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Comments:

At this juncture in our management of the forests of Montana we have a responsibility to maintain and protect the lands that are left to us. It is my belief that the lands bordering Yellowstone National Park are critical habitat for elk, bears and other species that need an intact and diverse range in order to survive. We are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction on earth because of the success of human beings. We must protect crucial habitat for animals. If we are concerned about multiple uses of the forest it must not encroach upon the security of these species surviving. While it is the law, it is also the law of the land. As a solution to helping people understand what is at stake, and realizing that monetary gain through logging and road building is not sound management or viable economic sustainability, we must manage carefully to support a wise and prudent approach. I support the Gallatin Forest Partnership agreement as a wise and prudent approach to the ever growing threat of development and overuse of the forest surrounding the park. I believe it is respectful of current uses of the area without being overly restrictive to access. Increased access will cause not only stress on the forest, but may lead to increased fire threats and degradation of habitat, especially motorized use and road access may increase fire threat. The Elk that remain in this system are in dire need of support and are an indication of the overall balance of the area. Bears need room to survive and the watershed is stressed by overfishing, and fire damage. preserve and protect the Custer Gallatin, we need to see the forest for the trees, not the other way around.