

TETON COUNTY WYOMING PUBLIC LANDS INITIATIVE: TURIANO TEAM PROPOSAL

SUMMARY

Protect roadless areas on US Forest Service lands in Teton County, Wyoming using a mix of two designations: National Backcountry Conservation Areas (NBCAs), and Wilderness Areas (WAs). Recommendations for new federal Wilderness Areas within Grand Teton National Park, and on John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway lands administered by Grand Teton National Park, are included in this proposal.

This summary has four parts:

- (1) Declaration of local, state, and national interest management themes for NBCAs;
- (2) Identification of areas recommended for National Backcountry Conservation Area designation, with particular terms for some of the areas;
- (3) Generic guidance applicable to all NBCAs; and
- (4) Recommendations for the adjustment of boundaries to existing Wilderness Areas and the establishment of new Wilderness Areas

(1) Declaration of principal management themes for NBCAs

Subject to existing state and federal laws and regulations, unless otherwise specifically addressed hereinbelow, the Congress of the United States declares these integrating themes and general guidance for federal public lands in Teton County, Wyoming to be in the local, state, and national interest:

- A. Preserve and protect the area's ecosystem in order to ensure a healthy environment, community and economy for current and future generations.
- B. Provide for the perpetual welfare of the Teton-Yellowstone ecosystem, operating on its own, as a wild place, with all of its native component parts and systems respected, active on their own schedules, and viable.
- C. Establish and support such systems of management as will provide for the enduring public use and enjoyment of the public estate.

Compliance with these management themes may require periodic management actions by the Forest Service. Using the standard decision-making protocols of the National Environmental Policy Act, (NEPA), and the National Forest Management Act, (NFMA), the agency is authorized to take such steps and impose such regulations as are reasonable and necessary to achieve these goals. Where a particular use or generally permitted activity conflicts with these overriding goals, the conflict will be resolved in favor of the overriding goals.

(2) National Backcountry Conservation Areas, with detailed recommendations for particular roadless areas:

Each area below has a particular map delineating its boundaries and a descriptive chapter noting significant features. Those maps and descriptions are a part of this Teton County Proposal and Summary.

- **Pacific – Blackrock Creek NBCA, 25,715.2 acres**
 - Establish the Pacific - Blackrock National Backcountry Conservation Area (NBCA)
 - Enforce winter non-motorized restrictions within the specific areas, (West Angle, Angle Conehead, and Breccia) highlighted on the Pacific – Blackrock map
- **Spread Creek – Gros Ventre River NBCA, 250,976.0 acres**
 - Establish the Spread Creek – Gros Ventre River NBCA
 - Recognize and maintain the National Continental Divide Snowmobile Trail and the National Continental Divide Scenic Trail
 - Provide for continued motorized recreational use on a single-track trail at Horsetail Creek, and on existing open ATV trails between Slate and Dallas creeks
 - Enforce a winter non-motorized recreation restriction in west Turpin ridge area as shown on the attached map.
- **Phillips Ridge NBCA, 9,958.4 acres**
 - Enforce an all-season non-motorized restriction within the specific area on the slopes of Mt. Glory highlighted on the Phillips Ridge – Mt. Glory map
 - Enforce a winter non-motorized recreation restriction within the specific area in the vicinity of Rendezvous Mountain highlighted on the Phillips Canyon – Mt. Glory map
- **Palisades NBCA, 82,457.6 acres**
 - Establish the Palisades NBCA
 - Allow a single specified trans-Palisades two-wheeled motorbike route through Mosquito Creek and then along the ridge dividing Mail Cabin Creek from the upper east fork of Palisades Creek - on attached map
 - Enforce an all-season non-motorized restriction within the specific area called out as the Stateline-Mosquito Designated Non-Motorized Area on the Palisades map, 14,227 acres.
 - The eleven public access trailheads identified on the attached map shall comprise the complete set of official, maintained trailheads for the Palisades area within Teton County, Wyoming; the Forest Service may maintain and improve these trailheads as necessary for public safety and operating efficiency.
 - Weigh Station
 - Coal Creek
 - Teton Pass
 - Shovel Slide
 - Phillips Bench pullout
 - Old Pass Road
 - Mosquito Creek
 - Munger Mountain trailhead

- North Fork Fall Creek Road (Red Top)
 - Dog Creek Feedground
 - Cabin Creek pullout
- Subject to standard commercial use permitting terms, allow sixty-five (65) user days for helicopter access winter recreation
- Northern Palisades Mechanized Recreation Area, 27,494.4 acres
 - Establish a summer recreation area for mechanized travel (two-wheeled mountain bikes) on trails A, B, C, D, G, and F delineated on the attached Northern Palisades Mechanized Recreation map
- **Cache-Game NBCA, 15,980.8 acres**
 - Establish the Cache-Game National Backcountry Conservation Area (NBCA).
 - The standard terms for all National Backcountry Conservation Areas as designated under this Chapter shall apply.
- **Curtis Canyon NBCA, 12,051.2 acres**
 - Establish the Curtis Canyon National Backcountry Conservation Area (NBCA)
 - The standard terms for all National Backcountry Conservation Areas as designated under this Chapter shall apply
- **Munger Mountain NBCA, 12,940.8 acres**
 - Establish the Munger Mountain National Backcountry Conservation Area (NBCA)
 - The standard terms for all National Backcountry Conservation Areas as designated under this Chapter shall apply

Total acres in NBCA designation: 410,080.0

(3) National Backcountry Conservation Areas, common guidelines:

Unless specifically modified by the foregoing provisions related to particular places, management of National Backcountry Conservation Areas will have these shared, common, generic characteristics:

- **Cooperate with WGFD to keep wildlife viable.** The Forest Service shall cooperate with the Wyoming Department of Game and Fish, and, when required by law, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to manage wildlife habitat in such as fashion as will allow for the full range of native fish and wildlife species, and plants, to thrive. These actions may include restrictions on recreational use and the active engagement of programs to control and arrest the spread of noxious and invasive plant and animal species.
- **Set NBCA boundaries.** When near established roadways, National Backcountry Conservation Area boundaries are generally established a distance of 50 meters from the road.
- **No new roads.** No new passenger vehicle roads may be constructed or permitted within NBCAs.
- **No temporary roads, no aircraft landing, no motorboats, no buildings.** Except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this Chapter (including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area), or as permitted hereinabove in the Palisades, there shall be no temporary road, no motorized access equipment except for oversnow motorized equipment, no motorboats, no landing of aircraft, and no structure or installation within any NBCA.
- **Let vestigial roads molder; protect resources.** Where moldering and currently closed roads from historic commercial logging or other activities exist within the boundaries of NBCAs, managers may take such actions as they deem appropriate to limit damage to resources associated with road-induced erosion from slope failures, snowmelt impacts, and stormwater runoff, and otherwise allow, facilitate, or accelerate the reversion of these vestigial roads to trails or undeveloped land.
- **No recreational helicopter access.** Except as specifically permitted in the Palisades NBCA, helicopter-access recreation is prohibited. Where the control of invasive plant and animal species or human rescue operations reasonably require the overflight, aerial treatment, and landing of aircraft, including helicopters, such use of aircraft shall be permitted.
- **Dirt-based motorized recreation limited to specific areas as set forth in Part (2).** Motorized summertime recreational use shall be limited to the network of Forest Service System Roads.
- **Mountain bike and snowmachine use allowed.** Apart from the specific mountain bike and snowmachine guidelines set forth above for the Palisades NBCA, and for designated non-motorized winter areas at Mt. Glory, Rendezvous Mountain, West Angle, Angle-Conehead, and Breccia, mountain bike and snowmachine uses are allowed in NBCAs.
- **No timber fuels reduction projects.** The Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, P.L. 108-148, and any fuels reduction projects authorized thereunder, shall have no legal force or effect in NBCAs.

- **No commercial logging.** Commercial timber removal shall be prohibited within NBCAs.
- **No oil and gas leasing or development, no commercial mineral extraction.** Within designated NBCAs, this chapter shall prevent any activity, including prospecting, leasing, or other forms of contracting or sale, for the purpose of gathering information about or exploiting for commerce mineral or other hydrocarbon resources.
- **USFS Travel Management Planning to continue.** NBCAs are subject to the usual USFS travel planning and management - this gives the managing agency common-sense flexibility to open and close trails as things change in the years ahead. Travel management will follow the existing travel management public process.
- **Dams, power projects, transmission lines, cell phone towers.** Within NBCAs there will be no: prospecting for water resources, new water retention reservoirs, water-conservation works, hydropower projects, transmission lines, cell phone towers, signal relay stations.
- **Commercial guiding services allowed.** Commercial guiding services may be performed within NBCAs to the extent necessary for activities that are proper for realizing the recreational or other backcountry conservation purposes of the areas.
- **Livestock grazing permitted; allotment retirement allowed.** The grazing of livestock, where established prior to the date of the enactment of this act, shall be permitted to continue subject to such reasonable regulations as deemed necessary by Forest Service, provided, however, that the Forest Service shall have the authority to permanently retire such grazing allotments as may have been administratively retired prior to the date of the enactment of this act or which may subsequently be retired with the consent of the then-permitted grazing allotment holder.
- **Inholdings, State lands.** The Forest Service may acquire privately owned land or State of Wyoming lands within the perimeter of any NBCA if (1) the owner agrees to such acquisition or (2) the acquisition is specifically authorized by Congress.
- **Ok to receive gifts of land in or adjacent to NBCAs.** The Forest Service may accept gifts or bequests of land within NBCAs. The Forest Service may also accept gifts or bequests of land adjacent to NBCAs.

(4) WILDERNESS ADDITIONS

The following areas shall be added to the National Wilderness Preservation System:

- (1) Beaver-Beard Addition to the Jedediah Smith Wilderness, 1,382.4 acres
- (2) Beaver Mountain and Willow Creek Wilderness Area, 25,721.6 acres
- (3) Boulder Creek Addition to the Gros Ventre Wilderness, 3,148.8 acres
- (4) Camp Creek Addition to the Gros Ventre Wilderness, 3,257.6 acres, (provided, however, that the natural gas pipeline that bisects the area shall have its own maintenance corridor for exclusive maintenance use by the holder of the pipeline easement).
- (5) Game Creek North Fork Addition to the Jedediah Smith Wilderness, 1,299.2 acres
- (6) Grizzly Lake Addition to the Gros Ventre Wilderness, 4,441.6 acres
- (7) Jackpine-North Boone Addition to the Jedediah Smith Wilderness, 13,529.6 acres
- (8) Shoal Creek Wilderness Addition to the Gros Ventre Wilderness, 11,801.6 acres
- (9) USDI-Grand Teton National Park: Two Ocean Lake Addition to the Teton Wilderness, 20,850 acres
- (10) USDI-Grand Teton National Park: Teton Range Wilderness Area, 122,604 acres
- (11) USDI-John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway Wilderness Area, 21,500 acres

The following area shall be removed from the National Wilderness Preservation System:

- (1) Pinnacle Wilderness Subtraction from the Jedediah Smith Wilderness, 201 acres

Net total acres in Wilderness Area portion of proposal: 228,202