

June 7, 2019

Response to Draft Revised Forest Plan – Custer Gallatin National Forest

In reading over drafts of the Gallatin/Custer Forest Plan, my conclusion is that all alternates listed are exclusive in nature because they call for limiting use by the American public of forest lands. All the alternates of the proposed forest plan calls for limiting access (motorized and man-powered), timber harvesting, livestock grazing (especially sheep and goats), recreation, and mining. All these limitations are very contrary to the policy of multiple use of PUBLIC LANDS.

All alternatives call for an increase in Wilderness areas. This excludes the majority of people in this country from experiencing and utilizing this “so-called” public resource. The rules for wilderness management are such that the public resource cannot be sustainably maintained. Wilderness designation also prevents adjoining communities from enjoying social and economic benefits of these adjacent lands. The rules for wilderness management are such that a resource ecosystem is allowed to progress to a climax state and the next step is catastrophic fire thus endangering neighbors.

The major emphasis on wild sheep health is my main concern because science has proven that the virus causing wild sheep die-offs is present in most wild sheep (and numerous other wildlife). Under certain circumstances, i.e., stress, die-off can occur. To totally blame sheep and goats is to not accept reality.

I also question why so few acres are designated for timber harvest, and why so many acres are designated for air strips.

In summary, I think the forest plan should initiate a policy of providing as much use as possible by our citizens and manage for all resource sustainability – not a policy of exclusivity, which the present alternatives strongly project.

Sincerely,

Gene Langhus, 147 Main Boulder Rd., Big Timber, MT 59011, 406-932-4718

CC: Sweet Grass County Commissioners