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Comments:

Grizzly bears must be designated as a Species of Conservation Concern, with protection of their habitat throughout the CGNF, especially in light of the negative impacts of climate change. Restore connectivity to allow a self-sustaining bison population by removing these barriers: (1) 695 feet of electrified fencing to "maintain a bison corridor fence" with the Royal Teton Ranch, (2) 900 feet of jackleg fencing along the Yellowstone River near Yankee Jim Canyon and cattle guards on HWY 89 to stop bison from migrating beyond Gardiner Basin, and (3) jackleg fencing and cattle guards on HWY 287 in Hebgen Basin to prevent bison from migrating further west, toward the Madison Valley. Recreational use must be monitored more extensively by area, and standards must ensure that increasing recreation is balanced with wildlife protection.

I fully support the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan because it creates 39 Recommended Wilderness areas consisting of more than 700,000 acres. But the entire 230,000 acres of the Gallatin Range that are currently roadless and wild must be included as Recommended Wilderness in the final forest plan. So the final forest plan must preserve the wilderness character of these lands by immediately prohibiting all mechanized and motorized uses and prohibiting all activities inconsistent with wilderness designation until Congress formally makes the designation.

The current wilderness management plan must be changed to decrease the maximum size of groups to 12 people and 8 pack animals to reduce negative impacts. The forest plan must end fish stocking in wilderness lakes that are naturally fishless. Current problems of fecal contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau and the entire Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness by both people and pack animals need to be addressed and managed. Cessation of fish stocking would ameliorate these concerns.

Also, areas of the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses that are currently trailless must remain this way, with no trail re-construction or construction, to preserve these lands for undisturbed wildlife use. Any vacant grazing allotments in Wildernesses must be abolished.