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Comments:

I support the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan. However, they need improvement! The entire 230,000 wild, road-less acres of the Gallatin Range (as Recommended Wilderness in the final forest plan) must be added!

The plan must prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses, and any other activities not consistent with wilderness protection, in the Recommended Wilderness areas to preserve their wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

The draft plan has little direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current wilderness management plans allows destructively large groups of up to 25 head of stock (horses and mules) and 15 people in most areas. Research shows that impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed 8 head of stock and 12 people. The Forest Service must reduce group size limits accordingly to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm.

Further, the forest plan should put an end to ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, which significantly alters the areas' natural conditions.

The plan must also address the issue of human and pack animal feces contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Eliminating fish stocking would likely go a long way toward solving this problem, but additional measures must be included if needed. This is critical!

Thank you.