

## COMPARISON OF WILDERNESS RATINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is a comparison of the wilderness ratings for specific roadless areas in The Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership Agreement dated April 2006, between non-USFS parties, and the wilderness ratings of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge N.F. as found on their website in Appendix C of the DEIS on the new forest plan 2007. According to the official rating protocol of BDNF a roadless area must receive a minimum rating of 25 to be considered for wilderness recommendation. The maximum possible score is 40.

Roadless Area Name	BDNF Rating	Agreement Rating	Recommended By BDNF	Comments
North Big Hole	18.17	25-32	Doubtful	Agreement lumps these 3 together in 52,622 acres and claims that BDNF recommended 25,094
Rock Creek	Not Rated	18	?	Not found among the list of BDNF roadless areas
East Pintler	Not rated	29	?	Not found among the list of BDNF roadless areas
West Pioneers	Not rated	27	?	It is interesting that the Agreement selected only a portion of the unrated Wilderness Study Area. BDNF comments indicate the roadless acreage outside the WSA is not eligible for wilderness
East Pioneers	24.84 & 31.87	28	Partly	Agreement selected more acreage than BDNF Parts of this area are highly mineralized. Includes private land, mining claims and mining roads
Snowcrest	37.1	38	Yes	
Cowboy Heaven	31.93*	32-34	Yes	*BDNF only lists 7750 acres for this area. Agreement includes 17,811 Includes cattle grazing
West Big Hole	28.27*	29	No	*BDNF rated 2 sub areas that totaled 71,602 acres at 28.27 and the rest under 25. The over 25 acreages are not touching each other. Agreement selected 92,795. 6.1 billion dollars of mineral potential in the area. Active mining and mines under development even in one of the highly rated areas.
Italian Peaks	26.17*	24-33	Partly	*BDNF rated only 1 subarea of 12,972 acres over 25. Agreement selected 29,522
Stony Mtn	26.6	27	No	Includes 80 acres private, oil and gas leases, some mining claims, an active mining road.
Quigg Peak	30.2*	30	Partly	* BDNF rating based on reduced boundary 3746 acres; lower if not adjusted. Agreement included 9341 acres. Includes mining claims
Ross Fork	Not	30	No	Not found among the list of BDNF

	Rated			roadless areas
West Flint/ Dolus	26.8	27	No	Includes 120 acres of private, 5980 acres of mining claims and 9 reservoirs and 4wd roads.
Garfield Mtn/ Lima Peaks	27.43	27	No	Cattle grazing over most of the area
Electric Peak	30	30	Yes	Did not recommend the entire area. Somewhere in this roadless area there is private land, mining claims, an old mining town, old roads and a major USFS road. Cannot tell if this is within boundary of recommended wilderness.
Highlands	26.5	26	No	Includes 5680 acres of mining claims on 273 claims, 60 acres of private land and special use permits and pipelines for water use
Lost Cabin Lake	Not Rated	32		Not found among the list of BDNF roadless areas.
Mount Jefferson	37.33	35	Yes	

Many of these areas are in old mining areas and contain hundreds probably thousands of miles of roads. These roads must be identified and permission granted from county authorities to close and reclaim these roads before they can be included in wilderness or even roadless areas.

As you can see, the Agreement was arbitrary in almost half of their selections. According to the agreement map there are at least 3 separate areas that are not even included in a BDNF roadless area. Also, it appears that BDNF may have been arbitrary in their selection of wilderness recommendations and roadless designations because of the high number of non-wilderness and non-roadless features included in these areas.

## REFERENCES

BDNF roadless descriptions and maps <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/b-d/forest-plan/index-eis-vol2.shtml>

Data from the Agreement taken from **PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR THE BEAVERHEAD-DEERLODGE NATIONAL FOREST** April 2006