

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 3/11/2019 5:13:48 PM

First name: Martin

Last name: Hamilton

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1: 309 S 6th Ave.

Address2:

City: Bozeman

State:

Province/Region: MT

Zip/Postal Code:

Country: United States

Email: hamovich@yahoo.com

Phone: 406-587-3392

Comments:

We submitted a comment at the previous planning stage. See the comment by Martin A. Hamilton and Mary T. Hamilton concerning Custer Gallatin Forest Plan Revision #50185. We were notified that the comment was received on 2/27/2018 and assigned the ID# 50185-2289-207.

Now that you have published the Draft Revised Forest Plan of March, 2019, we want you to know that our views have not changed. We have researched the issues. Our comments submitted on 2/27/2018 list several serious negative impacts on the ecosystem that will occur if the study area is not permanently designated as wilderness. We believe Option D is the only acceptable plan among the five available choices.

Assuming we need not repeat the points discussed in our previous comments, we focus here on modifications of the wilderness concept we have observed during the past year. Specifically, we see such phrases as "suitable for nonmotorized and for mechanized recreation use" and "quiet, nonmotorized recreation opportunities" permeating the March, 2019, document. We interpret these phrases as supporting the concerted lobbying effort by mountain bikers to open up about half the Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area to their mechanized, wheeled transport. As we stated in our comment of 2/27/2018, the ultimate designation must prohibit "vehicular impacts ... when the inevitable new products come along, more folks will enter the mountains on such vehicles, looking for speed and challenge, and making demands for more & longer trails of greater variety; undoubtedly recreation equipment marketing will produce a steadily increasing challenge to Forest Service managers."

It would be a grave error for the Forest Service to allow any mechanized recreation or wheeled transport within the Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area. The bikers' quest for more terrain should not be granted in a Wilderness Study Area. In wilderness, hiking and horse riding are the only appropriate modes of transportation. If you folks allow mountain bikes in the wilderness, what will you do about electronic-assisted bikes? Will hikers and bikers be allowed to pull or push bicycle-wheeled trailers, carts, or wheel barrows into the area to carry their gear? Transportation technology is increasing more rapidly than planners can anticipate. How many new methods of motorized, mechanized, or wheeled transport are on the horizon? Once you open the door a crack, it will be impossible to close. If mountain biking is allowed now, the tranquil beauty and wildlife habitat of the Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area will be undermined, probably lost forever.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Hamilton & Mary T. Hamilton

Bozeman, MT