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Attachments: Darby Trails - Grand Opening.docx

Grand Opening of New ATV Trail System

Hamilton, Montana (July 17, 2017) – The Bitterroot National Forest, along with the Ravalli County Off Road User Association, is inviting the public to a grand opening of the new ‘Darby Trails’ on the Darby/Sula Ranger District. The new ATV trail system located east of Darby in the Sapphire Mountains boasts nearly 50 miles of motorized routes on the forest open to motorcycle and ATV travel. The new trails, which are part of the recent Darby Lumber Lands Watershed Improvement and Travel Management Project, include spectacular panoramic views of the Bitterroot Valley and Sapphire and Bitterroot Mountains.

The celebration begins at 9am on Saturday, July 22nd at Rye Creek Lodge in Darby. The event includes guided rides on both the 28-mile and 15-mile loop routes, barbecue sponsored by Al’s Cycle, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony. All ATV’s must be 50 inches or under and machines should be clean and free of weed seed. Follow signs off Highway 93 south of Darby to Rye Creek Lodge.

The new trail system utilizes formerly abandoned logging roads along with forest roads and newly constructed connector trails. The land, which was originally granted to the railroads around the turn of the century, was acquired by the Forest Service in 2005, and had extensive road systems built decades ago for logging. Unfortunately, many of the low standard roads and clear-cutting had negative impacts on the local watersheds by chronically elevating sediment levels. The Darby Lumber Lands project will help improve watershed and stream health while also creating a sustainable motorized access system. The new routes were also designed to be suitable for all riders.

The Darby Trails project received \$27,000 in grants from Polaris and Yamaha along with support from the Western Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association. For more information contact Brent Nelson at (406) 821-4844 or Ryan England at (406) 363-3433 or visit www.ravallioffroad.org.

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