

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 6/6/2019 10:09:01 AM

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Comments:

As a mountain biker, runner, snowmobiler, skier and just general outdoor enthusiast I enjoy outdoor recreation on the Custer Gallatin National Forest and am grateful for the opportunity to participate in the forest plan revision.

I support the Gallatin Forest Partnership agreement as well as continued use of motorized travel with in the Henry's mountains where currently allowed.

I recommend maintaining the current management of the Lionhead area (Henry Mountains). That being said, I believe the area needs to be protected from extraction industries and development not recreation. It is important to preserve the wild, undeveloped character of the Lionhead area while continuing to allow mountain bike use as well as winter motorized use. All user groups benefit from the maintenance mountain bikers provide on the CDT as well as Targhee Pass area each season. I realize there are those who argue that people should not be in any of these recommended wilderness areas, but I would counter with the question of, how can we ask people to protect something that they cannot use and appreciate? I ask the USFS to rely on objective data driven science in the case of managing all trails on the Custer Gallatin and not the subjective whim's of one user group's dislike of another. We all want the same thing, to protect these area's as they are and to be able to continue to be able to appreciate them whether it be on mountain bike, skis, snowmobile or foot.

The other area's that deserve consideration are the trails in the foothills of the Bridgers and the Hyalite area. I believe the time share was a fantastic solution that helps maintain use for mountain bikes in these areas. Trail closures for mountain bikes, (especially in frontcountry areas near Bozeman/Livingston), are not going to help anyone. With every trail closure for mountain bikes, the areas we are allowed to ride in shrink and we are concentrated into smaller spaces and increase the chance for future user conflict. The Custer/Gallatin would benefit from less closures to mountain bikes (as well as motorized), and more new trail construction to add to connectivity of existing trails. When loop options are provided there are less chances for conflict as people are more dispersed than on the many out and back trails that are on the Custer Gallatin.

I ask the USFS to consider not how and what to close on the upcoming travel plan, but how can we give the public more in the way of enjoying our national forests whether that be by mountain bike, skis, snowmobile or on foot.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a comment.

Sincerely,

Quint Gidley