

Swan View Coalition *Nature and Human Nature on the Same Path*



3165 Foothill Road, Kalispell, MT 59901

swanview.org & swanrange.org

ph/fax 406-755-1379

November 15, 2012

Greg Poncin - Kalispell Unit Manager DNRC
655 Timberwolf Parkway
Kalispell, MT 59901-1215

Re: Comments on Spencer Mountain Area as PDF to gponcin@mt.gov

Dear Greg;

This letter is in response to your 11/2/12 Scoping Notice for Proposed Land Use Authorization on State Trust Lands in the Spencer Mountain Area.

1. We support the previous proposal by DNRC, Whitefish Legacy Partnership and the City of Whitefish to secure public recreation and trails north of Highway 93 in the Beaver-Skyles area. In this regard we have signed onto WLP's letter to the Land Board.
2. We support WLP's proposal for the Spencer Mountain area south of Highway 93 and the Trail Runs Through it Master Plan, as summarized in your Scoping Notice, to provide quality trails and trail experiences for horseback riders, hikers and mountain bikers. This will go far to satisfy such user demand in the Flathead Valley.
3. We ask you to prepare an EA for the Spencer Mountain Area, coordinating with the Forest Service and other land managers to set the assessment within the context of recreation opportunities that either already exist in the Flathead or are needed.
4. We ask that the EA set forth clear criteria and standards for determining what previously unauthorized "free-ride" bicycle features will be removed, retained or reconstructed to protect public resources and public safety. We do not want the taxpayer left on the hook for injuries that thus far include a broken femur and injured spinal cord on Spencer Mountain. We note the TRTI Master Plan states "defined play areas" for equestrian or motorized use should be investigated so they are separate from but integrated into the main trail. We think a separate "free-ride" biking area should also be considered as one means to resolve the dilemma on Spencer Mountain.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Keith J. Hammer
Chair