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Comments:

I am writing to request that you support the Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement. As the Executive Director of the San Diego Mountain Biking Association, I request on behalf of our almost 1400 members that you support managing this valuable area as a Backcountry Area (BCA) as described in Alternative E. The Backcountry Area is the most consistent method to keep things the way they are now, maintaining bike access. Please support continued bicycle access to Lionhead. All Mountain bikers value the rugged, remote, natural feel and do not feel that it is degraded in any way by simply riding a bicycle there. If anything, mountain bikers have left it better than it was found, volunteering thousands of hours of trail work over the years.

We also request that you continue to manage recommended wilderness areas to allow bicycles. Outside of the Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement Area, we believe managing these areas to exclude bikes (described in alternatives C and D) is unacceptable and could remove our preferred way of accessing an enormous portion of the forest. Alternative D would make many new Recommended Wilderness Areas and remove bicycles from hundreds of miles of trails across the Forest. Specifically, 256 miles of trails currently available to bikes, plus 172 which we share with motorized, plus any rides that become shortened to the point of no use. This would include trails such as Sypes, Truman, Middle Cottonwood, South Cottonwood, Mystical Bear and more. This would concentrate use in front country areas and degrade the experiences of cyclists and other recreationists alike.

The San Diego Mountain Biking Association stands with SWMMBA and other local trail stewards who believe that bikes belong and mountain bikers are invaluable to the continued stewardship of these areas.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.