
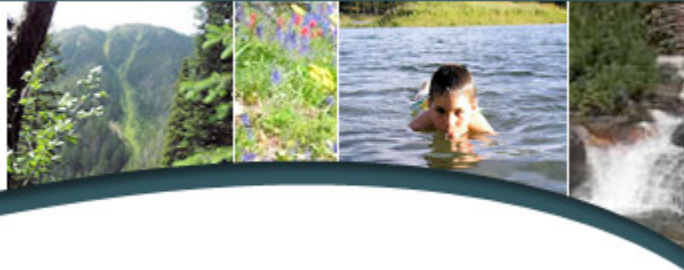


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## Comments Needed Now on North Fork Road Study

August 3, 2010

*The Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Flathead County want to prioritize improvements to the North Fork Road ahead of other county gravel roads. Does it make sense to improve this "road to nowhere" for between \$7 and \$20 million federal tax dollars because the County can't afford \$30,000 in annual maintenance? You decide!*

Dear [member\_name\_first]:

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) recently released its study on the North Fork Road corridor between Columbia Falls and the Camas entrance to Glacier National Park. MDOT will take public comment on this study through Saturday, August 10. We apologize for the short time remaining for public comment. Please take a moment now to write a brief note to MDOT. ~Thank you!



### Background

The Flathead County Commissioners apparently requested this corridor study from MDOT. The commissioners seem to want to get this road "improvement" process going - and the North Fork Road prioritized - in time for the State of Montana's turn at the federal highway tax trough just a few years from now.

*Graders on the North Fork Road  
Simple grading with some dust abatement may be the best option. However, with federal gas tax dollars available common sense may not prevail. [Write](#) the MDOT today to prevent tax dollar waste.*

*Headwaters Montana* is concerned that most possible road improvement options could usher in high speed traffic, easier access, and accelerated subdivision and bedroom community developments. Such outcomes from paving or enhanced chip-sealing and other options will lead to rapid degradation of wildlife habitat, the decline of the North



Fork's primitive, rustic character, and Glacier Park's wilderness character.

We would hate to see land subdivision and an increased human settlement of the U.S. side of the North Fork Valley after fighting for 35 years! to prevent industrial development in the British Columbia Flathead Valley.

***Points to Make***

Please take a few moments now to write the MDOT and urge them to prioritize the improvement of gravel roads in the main Flathead Valley, and not just the North Fork Road corridor between Columbia Falls and the Camas entrance to the Park. Over 700 miles of dusty, heavily used, county roads and thousands of county taxpayers stand waiting for paving, instead of the North Fork "road to nowhere".

*Polebridge's Rustic Charm*  
*Will the North Fork's character remain unaffected by improvements to the North Fork Road? We think not. Speak up now to keep this special Valley the way it is.*

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*Other points you may wish to make:*

- Restart the road study process and study all county roads to help objectify what roads to improve with federal highway tax dollars. The county commissioners took it upon themselves to prioritize the North Fork Road at the expense of other roads in the county.
- Ask the MDOT to directly address Flathead County's fiscal problems with maintaining the North Fork Road. Flathead County apparently can't afford to maintain the road. But the MDOT study does not directly address this overriding factor. Does a \$7 - 20 million dollar federal paving 'solution' really solve the County's \$30,000 (!) funding problem? What a waste of tax dollars!
- Ask the MDOT to justify their assertion that all but paving options won't lead to an increase in traffic

*A 35-Year Fight*  
*It's taken 35 years to get to a breakthrough with British Columbia to fore-go mining and energy development. Are we now prepared to squander that victory by allowing improved access and subdivision - 'a death by a thousand cuts'? Wildlife and wildlife habitat would be lost with North Fork Road improvement.*

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***Comment deadline*** is August 10, 2010. Please send your comments to: Ms. Lani Eggertsen-Goff at: [Goff@pbworld.com](mailto:Goff@pbworld.com).

For more information, please contact us at [info@headwatersmontana.org](mailto:info@headwatersmontana.org),

***~ Thank You!***

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