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Comments:

To Whom It May Concern:

Myself, like many before me, moved to Southwest Montana due to the tremendous opportunity for exploration in the mountains found in this part of the state. Having only spent 18 months as a resident of Bozeman I have just started my exploration of the mountain bike trails found within the Bridger and Gallatin Ranges. The existing access is wonderful and even on a busy day in the peak of summer the trails never seem crowded. I have yet to discover any adverse effect on the natural beauty due to cyclists. In fact, I have found the opposite. As an avid hunter, fisherman, and cyclist I have found that as a whole the people of the cycling community have shown the most respect for their surroundings. We cyclists pride ourselves on our trail etiquette and constant effort to improve existing trails while also doing our best to leave no trace. I have plans to explore the Madisons, Lionhead area, and deeper into the open trails of the Gallatins/Bridgers this summer. I hope to be able to share these beautiful areas on bicycles with my children someday. I feel strongly that limiting mountain bike access in the aforementioned areas will only cause problems. Confining cyclists to a much smaller area of access will only serve to diminish the experience for all trail users such as those on horseback, on foot as well as other cyclists. Increased volume on existing trails due to a removal of current areas of use will cause excess stress on the trail systems, thereby causing a rapid increase in the rate of deterioration.

Thank you for your consideration,
Michael Stem, Bozeman