



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Helena National Forest

2880 Skyway Drive
Helena, MT 59601
406-449-5201

File Code: 1920

Date: July 25, 2003

Dear Travel Plan Participant:

The Helena National Forest is currently in the process of revising its travel management plan. The intent of this mailing is to seek additional public comment and to provide a general update on where the travel planning process is.

Travel management revisions for the Blackfoot, Divide and South Belts planning areas were originally initiated during the winter of 2000-2001. Public involvement during this first revision effort resulted in several hundred comments. Travel planning was reinitiated on April 24, 2003 with a mailing presenting the public with two alternatives: Alternative 1 - the No Action alternative (which includes the existing travel plan and the Montana/Dakotas OHV Decision), and Alternative 2 - the Proposed Action alternative. We provided a comment period for the public to respond to the information presented and received numerous comments. Utilizing comments from these public outreach efforts and ongoing data collection and analyses, the Forest Service is developing alternatives to the proposed action. These alternatives are currently in the conceptual stage.

Because of the importance and sensitivity of travel management decisions, it is our desire to make these conceptual alternatives available to the public for an additional opportunity to comment. We are inviting the public to review the concept maps and identify roads, trails and places that are important to them and submit their proposed changes and additions on the enclosed maps for consideration in the planning process.

Conceptual alternatives specific to the travel planning area(s) that you expressed interest in can be found in the attachment(s). The comments received from this public outreach effort, and any additional information that is developed, will be used in refining the attached concepts into alternatives for the draft environmental impact statement. Please use the attached form to submit your comments. If the form does not provide adequate room for you to comment, feel welcome to add pages to it.

We thank you for your earlier input and believe that we now have a pretty full picture of the wide number of overall issues and concerns tied to the travel decision. We do feel the need to better lock in on the specific roads, trails, and areas that you feel logically belong in one alternative or another. In the interest of being better able to utilize your comments, we are asking that your comments be as specific as possible and that you provide input to us by September 18, 2003. Even if you do not have additional information to provide at this time, we will continue to maintain your name on the travel planning mailing list. Additional opportunities for public involvement will include area-specific open house meetings and field trips. Field trips will be available upon request and schedules will be publicly announced as they are set up. The open houses are scheduled as follows:



COMMUNITY	MEETING PLACE	TIME	DATE
Elliston	Elliston School	4pm – 8pm	Aug. 4
Helena	FS-Supervisor's Office	4pm – 8pm	Aug. 5
Townsend	Schools Library	4pm – 8pm	Aug. 6
White Sulphur Springs	City Hall	4pm – 8pm	Aug. 7
Lincoln	Community Center	4pm – 8pm	Aug. 13 & Sept. 3
Marysville	School House	4pm – 8pm	Aug. 11
Helmville	Community Hall	4pm – 8pm	Aug. 19

If you need additional information or attachments for other areas please contact the Helena Forest Supervisor's Office or appropriate Ranger District at the phone numbers shown below, or if you have access to the Internet, log on at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/helena/projects>.

<p>FOREST WIDE TRAVEL PLAN COORDINATOR Chuck Neal, Travel Planner Coordinator (406) 449-5201 ex. 277 Helena Forest Supervisors Office 2880 Skyway Dr. Helena, MT 59602</p>	<p>SOUTH BELTS TEAM LEADER Mike Cole, District Ranger or Beth Ihle, South Belts Team Leader (406) 266-3425 Townsend Ranger District 415 South Front St. Townsend, MT 59644</p>
<p>DIVIDE TEAM LEADER Duane Harp, District Ranger or Kurt Cuneo, Divide Team Leader (406) 449-5490 Helena Ranger District 2001 Poplar Street Helena, MT 59601</p>	<p>BLACKFOOT TEAM LEADER Amber Kamps, District Ranger or Martie Schramm, Blackfoot Team Leader (406) 362-4265 Lincoln Ranger District 1569 Highway 200 Lincoln, MT 59639</p>

We plan to have a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for these planning areas available for the public in the spring of 2004 and a Final Environmental Impact Statement available in the summer of 2004.

Also, the draft environmental impact statement for the North Belts travel planning area is available. If you have not already received a copy or summary of this document and would like to have one, contact Beth Ihle at (406) 266-3425.

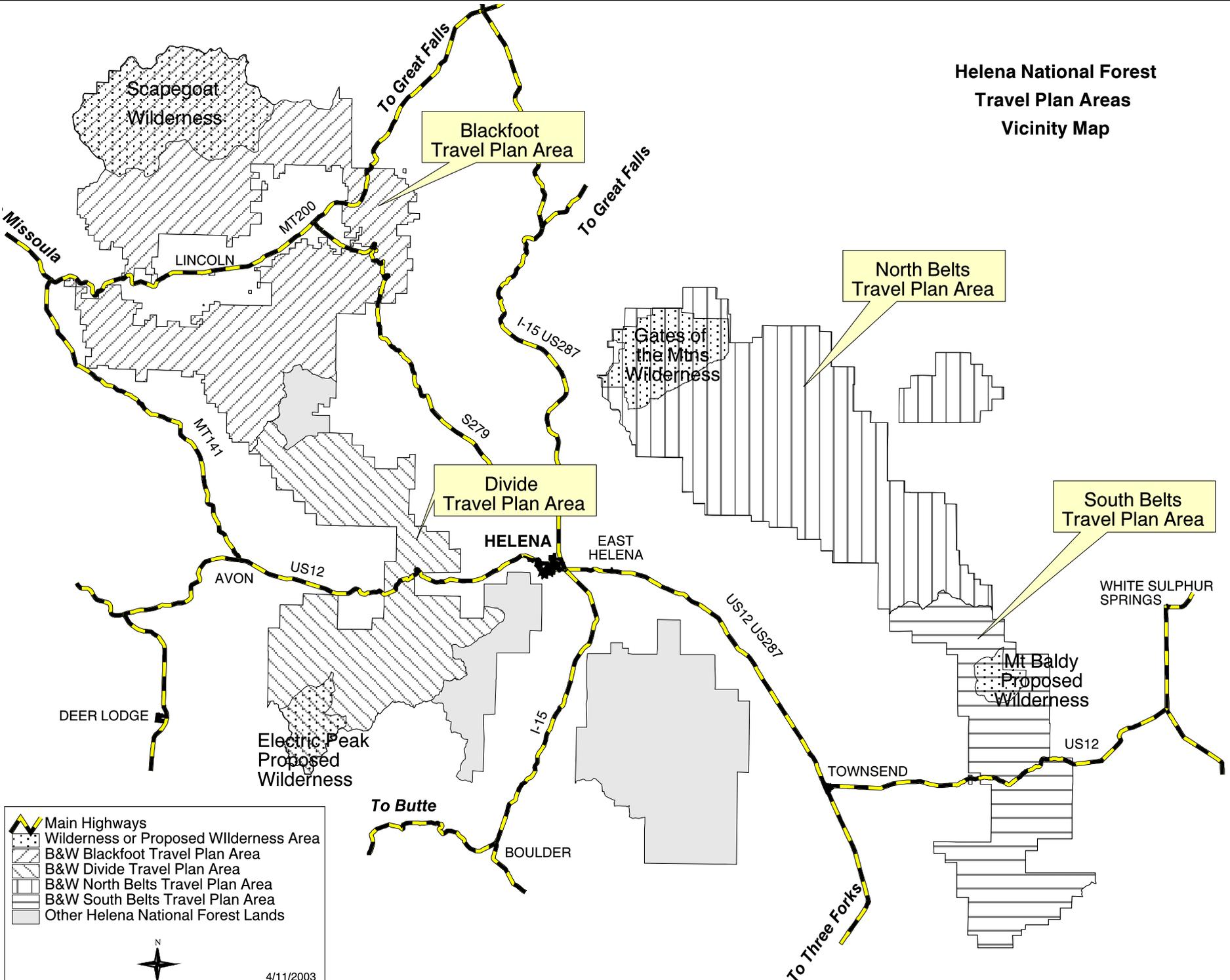
Thank you for your interest in travel planning on the Helena National Forest.

Sincerely,

THOMAS J. CLIFFORD
 Supervisor, Helena National Forest

Attachment(s): Conceptual Maps and summary of Conceptual Alternatives

Helena National Forest Travel Plan Areas Vicinity Map



	Main Highways
	Wilderness or Proposed Wilderness Area
	B&W Blackfoot Travel Plan Area
	B&W Divide Travel Plan Area
	B&W North Belts Travel Plan Area
	B&W South Belts Travel Plan Area
	Other Helena National Forest Lands

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4/11/2003