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Comments:

Dear Forest Planners,

As an avid hiker, skier, snowshoer and backpacker, I have covered many miles of trail in the Custer-Gallatin, and am a strong supporter of increasing the level of protections as much as we can before it's too late and the wilderness character of many areas within the forest is lost to forest destruction by motorized vehicles and other uses that destroy habitat and displace wildlife.

I fully support the recommendations put forth by the Montana Wilderness Association, including but not limited to:

- Implementing the Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement

- Protecting the Crazy Mountains

- Managing recommended wilderness identically as designated wilderness (not allowing motorized/mechanized use)

I have been a resident of Bozeman for over 20 years, and have seen many changes in that span of time. It concerns me when some predict that our valley may reach 100,000 people within a decade or two. I have seen the damage that motor bikes and 4-wheelers do to trails, and cannot imagine how ugly it may be if the amount of use they receive triples in that amount of time, coinciding with the population. Let alone the displacement of wildlife due to the amount of disturbance by these users (a recent study was done showing the amount of wildlife displacement from hikers, which was surprisingly a lot- I can only imagine how bad it is from a motorbike). I am not against motorized use, but there are enough areas available for them to use without having to lose the most pristine parts of our forest to them.

I have spent many nights under the stars hearing the rare wolf howl or placing my boots in the tracks of grizzlies in places like Big Creek in the Hyalite-Porcupine WSA, and have been sad to see that year after year, it remains just that- a WSA without getting the full protection of wilderness it deserves. It is in your hands now to make that change and save it as well as many other places for future generations of humans and wildlife alike.

Please do everything you can to protect the Custer-Gallatin NF for the future by implementing wilderness, adding additional wilderness, and strengthening protections already in place. I would like many generations to be able to visit our forests and have the chance of seeing it the way I have- as a place of great beauty, full of incredible animals, and as a place of refuge.

Thank you for your consideration.