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Comments:

I am in support of the Gallatin Forest partnership agreement as it pertains to access of mountain bikers on current trails and recreation areas. I firmly believe that bicycle use in the Lionhead area should be maintained. Recent studies out of Santa Cruz California, on the impacts of bikers on trails and wildlife, have pointed to the fact that many of the impacts that bikes make are similar to hikers while horses have a greater impact. Please continue to allow the use of mountain bikes in the areas around Lion Head that have traditionally been open to bikers. Non-motorized Recreation should be managed for all user types and not exclusionary based on the vehicle that is used. Wilderness areas can be managed to allow bikes use and still accommodate other users such as hikers, horse riders or bikers. Many of our public lands are becoming more and more closed to non-traditional uses as that seems to be the easier approach versus creating a plan and instituting the plan with help from local mountain bike groups or organizations. Please protect mountain biking and make it a priority in your future plans for the Custer National Forest.