

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 5/14/2019 4:35:51 PM

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Comments:

The Yellowstone Ecological Research Center supports the Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement and would like to see it adopted in the Custer-Gallatin National Forest's final plan. We also support the modifications proposed by the Winter Wildlands Alliance, specifically:

(1) The Wilderness recommendations in Alternative C with the exception of the Lionhead, which should be managed as a non-motorized Backcountry Area. I would also like to see the roadless lands from Chico Peak to Dome Mountain recommended for Wilderness.

(2) Designating the Recreation Emphasis Areas identified in Alternative E, but ask that the Bridger Winter Recreation Emphasis Area be expanded north to Fairy Lake.

(3) The revised plan should include an objective to begin winter travel planning on the Custer portion of the forest within 1 year of completing forest plan revision. The winter ROS maps in the final forest plan must show desired future conditions reflecting where over-snow vehicles are ecologically, socially, and physically suitable, and not simply map where snowmobiles are currently allowed.

(4) The Forest Service should monitor wildlife populations across the forest, particularly in areas with high human use, and adapt recreation management as necessary to protect wildlife.

Thanks, Patrick Cross