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Comments:

I recently read an ad in the Bozeman Chronicle, the ad was in support of a very large addition to our wilderness area in the Gallatin Range. I have lived, recreated, and made a living in the Bozeman Area most of my life, was born and raised here, my wife and I are raising our son here. I looked over the cadre of listed people supporting this ad, 17 were from Bozeman. less than 20%, although it appears they were listed on the ad based on credentials, I'm pretty sure opposing sides could supply an equal listing of accredited folk, however letting people from as far away as Florida bias a decision would not seem the best option for those of us who live here.

I cannot support such a large increase in wilderness, for many reasons. Wilderness designation closes too many doors for too many of our National Forest users, limiting opportunities for far more than it creates. Many would benefit from more wilderness, but they are a small percentage of our national population. Wilderness unfortunately is an antiquated land management philosophy, it worked well in the past, but adding more of it is similar to going back to fire suppression doctrine from the early 1900s. That has put us so far behind with protecting our natural resources that we will likely never recover. We need to protect and preserve our wildlands and all they offer, but not at the cost of finding out that we made a major mistake in what we did. With the available science and knowledge out there, can't we come up with a solution to be adaptable to work with nature? With the laws and policies pertaining to wilderness, land managers hands will be tied, they can't use best science, can't utilize all the tools in the toolbox, and they have to manage the land under guidelines created long before our environment ended up in the current condition. I'm not against good land management to protect our wildlands, just am not going to support making the same mistakes we made in the past by applying a static ideal to a dynamic environment.

The ad that caused me to comment was from a group that is in support of Alt. D, with the Wilderness Act of 1964 being defined by them as the ""Gold Standard" to preserving our wildlands and ecological values". I can agree that wilderness designation protects the environment from many potentially negative management options, but it also limits the potential for beneficial land management and defines the options in a limited and no longer viable policy and act. I feel the need to support Alt A, No Action, but strongly urge some action, too not utilize "old" ideals but to move toward working with our environment to protect it, and us in the long run! I hope that the public can urge the Forest Service, as I am to quit applying age old policies and ideals like wilderness act. Instead of adding wilderness, please put the act up for review, determine if it meets current needs, and then provide some adaptive management. Protect, maintain, and hopefully improve our forests, don't forget basic guidelines, do the greatest good, for all of us, not just a select few, please.