

District Ranger Amy Hass
Beartooth Ranger District
6811 HWY 212
Red Lodge, MT 59068

Henry Dykema
67 Vernet Road
Red Lodge, MT 59068

July 22, 2025

Dear Ranger Hass:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Burnt Mountain Project proposed for the Custer/Gallatin National Forest. I have several concerns regarding this project proposal and will itemize them below:

1. Please address the process used to determine this project's qualification for a Categorical Exclusion. Was there a list of possible or potential environmental impacts generated? How was it determined that there will be no lasting environmental, ecological, or human impacts from this project?
2. Please describe the association of this project with the development of System Road 21415. Has this association been presented to the public? Has the legality of the creation of 1.25 miles of new road by "modifying" the accepted alternative in the 2008 Beartooth Travel Management Plan without public comment been reviewed? What specific actions will occur to "minimize water quality, fisheries, and aquatic concerns"?
3. Has the old growth characteristics of this ecosystem been evaluated and determined to comply with the Forest Management Plan? Please provide documents establishing this compliance.
4. Please provide details of the Wildland Urban Interface designation for the northern units of this project. There is less than 1 structure/40 acres and less than 28 people/mi² in this area. What accepted criteria was used to justify this project based on the WUI?
5. Our irrigation ditch runs through the proposed logging/road building area. What specific actions will be taken to prevent any impacts to this ditch?
6. Have all known and potential endangered or threatened wildlife species been evaluated and determined in this area? Have the findings of your plant and wildlife biologists been incorporated in this project's design?
7. Please describe in detail what treatments will take place in the "stand improvement" cuts and how they have been scientifically evaluated to "improve" these stands?

This project will have lasting and grave environmental impacts to this ecosystem and it is the responsibility of the Forest Service as our public land stewards to focus exclusively on maintaining the integrity of this ecosystem and make informed and scientifically established decisions to protect this integrity. It is also the responsibility of the Forest Service to carefully evaluate any impacts by a thorough environmental assessment and environmental impact statement including a public scoping period to better understand the irreversible ecological impacts this project will have.

Sincerely,
Henry Dykema

