

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 6/6/2019 10:54:31 PM

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Comments:

Dear Supervisor Erickson and Forest Plan Revision Team:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Revised Forest Plan and the DEIS for the Plan.

I have had the great privilege over the past 50+ years to spend countless days exploring many areas of the CGNF, enjoying the forest as a backpacker, climber, skier, an occasional biker, but mostly a wanderer. Growing up, I lived and worked for years on logging operations in neighboring national forests, providing me another, much different, perspective on the uses to which a forest may be subjected.

After reading though as much of the Plan and DEIS as I could in the time I had, I read numerous comments submitted by others. One comment, dated June 1, 2019, by the Gallatin Wildlife Association (with which I have no affiliation), stood out to me as being extraordinarily well reasoned and documented, and I urge the Plan Revision Team to give it careful consideration. I share the GWA's view that, in the face of impending climate change, population growth, species decimation, and other stressors, CGNF forest planning and management should focus far more on protection of the forest than on the uses to which it can be put. In the face of these challenges the best course of action is to maximize protection and restoration of the forest to preserve and revitalize its ecological integrity and diversity.

For these reasons, I support proposed Alternative D. By any reasonable measure, the application of "best science" demands that choice over the other alternatives provided in the Plan. It's my view that, to the extent possible, the last remaining roadless areas having wilderness characteristics in the CGNF should be managed as wilderness and preferably designated as such.

I cannot support the plan proposed by the Gallatin Forest Partnership for the Madison-Gallatin area. While the Partnership's members undoubtedly had good intentions-among them to overcome the decades-long impasse in resolving the status of Wilderness Study Areas-they gave short shrift to the preservation of intact forest ecosystems. Instead, their focus seemed to be divvying up the forest into islands accommodating the special uses they represented. I found it particularly telling, and troubling, that 6 out of 15 (40%) of the GFP's voting members represented or advocated for mountain biking interests.

Finally, I support the adoption of Alternative D for protection of CGNF lands in the Crazy Mountains. As many have noted, the Crazies are a unique, island range, of cultural significance to Native Americans. I've spent much time there, like my parents before me. Having summited several peaks in the range, been awestruck by the prominence of Crazy Peak rising out of Big Timber Canyon, and experienced the range's almost-incomparable wildness, it's not hard to fathom why the Crow Tribe attaches spiritual significance to the place. Private inholdings and access issues are certainly today's challenges, but in the long term those issues are likely solvable and should not dissuade the Plan Revision Team from affording the Crazy Mountains utmost protection. Giving the range the nebulous "Backcountry Area" designation just won't do it.

Thank you for considering my comments and for all of your hard work on the Draft Revised Forest Plan.

Sincerely,

William Dockins