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Comments:

As part of the Forest Plan revision process, the Gallatin Range-stretching from Bozeman to Yellowstone National Park-including the HPBH WSA, is particularly at risk of being sacrificed as a motorized and mechanized recreational playground for the exploding populations of Big Sky and Bozeman.

Wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the draft forest plan, with the suggested improvements outlined below, would offer the best protection for the "Gallatin Range" and, other critical wildlife habitat across the "Custer Gallatin National Forest".

"Alternative D" creates 39 "Recommended Wilderness" areas totaling over 711,000 acres, including the "Gallatin Range", "Lionhead", "Crazy Mountains", "Bridger Range", "Cowboys Heaven", "Deer Creeks", "Line Creek Plateau", "Emigrant Peak", "West Fork Rock Creek", "Red Lodge Creek", "Pryor Mountains", and "Tongue River Breaks".

OUR FAMILY IS SPEAKING UP NOW! This public comment period is open until June 6 for the public to weigh in on the future of wild lands in the "Custer Gallatin National Forest".

The draft plan has little direction for administering the "Absaroka-Beartooth" and "Lee Metcalf Wildernesses"! The current wilderness management plans allows destructively large groups of up to 25 head of stock (horses, and, mules) and, 15 people in most areas! Research shows that impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed eight head of stock, and, 12 people! The "Forest Service" should reduce group size limits, accordingly, so as to protect all "Wildernesses" on the forest from harm! Further, the forest plan should put an end to ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fish less wilderness lakes, which significantly alters the areas' natural conditions!

The plan must address the issue of human, and, pack animal feces contamination of lakes, and, streams, on the "Bear tooth Plateau" in the "Absaroka-Bear tooth Wilderness"! Eliminating fish stocking would likely go a long way toward solving this problem, but, additional measures must be included if needed! Vacant grazing allotments in the "Wildernesses" should be closed so these areas can return to a wild condition!

No trail construction, or, reconstruction, in the currently trail less areas of the "Absaroka Bear tooth", and, "Lee Metcalf Wildernesses"! This provides remote areas for wildlife, as well as premier areas for solitude!

Our family supports the wilderness recommendations in "Alternative D" of the "Revised Draft Forest Plan"; however, they must be improved by adding the entire 230,000 wild, road less acres of the "Gallatin Range" as "Recommend Wilderness" in the final forest plan! The following three points also expand on the importance for the wild "Gallatin Range".

The plan should prohibit all motorized, and, mechanized, uses, and, any other activities not consistent with wilderness protection, in the "Recommended Wilderness" areas so as to preserve their wilderness qualities, until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations!