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Comments:

I would like to write to express my continued opposition to added Wilderness areas in the Gallatin national forest. Between existing wilderness, wilderness study, and Non-motorized areas we already have ample opportunities to recreate in non motorized regions. Add in seasonal restrictions and the large majority of the Forest is off limits to motorized use. As forest user who recreates in both motorized and non motorized methods I never struggle to find solitude on my hiking trips. Every aspect and mtn range in the Gallatin has ample opportunity to be totally isolated from motorized use. What I find when recreating on motorized methods is often crowded trailheads and infrastructure not ready to handle the usage. The Gallatin region continuing to experience incredible growth. This means more and more users. By adding wilderness to the region and further congesting trail systems along with the added burden of the new population we will continue to see problems. This continued bottle neck of access for methods like snowmobiles/snowbikes and dirtbikes/atv's will increase congestion, increase risk to users and overall further limitations of access.

By adding more wilderness this also continues to reduce access to remote existing wilderness. Oftentimes motorized methods are used to get users far from the main roads into the forest and then they continue on foot to hike, fish and camp in very remote existing wilderness. By adding additional wilderness and limiting access to further away that makes large swaths of the forest completely inaccessible due to the remote nature.

Many of the motorized groups also play a critical role in trail maintenance in the forest. The FS has limited resources to clear/repair trails and they are often not cleared/repared for until late in the usable season. The large portion of trails in the FS network are cleared by private citizens and are done right away when trails open for seasons. By turning areas into wilderness this means the trails will see less use, and will be increasingly hard to maintain. This increases the cost to the FS as well as greatly increases the number of trails falling into a state of disrepair.

In summary, more wilderness means less access, more congestion and a worse trail system. None of which are good things for users of the Gallatin NF