



## Coalition for Public Access

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Transmitted via email

February 1, 2011

The Honorable Dean Heller  
Member, United States House of Representatives  
125 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Heller:

Last year a Bridgeport Ranger District (U.S. Forest Service) Acting Ranger issued a Record of Decision (ROD), on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Bridgeport Ranger District Travel Management Plan (TMP). The Coalition for Public Access (CPA) spent several hundred hours participating in the public process. The ROD did not reflect a recommendation in FEIS and we filed a formal appeal. Our appeal was overruled by Ms. Jeanne Higgins (Appeal Officer) and we wrote a letter to Ms. Higgins asking for clarification of the basis for reversing a particular recommendation in the FEIS. Several weeks went by without a response from the Forest Supervisor. Subsequently, we contacted your office requesting assistance to get a response from the Forest Service. Ms. Lesofski was very helpful and her involvement resulted in our receiving a response from Forest Supervisor Higgins.

Late last year the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) filed a lawsuit against the Forest Service challenging the same, above mentioned, ROD. While we were not in agreement with some aspects of the ROD we decided, in cooperation with the Blue Ribbon Coalition and other recreational organizations, to commit some of our limited resources to gain Intervener status in this lawsuit.

Last week we received an undated letter (enclosed) from Bridgeport District Ranger Crowley informing us that the Forest Service had decided the above mentioned ROD was not as final as previously stated. We are concerned this letter, received after the lawsuit from CBD was filed, is an attempt to comply with demands of CBD to avoid litigation. We are also concerned that it appears the F.S. has changed the rules in the middle of the game with no public review.

Would you please look into this and determine if the new procedure being utilized by the Forest Service is proper? It appears to us that the Administration which was going to be the most transparent ever is doing all of this behind closed doors. After all the effort we put into this TMP, we are very frustrated with the current direction this process is taking.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If additional information is needed please contact us.

Sincerely,  
*Signed copy on file*  
Harold Ritter  
President

Encl: Errata Notice – Bridgeport Travel Management Plan Record of Decision, Undated