetera.  
17 Well, those are sort of -- are there criteria, other  
18 triggers that you can think about that would cause you to  
19 think scheduling?

20 MS. EISEN: I don't know if I have like the  
21 perfect answer. I don't think there's a trigger,  
22 necessarily. I mean, I think in the forest plan, using  
23 the example of the areas that are currently not open to  
24 snowmobiles but the plan says Actually, we've decided  
25 those are suitable areas but we have to do travel

1 planning before we can open them. You know, that sort of  
2 thing. Like people worked really hard over the last  
3 however many years in this forest plan revision to get  
4 that. And if you don't want the public to lose faith in  
5 the agency, I think it's important to follow through on  
6 that sort of promise.

7 MS. TRIBE: So already-determined  
8 suitability would be a criteria.

9 MS. EISEN: Yes. And the forest plan lays  
10 out suitability across the entire Forest. So a criteria  
11 has already been met. But I think in just human nature  
12 of what we consider to generally feel to be acceptable,  
13 people have short memories. So if it's like In ten years  
14 we'll get to this, conditions have changed so much in ten  
15 years and people have moved on or they've stopped paying  
16 attention, it may as well be forever.

17 Maybe one year is too short because maybe you  
18 all need a break from planning. But I think less than  
19 five years is really important because that's still sort  
20 of in that human nature memory time frame of like We're  
21 all still thinking about this, we all still know each  
22 other, talking about it, the forest plan's not a distant  
23 memory.

24 And also, travel planning doesn't happen  
25 overnight. So if you don't start for five years and then

1 it's a three-year process, it's eight years before Dave  
2 can go riding and the trees have grown again. So I'm  
3 rambling now.

4 MR. COVILL: This is Dave again. In eight  
5 years I might have a knee replacement and I might not be  
6 able to ride anymore. But seriously, one thought that  
7 came to mind was to try to keep the planning horizon as  
8 short as possible.

9 One suggestion that I had in a discussion with  
10 some of my members was What if we could do like a season  
11 experiment? And if there was an area that was currently  
12 closed but we would have an experiment to see if, number  
13 one, anybody would ride it? Number two, what impacts  
14 would it have? Would it have detrimental impacts on  
15 parking, on wildlife, on the trees or the vegetation, any  
16 of the neighbors, other recreation groups, you know?  
17 Because I think a lot of times we look at areas -- we  
18 look at the Forest and we say Oh, well, this would be  
19 best suitable for this activity, but nobody does that  
20 there.

21 You know, like one of the things that I had to  
22 kind of chuckle about was like suitability for timber  
23 base. And there was one area that I was talking to a  
24 friend of mine about and I said Well, this is suitable  
25 for timber. And they said Well, yeah, it will be

1 suitable for timber in about eighty years because a fire  
2 went through there and there's no timber there anymore.  
3 Oh, okay. Well, same kind of deal with snowmobiling or  
4 any other activity or any other purpose on the Forest is  
5 saying it is so does not make it so.

6 For example, if we opened up an area -- let's  
7 say we opened up a creek drainage, we'll just call it ABC  
8 Creek and we open that up for snowmobiling, maybe it's  
9 found out that nobody wants to go there because it's  
10 really not a good area to snowmobile. Well, then, we  
11 found that out through experimentation. Or maybe we open  
12 it up and it's a great area to snowmobile but the traffic  
13 on the road makes it unsafe or the avalanche conditions  
14 make it unsafe. Then we would know that. Anyway, that  
15 was a thought that if there was some flexibility that we  
16 could enter into an experiment, you know, then we could  
17 evaluate it in the spring and say Well, this is what we  
18 found over the course of the winter.

19 We found that this was not a good area to  
20 snowmobile because there were too many -- too much impact  
21 on the wildlife, or this was a great area to snowmobile  
22 and let's look at maybe opening it up permanently or  
23 while it's still suitable.

24 MS. MARTEN: Thanks.

25 Sarah, did you have any thoughts on schedules

1 or Whitefish Range, some of the work there?

2 MS. LUNDSTRUM: Well, I just can't wait to  
3 do more planning. I was wondering what I was going to do  
4 with my time.

5 MS. MARTEN: I know. I've got a whole team  
6 here thinking the same thing.

7 MS. LUNDSTRUM: You know, job security;  
8 right? No, you know, I mean I don't think I have a  
9 definite on a timeline for planning, but I do agree. I  
10 mean, like you can't just let it go forever. Five years  
11 is a long time to wait to start. I would say it needs to  
12 be started before three, honestly. And it's not just  
13 over the snow, it's also you've got suitability for  
14 mountain biking or not suitability for mountain biking  
15 and recommended wilderness. There's some potential areas  
16 for potential summer motorized use. So it's not just the  
17 snowmobiling community that's waiting. There's a lot of  
18 folks that are going to be really interested in this. So  
19 yeah, I would say wait no longer than three years because  
20 things change, so....

21 MS. MARTEN: And just out of curiosity with  
22 the Whitefish Range Partnership, and I know various  
23 people are sitting here from that, was it talked about at  
24 all from that perspective? I'm thinking of the areas  
25 that were newer on that.

1 MS. LUNDSTRUM: Yeah. So in our comments  
2 we said You need to set a timeline for actually doing  
3 this. Because we just said We want you to look at these  
4 places as potentially suitable for over-the-snow or  
5 summer motorized. That means you have to actually look  
6 at them. So yeah, we thought sooner rather than later  
7 was better.

8 MS. MARTEN: That's what I remembered. I  
9 thought I might have missed something or there might be  
10 something a little bit more specific.

11 MS. LUNDSTRUM: We did not say Start  
12 January 1st of 2019, but --

13 MS. MARTEN: Thank you very much.

14 MS. LUNDSTRUM: -- that wouldn't be too  
15 soon.

16 MS. MARTEN: Other thoughts along those  
17 lines or anything that we've brought out so far? Go  
18 ahead Amy.

19 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you; Amy Robinson.  
20 I've been sitting through various parts of the last three  
21 days, and there's certainly a common thread about this  
22 need for a timeline that also filters into, sometimes in  
23 many cases, stronger standards and guidelines that we  
24 can, as a public, stand on. And so I've just been  
25 thinking about that, I guess, as an overarching challenge

1 in a lot of different ways through this process. What  
2 else? I had one other thought.

3 MS. MARTEN: Have any answers for that  
4 challenge?

5 MS. ROBINSON: Well, I think about, as  
6 Sarah noted with the management of recommended wilderness  
7 and Mike Anderson and I's desire to say Hey, if you are  
8 going to do site-specific management or evaluation, when  
9 is that going to happen? Because we need to know and we  
10 need to, frankly, be able to count on that, inquire with  
11 y'all about that and kind of hold you accountable to it  
12 in the ways that we can. So yeah, I think it threads  
13 through in a lot of ways.

14 And then to Hilary's point really quick, I  
15 guess, about not waiting too long as well, we kind of  
16 know each other. Like I know Dave a bit, and it makes it  
17 easier for everyone if we go through travel planning  
18 before I decide I can't work on wilderness anymore in  
19 eight years or something and he's got to get to know a  
20 new person. So those things, those relationships that  
21 we've created, certainly do matter.

22 MS. TRIBE: Thanks, Amy.

23 MS. MARTEN: So let me ask -- well,  
24 actually, Sarah, you had indicated earlier that -- before  
25 we got on a couple of these other topics there were some

1 other things. So I just want to -- what else do I want  
2 to make sure you guys want to make sure gets put out in  
3 the room today on this topic? I know there's a lot of  
4 other nth details, but I get the feeling there was  
5 something specific you wanted to make sure you had an  
6 opportunity to bring forward.

7 MS. LUNDSTRUM: Well, no, just so the other  
8 piece of the original question was, was the six-mile area  
9 also identified as the Tuchuck-Whale recommended  
10 wilderness as not being included in the forest plan. And  
11 we actually -- so the Tuchuck-Whale is not part of  
12 amendment 24 at all. Getting rid of it will not change  
13 that. It's still not part of amendment 24. I just  
14 wanted to clarify, like we really tried as the Whitefish  
15 Range Partnership that the recommended wilderness  
16 boundary that we drew made sure that we left all  
17 available snowmobiling open and that we then found other  
18 places that were potentially available sort of as that  
19 tradeoff so that the wilderness folks were okay  
20 supporting more snowmobiling in the Whitefish Range  
21 because they got wilderness in the northern end of the  
22 range. And I think that made Robbie more comfortable as  
23 a snowmobiling incentive that Yeah, there's recommended  
24 wilderness, he doesn't really like it, but he's getting  
25 more snowmobiling down here. And so those were sort of

1 the tradeoffs that made our agreement work.

2 And as I said yesterday, it's recreation, it's  
3 wilderness, it's timber. Those are the three legs of  
4 that stool that hold up that agreement. And if we pull  
5 one of them out, then the whole thing falls. And I just  
6 wanted to make sure that that was very fair.

7 MS. TRIBE: So using sort of an old term,  
8 it's kind of a no net loss, no net gain, whatever you put  
9 back in, which is what holds your compromise together.

10 MS. LUNDSTRUM: Yes.

11 MS. MARTEN: Thank you.

12 So one of the underlying things that I seem to  
13 be hearing today, which is helping me out tremendously,  
14 is if I think about the Travel Management Rule subpart C  
15 and Chip's draft decision and the forest plan, one of the  
16 things I'm definitely hearing is there's concern from a  
17 process standpoint and the opportunity for all of you, in  
18 partnership with each other, to be able to continue  
19 working forward on the site-specific implementation and  
20 what that looks like and the desire to have the  
21 opportunity to have those discussions working continue in  
22 continued partnership with the Forest and the agency,  
23 other agencies, other members of the public, the tribes,  
24 the big picture, and do it in a timely manner recognizing  
25 timely doesn't mean we're going to start tomorrow but it

1 also preferably doesn't mean start ten years from now as  
2 well for a variety of reasons both on the ground, the  
3 resource, relationships, et cetera, from that standpoint.

4           And Amy, I appreciate you voicing also  
5 that -- because part of it was the position I'm sitting  
6 in and definitely the last three days but also, more  
7 beyond that, is how things dovetail together. Because  
8 forest planning is never the one-time you got it all it's  
9 perfect and now life is rosy. There's a lot of other  
10 things that go into the implementation side of it as well  
11 and how those pieces fit together in that bigger puzzle  
12 on that. Understanding there's a lot of other folks that  
13 are wanting for us to get started on the next steps on  
14 various other perspectives on that.

15           David, you picked up the mic, so go for it on  
16 that part.

17           MR. COVILL: Yeah. You were saying that  
18 there are a lot of other folks that want to be involved  
19 and have a say in the process. And I recently had a  
20 conversation with I'll just say a business person in the  
21 area who's very heavily involved with the tourism  
22 industry. And this -- our specific conversation was  
23 about how do we promote and encourage more people to come  
24 here in the winter so that people can have maybe a  
25 full-time year-round job instead of a 80-hour a week

1 90-days-a-year job? And so we were throwing around some  
2 ideas about that. And the topic of the reason why people  
3 come to the Flathead is the wilderness aspects of what we  
4 have around us and the -- if we have it designated as  
5 wilderness with a big W, that limits the amount of people  
6 that can access it and how far they can access it.

7 Now, you're limiting to what you can walk or if  
8 you can ride a horse, that's as far as you can go in the  
9 wilderness. And so we were throwing -- talking about  
10 different ways that could be used to promote utilization  
11 of the Forest in a good way so that we don't have extreme  
12 use in one area and very little use in another area but  
13 have it more widespread and enhance everybody's  
14 experience.

15 Nobody wants to come to Montana to have the  
16 experience that they have going to a park in southern  
17 California. I mean, they don't want to have the same  
18 number of people that they can see every day at their  
19 home in southern California. They want to come here and  
20 they want to get away from people. They want to see the  
21 trees. They want to be in the wilderness. And I totally  
22 get that. But if we limit where and how those people can  
23 have that experience, then we're going to defeat the  
24 whole purpose of why they want to come to Montana.

25 Now, I was involved with the collaborative

1 planning process all the way from the beginning for the  
2 Forest Service here on the Flathead National Forest, and  
3 I recall a few times people talking about the economic  
4 impacts. But I think it needs to be reemphasized that  
5 when decisions are made about how to use or how not to  
6 use the Forest or what is suitable for it, they should  
7 take more into account what the economic impact of that  
8 decision is and what the possible future economic impact  
9 would be.

10 I look at the areas around West Yellowstone.  
11 They, specifically with snowmobiling, they groom 400  
12 miles of trail seven days a week during the winter  
13 season. And they get thousands and thousands of people  
14 to snowmobile on those trails. It makes West Yellowstone  
15 basically a twelve-month-a-year economy instead of a  
16 three-month-year economy. And we get three million  
17 people plus to go to Glacier National Park, but that's  
18 like from June 15th to September 15th. What about the  
19 rest of the year? Yes, we have a couple of ski resorts.  
20 Those do a great job of getting people into Whitefish and  
21 to the Lakeside area. But the rest of the Valley, I  
22 think we have incredible potential. I'm not talking  
23 about making it necessarily exactly like West  
24 Yellowstone, but we have -- if we can survive with three  
25 million people in three months, we could add another

1 million over the next nine months and we would all do a  
2 lot better economically. And I don't think we would have  
3 that big of a detriment on the rest of the ecosystem.

4 MS. MARTEN: Thank you, David.

5 So Allison, I want to just make sure we don't  
6 forget you on the phone. Anything you want to bring  
7 forward or any other comments?

8 MS. FLINT: I don't think so, Leanne. I  
9 like the way that you summarized things maybe five, ten  
10 minutes ago, about the need to continue exploring process  
11 going forward and build on needs to do follow-up  
12 site-specific planning in a timely manner. So I think  
13 that kind of encompasses us as well. So thanks for the  
14 conversation.

15 MS. MARTEN: You bet; thank you.

16 So as we're kind of pulling things together  
17 here, I guess I want to make sure there aren't other  
18 things on this stop topic that you want to make sure are  
19 put in the room here this afternoon, again aware that  
20 I've got your written ones. But is there something that  
21 I've missed or something you want to make sure that is  
22 just on my mind and fresh or whatever else that I may not  
23 have brought forward that you want to have a little bit  
24 of dialogue on amongst yourselves as well as with me.

25 MS. FOX: Marla Fox, WildEarth Guardians.

1 The one thing that we didn't talk about and I don't think  
2 we need to have discussion on now but I wanted to  
3 highlight for you, Leanne, is our objection points on  
4 compliance with the Endangered Species Act and the OSV's  
5 impacts on grizzly bears as they emerge from their dens,  
6 especially mothers and cubs, and especially we're  
7 allowing winter travel, motorized travel, in the security  
8 core. To rely on amendment 24 -- I think that highlights  
9 the problem with amendment 24 and some of the outdated  
10 information there. And looking at that afresh through  
11 winter traveling planning would probably alleviate some  
12 of the concerns we have about compliance with the ESA for  
13 this forest plan revision. It's just taking such a big  
14 bite with a forest plan that one of our other object  
15 points was that it just doesn't fit in a forest plan  
16 because it is a high-level blueprint as opposed to the  
17 site specific.

18 MS. MARTEN: Thank you. And I do recall  
19 during the grizzly bear discussion you had brought that  
20 up. So thank you for -- because I said that at that time  
21 I know we'd have this today too. So appreciate that.  
22 Thank you, Marla.

23 Others? I'm getting all head shakes and nos.

24 So thank you. This has been extremely helpful  
25 for me, as have all the other topics. I know many of you

1 have been involved, and even those that have been sitting  
2 observing these three days, I give you all the credit in  
3 the world on that part of it. But you've all been  
4 involved from day one on this and throughout several  
5 years. So really appreciate your time and your input and  
6 the dialogue; extremely helpful for me.

7           Again, no decisions today, but this definitely  
8 will be incorporated in my thought process as I move  
9 forward with all the objections, winter travel being one  
10 key part of it and how it interlinks with everything  
11 else, endangered species, the grizzly, and a lot of the  
12 other topics, recommended wilderness, and many of the  
13 other things that have been brought up as part of the  
14 dialogue over the last three days.

15           So Ginny, I'll turn it over to you for some  
16 facilitation and observations.

17           MS. TRIBE: Well, what I was going to say  
18 is that we're scheduled to go to 2:30 and we're about 20  
19 minutes from that, but then we were going to take a break  
20 and then we were going to come back and have the  
21 reviewing officer's reflections, which is a spiritual  
22 activity, and that you would explain one last time about  
23 the documentation of the meeting and the people that work  
24 together and that kind of business and what would happen  
25 next. And so I'm going to ask the people at the table

1 and the two people that are in the room, would you be  
2 offended if we didn't take a break and --

3 MS. MARTEN: Just move into that part.

4 MS. TRIBE: -- would you guys be ready to  
5 reflect so that we can honor everybody's time here? And  
6 these guys, I know, they've been here. They don't go  
7 home at night. They just stay in those chairs.

8 MR. SMITH: We'll stay here for days if you  
9 want us to.

10 MS. MARTEN: He's my driver, and he's not  
11 staying for days, just for the record. He's driving me.

12 MS. TRIBE: So if you guys don't mind doing  
13 that.

14 MS. MARTEN: That's fine.

15 MS. TRIBE: So before you do that, the last  
16 thing I wanted to see is would the people at the table,  
17 would you make any other observations about the process  
18 or, in general, both Sarah and Amy were here yesterday.

19 MS. LUNDSTRUM: And the day before.

20 MS. TRIBE: Oh, yeah, it has gone since  
21 Wednesday, hasn't it? So we had a few process  
22 observations on the board over there. Is there anything  
23 you want to say just kind of in summary about the sort of  
24 objector process and what we can learn and that kind of  
25 stuff?

1           Amy, please.

2           MS. ROBINSON: Amy Robinson. I don't have  
3 anything huge to say, but I just really appreciated the  
4 process and all the hard work that you guys have  
5 undergone and the team to put together these briefs and  
6 really try to prepare us to be as informed and lead a  
7 process that we can participate in as thoroughly as  
8 possible and your sincerity in that as well in trying to  
9 hear what we're saying. I appreciate that.

10          MS. TRIBE: Thank you.

11          Anybody else?

12          MS. EISEN: Hilary again. Yeah, I just  
13 want to say we really appreciate the opportunity to have  
14 this sort of conversation and the whole objection  
15 process, being able to have another bite at the apple and  
16 say We still have these concerns and have conversation  
17 around it. It's something we really appreciate it.

18          MS. TRIBE: So that part of the regs.  
19 That's not the only reason they're doing it, but it  
20 really helps.

21          MR. COVILL: David, Snowmobile Association.  
22 Yeah, I'd just like to say that we're not here  
23 necessarily for our own personal agendas. We're here  
24 representing sometimes very large numbers of people  
25 that -- and I personally am thankful that we have that

1 opportunity to say something and to have our voices  
2 heard. Just the five of us at this table, there's  
3 probably a couple of man years tied up in this process,  
4 not to mention all of you sitting at the --

5 MS. TRIBE: I thought you were going to say  
6 woman years.

7 MR. COVILL: Human years. There's been a  
8 lot of after-work hours, a lot of weekends, a lot of  
9 phone calls. And it's -- it's -- we're all here hopeful  
10 that our concerns will have been heard and hopefully a  
11 lot of them met with the final decision comes out as.  
12 And just want to also say thanks for being patient with  
13 all of us because sometimes we can be a little demanding.

14 MS. TRIBE: Thank you, David.

15 You know, I don't work for the Forest Service.  
16 I don't live here. Bambi and I have worked together  
17 before Going-To-The-Sun highway and a couple things like  
18 that that were noncontentious. So I just want to say as  
19 a citizen who's sort of independent floating around out  
20 there, it's a wonderful thing to see citizens at work  
21 like this. And so as a facilitator, thanks for letting  
22 me push you around.

23 Bambi, thanks for your help, it was invaluable.

24 And thanks for inviting me to come.

25 Go for it.

1           MS. MARTEN: So I will just -- and there's  
2 a lot of people over the last three days that have been  
3 in and out. And I'm going to do my best to put this  
4 email out to everybody and the objectors as well. But  
5 for the folks here and folks on the phone for today, I  
6 just want to express my sincere gratitude for the last  
7 several days, for your time and energy over the last  
8 several years, with Chip and the staff here on the  
9 Flathead as well as across the region. And I know you do  
10 much more than just the Flathead and you are just  
11 involved citizens. And from my perspective and the  
12 unique role that I'm in, it has been extremely helpful.  
13 This process helps me tremendously.

14           And although we have the regulations and it  
15 gives you kind of the sideboards, how you design it and  
16 how you set it up and try to facilitate the interactions  
17 is just that. It's kind of an experiment. And so I  
18 appreciate your patience with how we did this. I  
19 appreciate any feedback we've gotten through the week  
20 but, also, if you think of something after this. Because  
21 there's several more of these coming up, at least in the  
22 region, that I'll be involved with. So I'm always open  
23 to learn what may have been changed or done a little  
24 differently or things that -- just like the observations  
25 we made over the last couple days from that.

1           And I would say that, David, you kind of  
2 sparked -- everything's been heard. I'm not going to  
3 guarantee the decision is going to please everybody or  
4 you're going to get everything that everybody wants just  
5 because, as you guys know, of the diversity. But I can  
6 sincerely say from myself and on behalf of Chip and the  
7 staff definitely heard throughout the process and through  
8 the objections are very much appreciated.

9           And before I turn it over to Chip to close this  
10 out as the host, I would be remiss if I didn't say a big  
11 thank you to Chip and his staff and then the folks in the  
12 regional office. Because the work over the last several  
13 years, the foundation, just everything has set up for a  
14 very successful process and dialogue this week but much  
15 more going forward with the management of the public  
16 lands on behalf of everyone in this room and everyone  
17 who's been involved for now and for future generations.  
18 And could not have done it without all of your passion  
19 and dedication throughout and your continued passion and  
20 dedication. So many thanks to Chip and staff and staff  
21 at the regional office and others that I know have been  
22 part of this with all of you in partnership as well.

23           So with that I'm going to let Chip close us out  
24 as the host here from the Flathead and we'll go from  
25 there.

1                   MR. WEBER: Thanks. And I'll be pretty  
2 brief because it's o'beer:30 or almost.

3                   But I will tell you I started with the word  
4 "curiosity" and, literally, I woke up last night at two  
5 o'clock in the morning. It wasn't because any golden  
6 retriever was nudging me. I don't do that very often.  
7 But I was thinking about the take-aways for me from this  
8 week. And I think that word that I would close with is  
9 probably "gratitude." And I want you to understand, and  
10 I thought a lot about this, that I'm certainly grateful  
11 with people who agree with what I think and the way I try  
12 to solve problems and stuff like that. But that's really  
13 not what this week is about. This is about people who  
14 still disagree or want something more than what I've done  
15 in this decision. And I want you to understand that I'm  
16 equally grateful that you are at the table and still  
17 rowing hard with your oars in the water to try to make  
18 this better. So it's harder, you know, for all of us, I  
19 think, to be grateful for the disagreement than it is for  
20 the agreement. It's sort of nice to go have beer with  
21 people who agree with you. But I'm grateful to those of  
22 you who stuck with me even in disagreement. So thank you  
23 for that. I hope you have a really wonderful weekend and  
24 you keep working with us on all the work to come. Thank  
25 you.

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MS. TRIBE: Thank you.  
(Proceedings concluded at 2:17 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE  
STATE OF MONTANA )  
: ss.  
County of Flathead)

I, BAMBI A. GOODMAN, Registered Professional  
Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter and Notary Public  
duly qualified in and for the State of Montana, residing  
in Whitefish, Montana do hereby certify:

That I was duly authorized to and did report  
the dialogue in the above-entitled matter.

I further certify that the foregoing pages of  
this transcript represent a true and accurate  
transcription of my original stenographic notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand  
this 14th day of May, 2018.

BAMBI A. GOODMAN, RPR, CRR and  
Official Freelance Court Reporter  
Residing in Whitefish, Montana

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