

Objection Reviewing Officer

USDA Forest Service

Northern Region

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Missoula, MT 59804

<https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=50185>

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I object to the Custer Gallatin National Forest Plan for the following reasons:

The Draft Record of Decision on page 1 states “the Custer Gallatin National Forest has a history of multiple co-existing uses, including recreation.....”, yet the Custer Gallatin National Forest Draft Plan focuses on segregating uses to in their words, “avoid user conflict.”

In my time of recreating in the Custer Gallatin National Forest I can honestly say conflict between users is very rare, if ever. I have never heard of any, and have not had any personally. People wishing to enjoy our area of public lands are inspired by the unique landscape and appreciate others they meet and share their experiences. In my mind the Forest Service should not be making decisions based on prejudice, discrimination, intolerance, false or misleading information and bias but this is what has been included in the plan. The Forest Service should not give in to interests that expect exclusive-use of the forest. The Forest Service should manage the forest such that all users are expected to share the forest with others.

The Forest Plan decisions on appropriate recreation activity is not being based on science but rather an arbitrary land allocation based on an assumed condition. This condition does not exist! I request the Forest Service revisit this decision and adjust these land allocations more fairly based on their statement of having “a history of multiple co-existing recreation uses.”

This letter is similar to many letters you may receive, and the language here states exactly my experience recreating in this forest, and my opinion. I have seen other trails in other forests closed for similar reasons and there is just no evidence of conflict scale that would necessitate this. I have never had a single visit to this forest where it was anything other than cooperative and pleasant with other users. I recreated a variety of ways, be it hiking, hunting, mountain biking and dirt bike use so I feel I can comment with documented cross-experience and I think any trail closures are not justified not necessary.

Please do not follow the trend and deny legitimate, harmless and legal use of the forest.

Sincerely

Tom Stark

