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Comments:

The USFS should strongly consider implementing the Gallatin Forest Partnership agreement reflected in alternative C of the USFS proposals for the Madison-Gallatin Ranges.

The agreement asks the USFS to recommend Wilderness for 102,000 contiguous acres between Yellowstone National Park and Hyalite Peak, ensuring north-south connectivity. The proposed area encompasses the entire Big Creek drainage, Rock Creek, and Tom Miner basins - all of which include a diversity of lower elevation habitat and significant densities of grizzly bears.

The GFP agreement also urges the Forest Service to recommend Cowboy Heaven and Quake Lake in the Madison Range as additions to the Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area.

The Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area is one of the most beloved Wilderness Areas in MT that has never realized it's original, proposed scope of size. The Quake Lake recommended Wilderness addition, South of the Taylor Hilgard section, is an extension of one of my favorite portions of that Wilderness. I would love the opportunity to hike South of the Taylor Hilgard unit and continue through Wilderness even when I reach Rock Creek. This is an area that is known for its wildlife habitat including big game like elk, moose, and bighorn sheep, as well as a landscape for grizzly bear and wolf rehabilitation.

What's more, this area is being recommended as additions to the Lee Metcalf Wilderness by a diverse group of conservation and recreationists in MT. The Gallatin Forest Partnership has come to an agreement between bikers and hikers, hunters and anglers, greenies and skiers. This consensus shows support for and benefit to all stakeholders involved---which is rare. Help honor this made in MT agreement by protecting the Madison-Gallatin Ranges.

In total, I urge the Forest Service to recommend Wilderness for over 124,000 acres in the Gallatin and Madison Ranges.

Thank you for your consideration.