



Letter: Unbalanced plan wouldn't allow diverse forest use

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Custer National Forest in Montana has released a travel plan for the Pryor Mountains, and they have asked for public comments.

In Custer National Forest's preferred alternative (Alternative B), the forest reports that two-thirds of the Pryors (USFS) would be in motorized settings. This is unnecessary and not acceptable. It is not balanced. The rich and unique Pryor Mountains are popular for hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, bird-watching and exploring everything from fossils and rock art to ice caves and rare wildflowers. They are also popular for ATV and dirt bike riding. The point is, there should be room enough for everyone, yet the Forest Service is fostering a plan that would manage the Pryors primarily for the benefit of ATVs and motorcycles.

This is a mistake. Don't allow this, please. ATVs have a place in the Pryors, but they shouldn't be the dominant force that they are becoming. With a balanced plan for ever-increasing levels of motorized use, we'll all be able to enjoy the landscape in years to come. The Forest Service has put forth Alternative C that is not its recommended plan. It is a better plan, but it has a serious flaw. Alternative C should be adopted but only if it is modified to limit the extension of two-track route No. 2088. Instead of extending this route for miles into a quiet and sensitive wilderness area, please consider limiting No. 2088 so there is no motorized use west of Crater Ice Cave.

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Big Sky