

 PO Box 6151, Bozeman, MT 59771 Gallatinwilderness.org

Mary Erickson, Supervisor

Custer-Gallatin National Forest

130 West Babcock St.

Bozeman, MT 59715

March 1, 2018

Dear Ms. Erickson,

 We the undersigned urge you to adopt the following recommendations for Wilderness on the Custer-Gallatin National Forest. This forest is widely known for its wilderness and wildlife qualities. And we believe these are the highest and best uses of this forest.

Please adopt these Recommended Wilderness areas in the draft Forest Plan for the Custer-Gallatin Forest Plan Revision.

**GALLATIN RANGE**

**If any place in the Custer-Gallatin is deserving of Wilderness, it is the Gallatin Range.**

**Please recommend 229,000 acres as described at Gallatinwilderness.org**. Since 1977 approximately 155,000 acres have been protected as the Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area. **There are about 229,000 total acres of potential wilderness, but the CGNF has only recommended about 85,000 acres in two units**.

**The Porcupine and Buffalo Horn drainages are the most important wildlife habitat in the entire Gallatin Range**—if any area should be wilderness it is these drainages. Another important Gallatin Range drainage left out of wilderness recommendations is **South Cottonwood**.

**MADISON RANGE**

**Cowboy’s Heaven**, a **17,000 acre roadless portion** of the Madison Range connecting the Beartrap Canyon Wilderness and Spanish Peaks units of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. It should be added to the Wilderness.

**PRYOR MOUNTAINS:**

Wilderness in the Pryors could be expanded with the closure of a few tracks and dirt roads. For more information see www.priormountains.org.

**Please request the following for Recommended Wilderness in the Pryors:**

**13,000 acres in the Lost Water Crooked Creek** area.

**Punch Bowl / Dryhead Creek Canyons RWA (~8,500 acres)**

**Big Pryor Recommended Wilderness Area (12,000 acres**)

**Bear Canyon RWA (10,000 acres**)

**CRAZY MOUNTAINS**

We are dismayed that the Custer-Gallatin Proposed Action recommended **no wilderness in the Crazy Mountains** despite identifying 90,690 acres as roadless. We ask that at least **90,690 acres be recommended for wilderness** with the caveat that private inholdings should be removed through land trades or purchase.

**ABSAROKA BEARTOOTH WILDERNESS ADDITIONS**

**Line Creek Plateau**, **30,000 acres**, including the 16,127 Line Creek Research Natural Area.

The **West Fork and Lake Fork of Rock Creek** and the **Beartooth Front**, **34,640 acres**. The Proposed Action recommended only 801 acres.

The **East Rosebud to Stillwater Roadless** area along the Beartooth Front, **25,000 acres.**

**Deer Creek drainage, 129,000 acres**, including lands surrounding the East Boulder, Lower Deer Creek, Upper Deer Creek and Bridger Creek.

**Mount Rae, 5,000 acres** between the Boulder and West Boulder Rivers.

**Tie Creek/Mission Creek/Livingston Peak/ Shell Mountain, 8,000 acres**

In **Paradise Valley**, **Deep Creek to Strawberry Creek**, **13,000 acres**.

 **Chico Peak**, **Emigrant Peak** and **Dome Mountain,**  **56,000** acres.

**BRIDGER RANGE**

We are also highly disappointed that this magnificent range received NO Recommended Wilderness.

**Recommended Wilderness in the Bridger Range should be 45,000 acres in two pieces.** The Bridger Range is a critical corridor for wildlife migrating between Greater Yellowstone and the Glacier/Bob Marshall ecosystem.

**Blacktail Peak** in the northern Bridger Range has about a third of this roadless component and should be recommended for wilderness.

**LIONHEAD (SOUTHERN MADISON RANGE)**

The **Lionhead Roadless area, 32,000 acres.**  We are pleased that the CGNF has recommended nearly 18,000 acres as wilderness, though the 1986 Forest Plan had recommended 22,000 acres for wilderness. **The recommended wilderness should be enlarged to include most of the 32,000 acre roadless area.**

Signed:

**Phil Knight, Montanans for Gallatin Wilderness, PO Box 6151, Bozeman, MT 59771**

**George Nickas, Executive Director, Wilderness Watch, Missoula, MT**

**George Wuerthner, author and ecologist, Livingston, MT**

**Jeff Juel, Missoula, MT 59801**

**Paul Edwards, Stecker Ranch, Augusta, Montana**

**John Carter, Ecologist, Yellowstone to Uintas Connection, Paris, ID**

**Ron Mitchell, Executive Director, The Idaho Sporting Congress, Inc. , Boise, ID**

**Kevin Proescholdt, 2833 43rd Ave S, Minneapolis, MN. 55406**

**Paula Hood, Co-Director, Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project, Portland, OR**

**Chad Hanson, Ph.D. Director and Research Ecologist, John Muir Project of Earth Island Institute, Big Bear City, CA**

**Keith Hammer – Chair, Swan View Coalition, Kalispell, MT**

**Denise Boggs, Director, Conservation Congress, Chico, CA**

**Sharon Bosley, Executive Director, Kootenai Environmental Alliance, Couer d’Alene, ID**

**Sam Stearns, Public Education Coordinator*,* Friends of Bell Smith Springs, Stonefort, Illinois**

**Matthew Keohler, Executive Director, WildWest Institute, Missoula, MT**

**Michael Kellett, Executive Director, RESTORE: The North Woods, Hallowell, ME**

**Jim Johnson, Yellowstone Forever, Bozeman, MT**

**Meredith Moran, Yellowstone Forever, Bozeman, MT**

**Ron Wilkinson, Bozeman, MT**

**Jenica Duntsch, Bozeman, MT**

**Nicole Hayes, Bozeman, MT**

**Mark Hufstetler, Bozeman, MT**

**Sam Norden, Bozeman, MT**

**Suzanne Winchester, Bozeman, MT**

**Julia Forsthof, Bozeman, MT**

**Torey Hanrahan, Bozeman, MT**

**Peter McNair, Bozeman, MT**

**Pam Bittner, Bozeman, MT**

**Margaret and Gary Kachadurian, Gallatin Gateway, MT**

**Kasey Welles, Bozeman, MT**

**Denise McKay, Bozeman, MT**

**Elizabeth Madden, Bozeman, MT**

**Elicio Garcia, Bozeman, MT**

**Erin Jackson, Bozeman, MT**

**Kali Armstrong, Bozeman, MT**