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Comments:

I am a longtime user and observer of the Forest lands in the Absaroka, Crazy and Gallatin ranges. My comments with respect to the Custer-Gallatin National Forest proposed final plan is as follows:

- 1) The primary values of these public lands at this time and into the future will be to provide protection for the outstanding intact natural values of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem inclusive of plant and wildlife communities and water and air quality. That protection is best realized by protecting these lands from any intrusive human developments or uses that adversely degrade those natural values. Wilderness designation is the best legal commitment for that purpose. Any existing wildlands in the Forest should be through this Plan managed as wilderness for the protection of those existing natural values and should be formally recommended by the Plan for legal designation as National Wilderness. This is particularly applicable for the undesignated wildlands adjoining the existing designated Absaroka-Beartooth National Wilderness and for all of the wildlands in the Gallatin and Crazy Mountain Ranges.
- 2) The Plan needs to provide stronger administrative protections to preserve throughout the Forest the integrity of the natural plant and animal communities from disturbance and destruction that would overtime undermine their continued integrity and existence. This necessitates that human activity must be regulated to preclude any mechanized encroachments and heavy overuse or other human encroachments that would unnaturally affect the natural integrity of these lands.
- 3) In order to foster the protection of the natural plant and animal communities of the lands of the Forest the Plan must provide educational opportunities to foster public knowledge of the natural plant and animal communities and the ecosystem that are encompassed by the Forest and that the public may experience.