

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

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Fortine, Montana NOV 15 1968

TO : George A. Mahrt, Forest Supervisor

DATE: November 14, 1968

FROM : Dean J. Weeden, District Ranger

SUBJECT: Recreation Management (Ten Lakes Scenic Area)

Act. *11/12*

① FS *11/12*

ABM *11/15*

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I am presently at a stalemate in formulation of work plans for this coming year on the above designated area. At present, there are many and varied plans and ideas on the management and direction we should take on this area. In light of recent congressional interpretations on wilderness management, I feel a review is in order. I would like to propose a meeting with your staff to discuss the following items.

Classification

1. Should the area remain as a Scenic Area?
2. Will it qualify as a future Wilderness Area under the FSM 2321 criteria?
3. Will increased future demand overuse this area and require a later reclassification?
4. Addition of 1500 acres of the area from the southern boundary, around upper St. Clair Creek, Fern Garden, Therriault Pass, Stahl Peak.

Development

1. Review the District proposal for
 - a. Trail maintenance
 - b. Sanitary facilities
 - c. Camping facilities
 - d. Special Use permits
 - e. Stock facilities

Meeting held 12/2

Please set up meeting w/ staff 12/2

Uses

1. Review the followings
 - a. Existing
 1. Horse travel
 2. Foot travel
 3. Winter use, sno-mobilers, skiers, etc.
 - b. Future - proposed Glacier Park-Grave Creek, Libby Dam Highway.

Meeting Dec 2 0900



The following is the District's recommendation for the area.

This area presently falls under a Class IV, Outstanding Natural Area classification and in the Multiple Use plan as an SP-1 Special Zone. There is a total of 6,541 acres presently classified as scenic area. It is felt that it is questionable whether or not the area would qualify as a Wilderness Area due to the following reasons.

1. Size: The majority of the Wilderness Areas in the west are of a much larger acreage.
2. Man: The imprint of man is well defined in the area from past mining and recreation use.
3. Solitude: The area is surrounded by extensive clearcuts and logging on one side and towns and rural developments on the other side. Solitude under a wilderness concept is questionable.
4. Use: The area is small and present use is concentrated around the lakes. Action is needed to spread out the use through new developments.

Conclusion

It is felt that this area should be kept in a Scenic Area classification because of the following.

1. Once the area is classified as a Wilderness Area, it will be difficult to maintain and develop under the pending wilderness management concept recently set forth.
2. Scenic area classification would allow development and expansion of the area to best handle the public needs. Present use is limited to persons with horses and limited foot traffic to Wolverine Lake and Combs Cabins. No facilities are available for the overnight hiker. Due to the elevation, inclement weather and short summer season, I feel this area would justify construction of several small shelters. The District proposes construction of two shelters - one on Trail 88 on the divide between Bluebird Lake and Wolverine Lake of native stone and one of wood at Rainbow Lake. This would enhance the area and spread out the use concentration around the Wolverine Lake. Construction of these shelters would help in future removal of Combs Cabin as far as the public is concerned. Small shelters would be an inducement for the hikers and horseriders to use this area.
3. Winter Use: The number of sno-mobilers has increased tremendously in the past several years and winter use of this area should be considered. Can we only allow limited summer use of this area when sno-mobile traveling in ten feet of snow could use the area with no possibility of damage to the ground? The entire north end is already receiving heavy use by sno-mobiles. Can we afford to police the Ten Lakes and keep them out? I feel year around recreation on the National Forest should be

promoted. From the winter use already shown on the north end, people counts indicate there may be a higher winter use than in the summer. Plans are presently underway to mark several sno-mobile trails in the north end for safety reasons. In conclusion, a decision should be made and direction set in management of this area. This entire Ten Lakes, Wigwam, Grave Creek area will tie in with the Libby Dam and the proposed highway in the future and it has a high recreation potential. I feel a meeting would be beneficial with a team approach to the many facets to be considered. If you consider this request justified, please set a meeting time and place for your convenience.

Dean J. Weeden