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Comments:

The draft plan, as it exists, has little direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current wilderness management plans allow destructive large groups of up to 25 head of stock (horses and mules) and 15 people in most areas. Research shows impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed eight head of stock and 12 people. Group size limits should be reduced accordingly to protect all forest Wildernesses from harm. The forest plan should also end ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes.

The plan must address the issue of human and pack animal feces contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau in the Absaroka-Beartooth 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...

No trail construction or reconstruction should be allowed in the trailless areas of the Absaroka Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses.

I support the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan; however, they need to add the entire 230,000 wild, roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommended Wilderness in the final plan.

The plan needs to prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses, as well as any activities not consistent with wilderness protection, in the Recommended Wilderness areas in order to preserve their wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.