

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 6/6/2019 9:52:10 AM

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Comments:

Dear Forest Service, below are my comments regarding the Custer-Gallatin Management plan.

The Custer-Gallatin plays an outsized role in preserving the entire Yellowstone ecosystem, and is absolutely critical in preserving our most iconic wildlife species, clean water, and unmatched wild recreation opportunities. To maintain these outstanding qualities, I urge you to incorporate the following into the plan:

The Gallatin Forest Partnership is a great effort to bring different voices to the table and has resulted in a plan that will ensure the protection of the Gallatin range and surrounding areas. I have backpacked in the Buffalo Horn and Gallatin Crest and the memories will be with me forever. The partnership plan will ensure the Gallatin range will remain a wild and special place for future generations.

The Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness is a special gem in our country's wilderness system. It provides crucial wildlife habitat for many species and contains some of the most scenic areas in the country. But wildlife, hunting and fishing, clean water and air would benefit by expanding the wilderness by adding Line Creek Plateau, Chico Peak, Dome Mountain, Emigrant Peak, and the Red Lodge Creek-Hellroaring Plateau. Please recommend these areas as wilderness to further protect the irreplaceable wild character of the area.

Finally, please make sure that recommended wilderness is managed the same as designated wilderness, allowing foot and horse travel only, to preserve these areas for potential future wilderness designation. It makes no sense to degrade these areas with off-road mechanized and motorized use, which will only create illegal trails, erosion, weed infestations, and polluted air and water, only to have to remedy these issues later if wilderness designation were to occur.

Thank you for considering my comments, I hope the forest will do what is necessary to protect these amazing public lands for many future generations of Americans.

Dan Smith