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Comments:

Greetings,

I am writing to express my support the wilderness recommendations outlined in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan, with the caveat they be improved by the inclusion of the entire 230,000 acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommend Wilderness in the final plan. Moreover, the following three points also expand on the importance for the wild Gallatin Range.

The plan should prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses, as well as any other activities inconsistent with historic wilderness protections, in order to preserve their wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

The draft plan offers insufficient direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current plans allows destructively large groups of up to 25 head of large animal stock such as horses and mules, and 15 people in most areas. Research proves that the environmental impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed eight head of stock and 12 people. These size limits should be reduced to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm. Further, the forest plan should halt ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, as this significantly alters the areas' natural conditions. The plan also needs to address the issue of human and pack animal feces contaminating 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 as necessary

Thank you for your service and consideration,
Royce Herndon