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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My Comment for the Gallatin National Forest Plan Revision is limited to Bicycle Access in the Lionhead Area.

I am a business owner in Bozeman and work part-time at Bozeman Health within the Radiology department.

Lionhead is a special place to me. I had the opportunity to meet Terry Johnson, the man responsible for designing and constructing Mile Creek Trail. This trail is a masterpiece. It was designed for bicycles with the perfect pitch allowing elite bikers to make the climb in one flawless ride. The reward is a breathtaking entrance into a beautiful, unique wilderness. The entirety of Lionhead is dear to myself and the bicycle community. I have personally been involved in maintaining the trails in Lionhead for many years. I am invested in these trails and the access they provide. We as a bicycle community have given many weekends and invested thousands of hours maintaining these trails in the Montana and Idaho Side of Lionhead.

I cannot think of any other big, back country trails/loops we have that we do not share with the motorized community. We are human powered, mechanized, not motorized, and we work well with the Back Country Horseman. Just like every other user group, we need these types of trail experiences and they are irreplaceable.

I do not want to see this area lose any of its protection, I am asking for the RWA status to be removed and a non-motorized back country designation be applied to this area. The HIGHEST and BEST use for this land is as it is today with bicycle access to all of the trails. You will not find better stewards of the land than the bicyclists that use and maintain these trails.

Attached is a letter from the Region One Forest Supervisor in 2007 giving way to remove RWA Status if an area has substantial non-conforming use.

Attached are letters from County commissioners in 2008 showing support for a companion designation, the Forest Service has the opportunity to apply a back country designation here that allows bicycle access and protects the resource.

The only other acceptable option is for the Gallatin National Forest to abandon the Region One Policy that bans bicycles in an RWA and allow bicycle use to continue in the Lionhead RWA.

With love and admiration of the Lionhead,  
Sherri Smith