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Comments:

RE: Comments on Gallatin Custer National Forest Plan Revision

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the forest plan revision.

My comments are grounded in two critical trends that must be taken into account in revising the forest plan.

First is climate change. Our forests are more and more at risk due to the known and unknown impacts of a changing climate. In almost all scenarios I've looked at, the northern Rockies are likely to receive less precipitation while having increased significant weather events.

Changing climate will leave our forest more susceptible to disease and slower to regenerate after significant use. As such, we must reign in the desire to expand motor use and limit roads and logging to areas most likely to regenerate quickly.

Second, is the rapidly expanding population in many areas adjacent to the Gallatin Custer national Forest. More people are moving to Bozeman, Livingston, Billings, and Red Lodge because of the recreational opportunities on public lands.

We risk loving our forests to death. More lands must be managed as wilderness to limit the significant impacts of motor sports and mountain biking.

In the Gallatin Range: I mostly support Option D. I support maintaining all wilderness study areas and expanding these where possible. This range has no designated Wilderness Areas, the only range without of those surrounding Yellowstone National Park. This range will also receive the greatest increased use as the Gallatin Valley continues to expand. Please retain the Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area. Likewise, the Lionhead area should be kept without roads, motor use or mountain bike trails.

The Bridgers, Bangtails, and Crazys need to have protected wilderness areas to retain their key habitat values and recreational opportunities. All are subjected to ever-increasing use pressures compounded by changing climate patterns.