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Comments:

I appreciate the work that has been done in creating these alternatives. As a resident of Red Lodge and an outdoor enthusiast my familiarity is predominantly with the area around the Absaroka Beartooth wilderness and the Beartooth ranger district. There are certainly components to alternatives B, C and E that appeal.

Predominantly those that create a balance of conservation areas and areas of reduced motorized access and extractive industry access but do not reduce the current number of trails and areas that can be accessed by mountain bike, such as Line Creek. Increasing front country development of non motorized trails to open up more area to responsible mountain biking and hiking, thus reducing strain on wilderness trails like Lake Fork, West Fork and east Rosebud should be a priority. As should be the very active management of wilderness areas to reduce human waste and human caused damage at active backcountry campsites such as Rainbow Lake. I am skeptical about the wisdom in alternative E of making the West Fork of Rock Creek, a municipal watershed, into a recreation activity area.

I also encourage managers to think about the sound scape within and above the wilderness areas. Can these spaces be managed to reduce the sound of motors, especially those from airplanes which may impact the areas as regional airports start to grow. On a recent visit to the Superstition wilderness in Arizona I was struck by the incredible distraction the noise of airplanes made.

I hope that the ranger district and local search and rescue operations continue to have a good relationship and understanding when it comes to the use of motorized rescue operations in the wilderness when life or limb is threatened.

My daughters would like to be able to continue to recreate within this area in a largely non-motorized way and do not support the creation of new roads. However, if roads must be created for projects, we encourage their return to a natural state or their eventual utilization for only nonmotorized and bicycle traffic.