

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 4/26/2019 10:37:34 AM

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Comments:

Regarding Custer Gallatin National Forest, I support Alternative D of the draft forest plan, but would want to include the following improvements. This would offer the best protection for the Gallatin Range and other critical wildlife habitat across the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

Suggestions are:

- Support Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan, but the plan should include adding the entire 230,000 wild, roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommend Wilderness in the final forest plan.

- Prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses, and any other activities not consistent with wilderness protection, in the Recommended Wilderness areas. This will preserve wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

- The draft plan does not provide clear direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. Current wilderness management plans allow destructively large groups of up to 25 head of stock (horses and mules) and 15 people in most areas. Research shows that impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed eight head of stock and 12 people. The Forest Service should reduce group size limits in order to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm. The forest plan should also end ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, which significantly alters the areas' natural conditions.

- 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 help solve this problem, but additional measures must be included, if needed.