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Comments:

Comment draft plan - CGNF

May 9, 2019

Forest Plan Revision Team

PO Box 130

Bozeman, MT 59718

Dear Revision Team,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on The Custer Gallatin National Forest's Draft Management Plan. I address the management strategy for the Forest generally and specifically for the Absaroka Beartooth and Madison, Henrys Lake, and Gallatin geographic areas.

To get control of carbon emissions, we must manage our public forests as valuable irreplaceable carbon sinks rather than for timber production. The forests of the northern Rockies, particularly those of the Custer Gallatin National Forest, represent a current carbon sink whose social value vastly exceeds any possible timber value.

Locally, urban growth and advances in recreation technology impose additional pressures on these public lands. Management plans for these forests must, therefore, preserve them as a carbon resource while also protecting ecosystem biodiversity. The future of these forests and the future of humanity depend on meeting these two goals.

I recommend several revisions to the draft plan:

Ensure wildlife connectivity in portions of the Madison, Henrys Lake, and Gallatin Geographic Area.

Designate grizzly bears as a Species of Conservation Concern, for the bears themselves but also to signal the importance of this ecosystem.

Monitor recreational use, setting new standards to ensure that increasing recreation does not conflict with protection goals.

Manage and preserve existing wilderness areas.

I appreciate the many use pressures on the Custer Gallatin National Forest and accept that recreational use will necessarily grow. The Draft Management Plan includes many strong points, but it needs to record and emphasize much more clearly and explicitly the immense value of these forests as reservoirs of carbon and biodiversity.

Respectfully,

Dr. David Carlson
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