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Comments:

Please see the attached comments on the Custer Gallatin Forest Plan and EIS.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Draft Revised Forest Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Draft Revised Forest Plan.

My comment is specific to single-track-motorized (STM) use of the Custer-Gallatin National Forest.

I believe that STM use has a significantly smaller impact than other motorized use, and therefore, should be considered separately from other motorized use.

STM vehicles have a lower impact on wildlife:

* Dirt bikes travel at a moderate velocity and do not remain in any given area for long. While wildlife may have little warning of approaching bikes, the impact is highly transitory. It is reasonable to conclude that STMU have a smaller impact on wildlife than shed hunters, horseback riders and some hiking uses.

* Dirt bikes users seldom conduct camping activities, which further reduces their impact on the landscape compared to other use by All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) or Utility Trail Vehicles (UTV), horses or standard vehicles like jeeps or trucks.

STM vehicles have a lower impact on trails:

* While ATVs require two tracks that are approximately four feet wide, the 3 inch-wide tires of dirt bikes have a lower impact. With narrow wheels, and handlebars typically measuring approximately 30 inches, there is significantly less disruption (visually and functionally) on vegetation.

* There is less erosion, and there needs to be fewer resources committed to trail maintenance.

I'm an avid conservationist and treasure public land. I understand that some areas benefit from having little or no access beyond hiking. However, many areas of Montana become unreachable without horse or dirt bike. I would argue that STM vehicles are sufficiently low impact that it should be allowed in most of the United States Forest Lands. We can balance the needs of conservation with the responsibility of the United States Forest Service to provide recreational opportunities on lands that the agency manages.

In conclusion, I support single-track-motorized (STM) use on public lands, and suggest that it needs to be evaluated separately from other motorized use. STM vehicles have a small, and mitigatable impact on the ecosystem that is consistent with USFS goals. For this reason, I urge the USFS to not adopt Alternative D, but support Alternative E or a hybrid alternative that recognizes the value and limited environmental impact of STM use.