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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Comment on Custer Gallatin Forest Plan DEIS

The Forest Service failed to provide a "No Action" alternative.

The Forest Service failed to provide a "Preferred" alternative.

Page 79, Table 15, Lands suitable for timber production of approximately 500 to 600 thousand acres while annual treatment acres on page 81, alternatives B, C, D and E reflect a mere 5 to 8 thousand acres treated annually. This very limited amount of treatment (<1% of suitable) will never effectively treat what is needed.

Page 79 and 80 of the DEIS states: "Both the projected wood sale quantity and the projected timber sale quantity are limited by the projected fiscal capability...[hellip]". The DEIS failed to include mention of an increased capacity based on the statutory appropriation of the Montana Legislature to the Good Neighbor Authority which will increase funding for planning and implementation of timber sales and increased sale quantities. I request the Forest Service increase projected timber sale quantities based on the State's contribution to this effort.

Additional Comments: In the 50's the Forest Service was the only government department to be self-supporting. A return to sensible policy would help alleviate the fiscal problems mentioned. Grazing, timber sales, fire suppression rather than let it burn.

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Page 50, Objectives (FW-OBJ-FIRE) 02 suggest a minimum of 37,500 acres burned annually. While on page 81, Objectives (FW-OBJ-TIM) 03 alternatives B, C, D and E suggest vegetation management treatments on 5 to 8 thousand annually. Vegetation treatment is superior to fire as smoke from both wildfire and prescribed burns produce toxic chemicals which according to Montana DEQ website can cause "premature mortality". According to reports the people in Seeley Lake are still experiencing reduced lung function nearly a year after the fires in 2018.

I request the Forest Service increase the annual vegetation treatment acres in an effort to reduce fire severity, reduce toxic chemical emissions, and increase available timber resources to support local mills and communities.

Additional Comment: the multiple use plan has apparently been discarded for a do-nothing policy. Selective cutting, grazing, recreation and watershed protection need to be reimplemented.

Marcia McNeil - 6/24/19