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Comments:

Although I am in favor of the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan, I also feel they should include adding all 230,000 wild, roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommended Wilderness in the final forest plan.

Additionally, the plan should prohibit use of all motorized and mechanized vehicles, and any activities that are inconsistent with wilderness protection in the Recommended Wilderness areas so as to preserve their wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

The draft plan fails to adequately address administration of the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current wilderness management plan allows 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 should reduce group size limits accordingly to protect all wildernesses in 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.

Last, the plan should include a solution to the problem 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.

Thank you for considering my comments.