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Comments:

The current wilderness management plans allows destructively large groups of up to 25 head of stock (horses and mules) and 15 people in most areas, amounts that exceed the recommended limits of eight head of stock and 12 people. The Forest Service should reduce group size limits to avoid harm. The plan should also discontinue fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, which is not ecologically sound. The plan must address contamination by human and pack animal in lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Eliminating fish stocking would likely go a long way toward solving this problem, but additional measures must be included if needed. Vacant grazing allotments in the Wildernesses should end to bet back to what is natural. Animal welfare dictates that we avoid trail construction or reconstruction in the currently trailless areas of the Absaroka Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. I support the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan; however, they must be improved by adding the entire 230,000 wild, roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommend Wilderness in the final forest plan.

The plan should prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses, and any other activities not consistent with wilderness protection, in the Recommended Wilderness areas until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.