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First name: John

Last name: Kilgour

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1:

Address2:

City:

State:

Province/Region: Montana

Zip/Postal Code:

Country: United States

Email: jbkilgou@hotmail.com

Phone:

Comments:

Hello,

I'm an outdoor enthusiast and resident of Helena, MT. I went to graduate school in Montana and, although I lived away for a while, came back to Montana annually to visit my wife's family here. My wife and I recently relocated to Montana, specifically because of the amazing outdoor access and diverse wildlands and wildlife. Weekly, we get outside to hike, ski, or snowshoe. We are excited to explore the Custer Gallatin National Forest. I am writing because I would like to see certain protections in the Custer Gallatin National Forest Plan Revision.

Lionhead:

Continue to maintain the existing 22,800 acres of recommended Wilderness in the Lionhead as outlined in Alternative A. Manage the recommended Wilderness like designated Wilderness with foot and horse travel only. Wilderness areas are fundamental to maintaining habitats and critical ecosystem links for wildlife. The Lionhead provides an important habitat link between the High Divide and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

The Gallatin and Madison Ranges:

I strongly support the Gallatin Forest Partnership agreement. Critical habitat between Yellowstone National Park and Hyalite Peak should become Wilderness to help ensure habitat connectivity for grizzlies.

The Crazy Mountains:

I urge you to protect the Crazy Mountains by not allowing any expansion of motorized or mechanical trails. In addition, I believe it is important to manage this area in close consultation with the Crow Nation. The Crazies have important wilderness and cultural value to Montana and the Crow Nation.

The Pryor Mountains:

I support managing the Bear Canyon, Big Pryor, and the Punch Bowl areas as Wilderness and expanding Lost Water Canyon Recommended Wilderness as outlined in Alternative D. Motorized and mechanized recreation will threaten the quality of the biodiversity and cultural values of the area.

Absaroka-Beartooth Area:

Continue protection for all existing Wilderness areas adjacent to the Absaroka-Beartooth area. I would like to see the following added (as outlined in Alternative D): West Woodbine, East Rosebud to Stillwater, Red Lodge Creek, Chico Peak Emigrant Peak, and Dome Mountain. I'm in favor of managing Bad Canyon as a Backcountry area with no motorized or mechanical recreation (as outlined in Alternative B).

Ashland Ranger District:

I support the Tongue River Breaks, King Mountain, and Cook Mountain being recommended for wilderness. I believe this would protect the cultural values of the area while still allowing for grazing as it has been done for several decades.

Sioux Ranger District:

I recommend managing this area as a Backcountry area where motorized and mechanized recreation is not allowed (as outlined in Alternative D).

Management of Recommended Wilderness:

One of the things my wife and I value most when enjoying the outdoors is solitude and wilderness character. It is important to us that RWAs are managed to protect their wilderness character. We do not want to see motorized and mechanized uses allowed in RWAs.

I would like to see the above protections put in place for the Custer Gallatin National Forest Plan Revision as I believe they help keep Montana wild, provide critical wildlife habitat and linkage, and safeguard landscapes for the future.

Thank you for considering my comments.

John Kilgour