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Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Custer Gallatin Forest Plan, Rev #20185.

I have been a hiker and wilderness appreciator my entire life. Wild places and the flora and fauna within them have become ever more threatened and increasingly rare in my 75 years on this planet. It is my conviction that citizens and our representatives including those at the Forest Service must do everything humanly possible to preserve wild places from inappropriate human incursions into these unique and threatened wilderness areas. I am including those individuals and entities with financial interests who wish to exploit these areas for their own gain into the "inappropriate" category.

I fully support Alternative D Which I believe is most compatible with the preservation principles I support. There are some improvements which I also wholeheartedly support:

- Reduce the group size limits on horses and mules and people. In my experience, overuse tends to degrade trails and leads to erosion.
- End fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes. This is not best practice in terms of maintaining the natural ecology of an area.
- Bar all motorized and mechanized activities and other activities inconsistent with wilderness protection.
- Add the entire 230,000 wild and roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommended Wilderness in the final forest plan.
- Put in place measures to address the issue of human and pack animal feces contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau.
- Do not allow trail construction or reconstruction in the currently trail-less areas of the Absaroka Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wilderness areas. Maintaining truly wild and tractless areas should be a priority.
- Close vacant grazing allotments so these areas can return to a wild condition. The goal should be preservation not exploitation.

Thanks again for the opportunity to comment. I hope you adopt Alternative D with the recommendations above.