

Filing as an Interested Person in the Land Management Plan Objection Phase

The Forest Service objection process allows the Agency to consider public concerns early on, before a decision is made, aligning with the Forest Service's collaborative approach to forest management and increasing the likelihood of resolving ongoing concerns.

In order to ensure potential objection resolution discussions are open and transparent, interested persons may participate in those discussions. To be formally recognized as an interested person and participate in the objection resolution discussions with the objector(s) and the reviewing official, you must request this status within 10 days of the legal notice listing the objections. You do not need to have objected to the plan decision to request to be an interested person. However, you must have provided substantive comment during the opportunities provided during the planning process.

Interested person requests must include:

1. name and affiliation, if any, of the requester;
2. mailing address, phone number, and email address (if available) for the requester;
3. the objection issues the requester has an interest in; a brief explanation of the requester's interest in the objection(s) and any specific concern(s), including a description of support or opposition to the objection(s); and
4. a statement demonstrating the requester's previous participation in the planning process (e.g., identifying when the requester submitted comments).

Cooperating agencies and governments of federally recognized tribes may participate in any objection without formal request. However, they must notify the reviewing officer of their interest in specific objections and intent to participate so that the reviewing officer is able to provide notification of relevant meetings or calls.

Please use the attached template to request status as an interested person.

Interested Person Request

I would like to participate as an interested person in the objection resolution discussions for one or more of the identified objection issues for the Custer Gallatin National Forest 2020 Land Management Plan or the regional forester's list of species of conservation concern (SCC).

Name: Montana Wilderness Association

Address: 80 S. Warren, Helena, MT 59601

Phone # or email: ecleveland@wildmontana.org

Name of lead interested person (if more than one): Emily Cleveland

I am interested in participating in any resolution discussions between the objector(s) and the reviewing official for the following objection issues:

I believe MWA's comments address the first 3 objections topics, but if not, we would like to ensure we are a part of those conversations. Additionally, we would like to be a part of the remaining topics. MWA would like to file as an interested person on all 13 objections issues.

Please provide a brief explanation of your interest in the objection(s) and any specific concern(s), including a description of your support or opposition to the objection(s):

- 1. MWA has provided comments that address the first three objections topics and is interested objections on these topics.*
- 2. MWA is interested in hearing objections to proposed motorized recreation, the ROS, fire and fuels mgmt, vegetation, invasive species, livestock grazing, and climate change. We are particularly interested in why the CGNF did not designate recommended wilderness areas as primitive ROS.*
- 3. MWA has engaged on this topic via the Gallatin Forest Partnership. Managing for population growth, increased recreation pressure, and user conflict especially in relation to wildlife is a very important focus of that work.*
- 4. MWA is interested in ensuring connectivity and providing for diversity of all native species; recovery and conservation of federally identified species grizzly bear, lynx, and wolverine. We support plan components that protect these values.*
- 5. MWA is interested in participating in the conversation about the projected timber sale quantity and sustained yield limit and the areas suitable for timber production and/or timber harvest. We support the identified sustained yield limit in the proposed final plan but have some concerns around areas suitable for timber production (S. Cottonwood) and timber harvest (Porcupine Buffalo Horn).*
- 6. MWA is interested in objections to land management plan direction for airfields and landing strips. We support the proposed plan direction in the section AIRFIELDS.*
- 7. MWA is interested in monitoring program questions and indicators. We support MON-WL-02 and 03 but would also like to see monitoring questions that address how to gauge recreation impacts on wildlife as*

recreation use grows, and whether management approaches for sustainable recreation are successful. These concerns were raised in the Gallatin Forest Partnership comments.

8. *MWA supports coordination with other land use planning such as the Beaverhead Deerlodge Forest Plan and is interested in objections related to alignment with Department of Agriculture Strategic Goals.*
9. *MWA is interested in objections on compliance with NEPA regarding environmental analysis, range of alternatives, environmentally preferred alternative, public engagement, and response to comments. We believe the CGNF did an exemplary job in this regard.*
10. *MWA is interested in objections on compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Especially in regard to the Gallatin Forest Partnership, to whom FACA does not apply.*

Please identify when you commented during the planning process (scoping, draft EIS, and/or final EIS):

MWA has taken part in every stage of the CGNF plan revision process, notably submitting formal comments on the preliminary assessment and need for change in 2015, the proposed action on March 5, 2018, the draft EIS and draft plan on June 6, 2019, and the final EIS and final plan on September 4, 2020.

Signature:  _____

Send written letters requesting recognition as an interested party to: USDA Forest Service, Objection Reviewing Officer, Northern Region, 26 Fort Missoula Road, Missoula, MT 59804.

Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding Federal holidays. Given current health and safety guidelines an appointment must be made in advance to the office you wish to drop your hardcopy at.

Send an electronic submission requesting recognition as an interested party to: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=50185> Electronic submissions must be submitted in a format that is readable with optical character recognition software (e.g., Word, PDF, Rich Text) and must be searchable. An automated response will confirm that your electronic objection has been received.

Send faxed letters requesting recognition as an interested party to: (406) 329-3411. The fax coversheet must include "Custer Gallatin National Forest Land Management Plan Interested Person" in the subject line and should specify the number of pages being submitted. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.