

1/8/2015

BEARTOOTH RD – CUSTER GALLATIN NF

BEARTOOTH MOUNTAINS



PRYOR MOUNTAINS



1/8/2015

RECREATION

DEVELOPED RECREATION:

- 16 Campgrounds
- 3 Picnic grounds
- 19 Major and 10 Minor Trailheads
- 3 Fishing Accesses
- 1 Observation Point (Vista Point)

WILDERNESS:

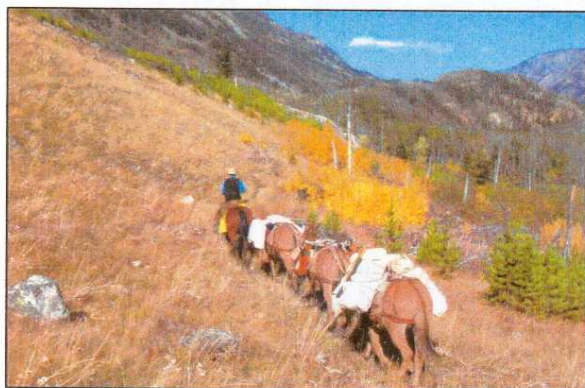
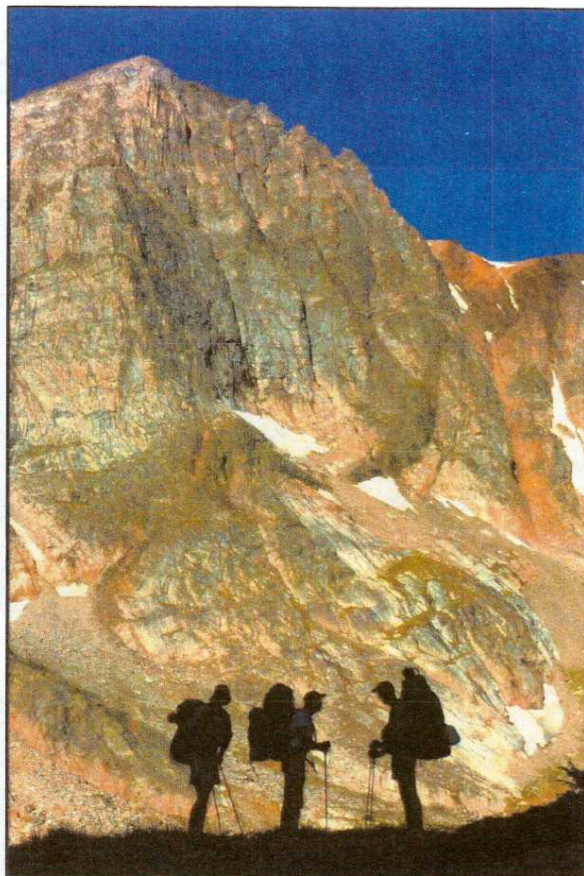
340,000 ac of the 945,00 ac AB Wilderness
= **65% of the District's land base**
11,800 ac – Lost Water Canyon WSA in the Pryors

HIGHEST POINT IN MONTANA:

Granite Peak – 12,799'
The 41 tallest named peaks in Montana are all in the
Beartooth Mountains

TRAILS:

- 273 mi non-motorized
 - majority are within A/B Wilderness
- 57 mi motorized
- 52 mi mixed use roads



2008 Beartooth Travel Plan signed,
litigated, and upheld

No winter use travel plan on the District

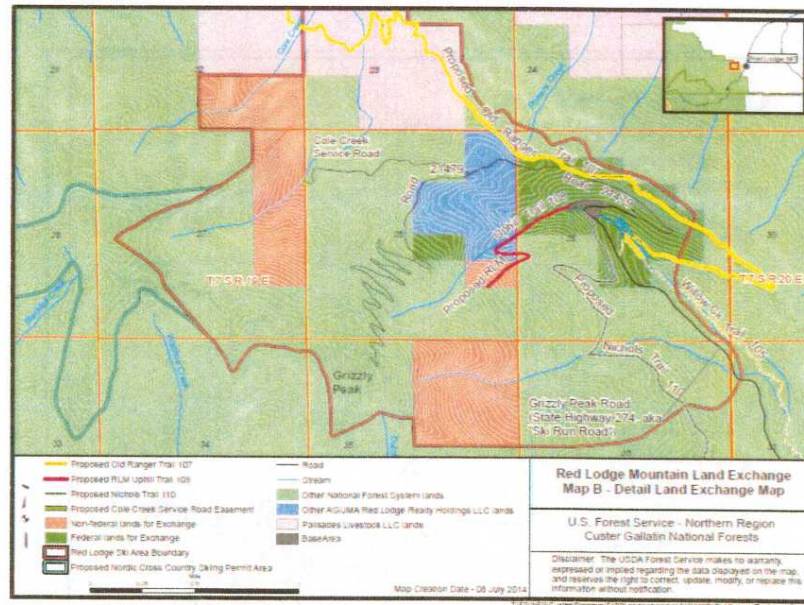


SPECIAL USES / LANDS:

- 12 Outfitter/Guide permits – camping, fishing, stock trips, technical climbing services
- 3 Organization camps
- 96 Recreation Residence permits
- Red Lodge Mountain Ski Area
- Beartooth Basin – formerly Red Lodge International Race Camp
 - Administered by Beartooth RD



- Will release scoping letter for Red Lodge Mountain Land Exchange by the end of the month

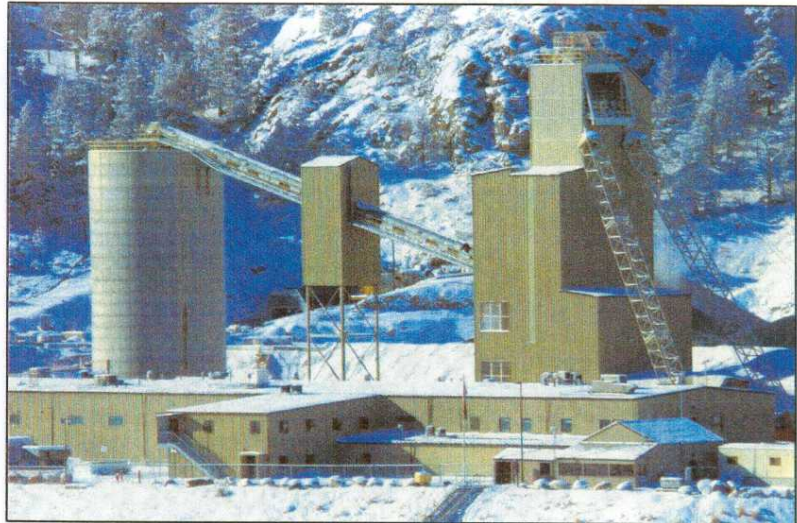


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MINERALS / GEOLOGY:

Beartooth Plateau – The Beartooth Mountains are composed of a massive block of Precambrian crystalline rock, including the Stillwater Complex. This complex contains the largest known platinum and chrome deposits and the second largest nickel deposits in the United States. The Stillwater platinum and palladium mine is located above the community of Nye. Platinum is currently trading at \$1220 / oz, and has been as high as \$2100 / oz in recent years.

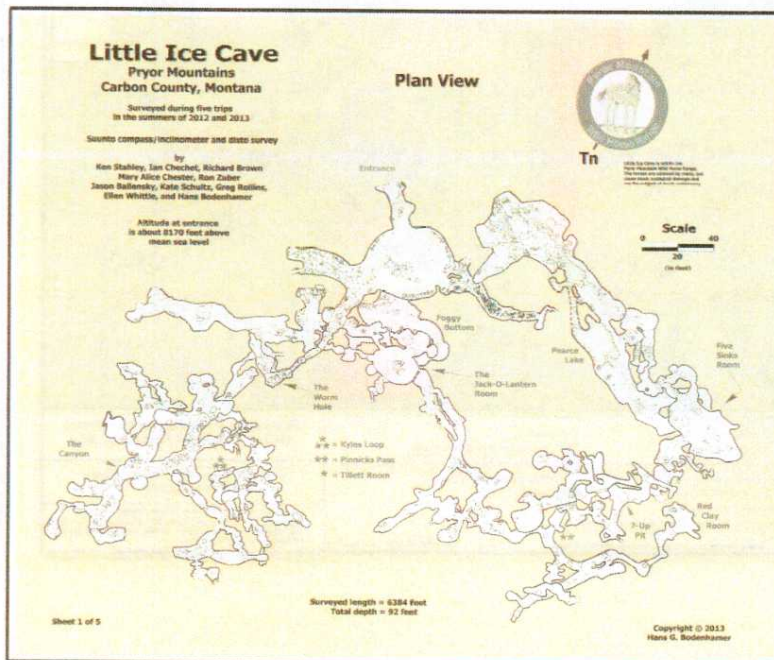
The Forest Service is currently completing environmental analysis on the proposed mine expansion involving the Benbow Portal, with a decision expected by September.



Ice Caves – Pryor Mountains

The Pryor Mountains contain the highest number of designated significant caves of any District in the Northern Region of the USFS.

Map of Little Ice Cave in the Pryors

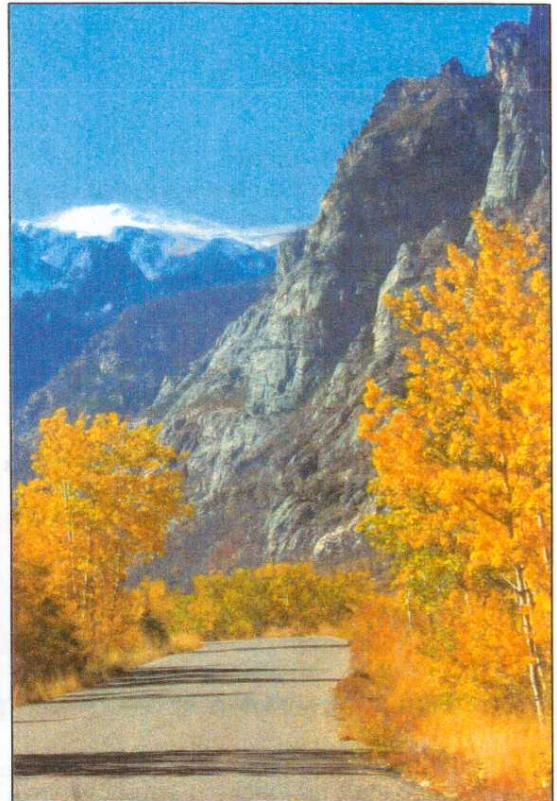


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WILDLIFE:

Aspen:

Objective is to stimulate aspen regeneration by conducting small-patch clear-cutting and selective conifer removal of decadent and conifer-encroached aspen communities, thus improving wildlife habitat.



Pikas,
Grizzly Bear,
And everything in between...



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RANGE:

22 Cattle Allotments
23 Permittees
16,330 AUM's
Pryor Mountain portion
 = 65% of District's suitable range
250 Range improvements
200 mi fence



NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL:

Annual treatments implemented for 30 yrs
 through weed crew or contract
Beartooth District is a member of the Beartooth Weed Management Area (WMA)
Successful use of biological control
Weed-free seed requirement

PRYOR MOUNTAIN WILD HORSE TERRITORY:

The Pryor Mountains are home to a nationally popular wild horse herd, made famous by the films about Cloud, the wild mustang, as shown on the PBS series Nature. The horse range is comprised of about 42,000 acres of lands from the BLM (68%), Park Service (20%), Custer NF (10%) and Private (2%). Although BLM is the lead agency, many issues are associated with the Custer NF portion. Wild horse management issues are charged with a complex mix of emotion, interagency goals, and extensive research. Interests include national, regional, and local wild horse advocates, as well as wilderness and wildlife advocates. A lawsuit filed by the Cloud Foundation has been ongoing for over 7 years at this point.



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FIRE / FUELS:

PROGRAM PRIORITIES:

- 1) Safety of the public through the use of fuels management while meeting Forest/District targets, utilizing Region 1 integrated Restoration and Protection Strategy and Custer Forest Plan direction.
- 2) Reducing fire potential in the WUI along the Beartooth Face including:
 - City of Red Lodge
 - Red Lodge Mountain Ski Area
 - Stillwater Mine
 - Recreation Residence cabins
 - Residences and improvements along the District boundary
 - Pre-planning fuels work ahead of ongoing development along the Beartooth Face
- 3) Assisting other District resource areas to achieve fuels goals associated with their programs/projects.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES:

Wildfire workload for the Beartooth District varies from year to year, but generally averages 7 fires a year and one "project" (involving a Type II incident management team) fire every other year. In recent years the fire crew has become more involved with county/State fire and averages 15 rural assists a year. Large fires tend to be down canyon wind driven events along the Beartooth face.



COMMERCIAL WOOD PRODUCTS:

Sawlogs:

- Our environmental analysis of post-Cascade Fire treatments up the West fork included the option of a commercial timber sale, but the markets were low at that point, and there was no interest.
- The Greater Red Lodge Area project will be the first commercial sawlog sale on the Beartooth District since 1993, when there were 2 sales in the Pryors.

Average of 1.2 million Board Feet comes off the District every year through Commercial and personal use firewood and Post and Pole sales.

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BEARTOOTH DISTRICT EMPLOYEES:



11 Permanent year round employees
5 Permanent seasonal employees
20-22 seasonals

ACREAGE DISTRIBUTION:

286,090 in Carbon County (roughly 75,000 acres in the Pryors, remainder in the Beartooth unit)
185,633 in Stillwater County
80,826 in Sweetgrass County
35,304 in Park County
587,853 Total

HISTORY:

How the Beartooths became a National Forest

- 1891- The Forest Reserve Act of 1891 authorizes the setting aside of land from the public domain as "forest reserves".
- 1902- The Absaroka Forest Reserve is created (Beartooth and Absaroka Mtns).
- 1903- The Absaroka Forest Reserve is added to the Yellowstone Forest Reserve.
- 1905- The Transfer Act of 1905 transfers management of forest reserves the Dept of Interior to the Dept of Agriculture's Bureau of Forestry, which is henceforth renamed US Forest Service.
- 1908- The Yellowstone Forest Reserve is split into 7 national forests, including the Beartooth National Forest (Beartooths and Pryors).
- 1932- The Beartooth National Forest joins the existing Custer National Forest.
- 2014 – The Custer and Gallatin Forests combine

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Historical touchstones –

1916 - The first commercially producing oil well in MT is drilled in the Elk Basin oil field, between the Beartooth and Pryor Mountains.

1919 - Dr. John Carl Frederick Siegfried first seeks to build a road over the Beartooths from his then-home in Bearcreek. He called it the Black and White Trail. That summer he built 13 switchbacks up the northeast side of Mt. Maurice (right). However, the project soon ran out of money and later, the highway was built in its current location.



1925 - The Mystic Lake Dam and Power Plant was built by the Montana Power Company.

Mystic Lake before the construction of the dam. (Photo courtesy of Museum of the Beartooths).



Hemingway fishing in Wyoming, 1928

1930 - Ernest Hemingway spends a summer in the Clark's Fork Valley, working on his bullfighting story, "Death in the Afternoon." In one 3-day period, he caught 92 trout, and would later declare that the best fishing in the world was on the Clark's Fork. He voiced concern that the rumored construction of a highway over the Beartooths would drive all the game away.



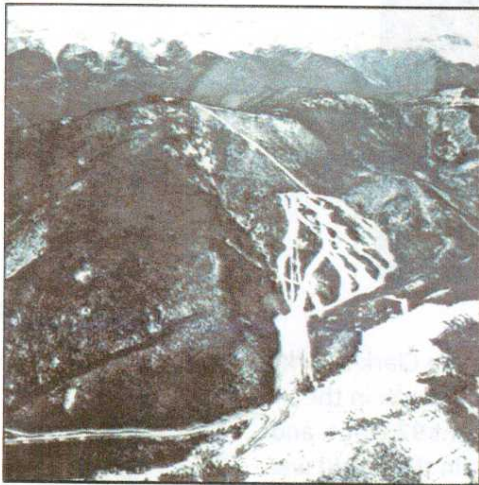
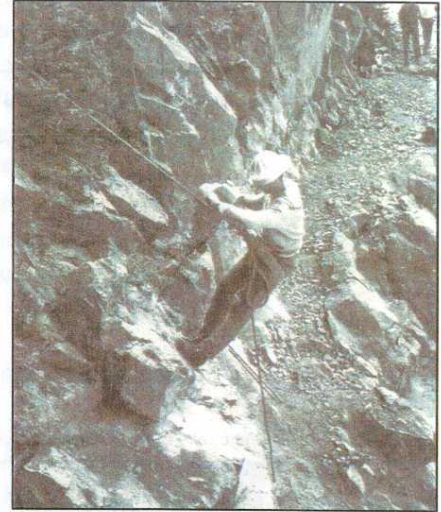
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1936 - Beartooth Highway is completed and opens to the public, on June 14.



1939 - The CCC begins construction on the East Rosebud Trail. WWII halts construction of the trail, but it is resumed in 1947. However, the entire route would not be completed until 1964.

1948- The Rock Creek and Hell Roaring Creek Fires, both human-caused, burned for three days and destroyed over 1,500 acres of timber.



1961

1960- Grizzly Peak, Inc opens a ski a ski resort with one chairlift and three runs. It was renamed Red Lodge Mountain in 1965.

- 1988** - Storm Creek Fire – 60,000 ac
- 1991** – Robertson Draw Fire – 950 ac
- 1996** – Shepard Mtn Fire – 14,890 ac
- 2000** – Willie Fire – 1503 ac
- 2002** – Red Waffle Fire – 5859 ac
- 2003** – Saderbalm Fire – 857 ac
- 2006** – Derby Fire – 207,115 ac
- 2008** – Cascade Fire – 10,173 ac
- 2011** – Hole in the Wall Fire – 6318 ac
- 2012** – Rosebud Fire – 2396 ac
- 2013** – Rock Creek Fire – 950 ac



Hole in the Wall Fire