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Organization:

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Dear Ms. Entwistle and Forest Plan Drafters,

I am very glad the Forest Service has recognized the importance of conserving the wildest areas along the Continental Divide and in the Big Snowies; but I am more than disappointed with the HLCNF plan to protect only 2/3 of the 98,000-acre Big Snowy Wilderness Study Area

Yes, I did write earlier on the HLCNF Plan. But I do not have a computer, or WIFI, at house, and have had no access to public libraries computers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Though I respect the Forest Service labor-intensive work done in drafting their plan, I am not happy with the results: as far as the Big Snowies are concerned, the whole B.S. Wilderness Study Area should have been classified as "Wilderness Area" since 1983. The same goes for areas along the Smith River, the Middle Fork of the Judith, and in the Elkhorns. Those places provide clean water to multiple communities, enable fish to thrive, and offer us all, humans, the solace we need now more than ever for our well-being.

We need to realize now, before it is too late, that since the "wild places" are not longer protected, they're soon gone and alas, do not return: look to Europe, if you need to be convinced. What are we going to leave to the next generations? Is the important question: what a waist of fresh, clean water, intact ecosystems, wildlife habitat and corridors, bird nesting places; all these factors are important factors for our survival as a species depending on our surrounding biological environment.

While I appreciate the Forest Plan to protect 32,000 acres for wilderness on Nevada Mountain- a major corridor for grizzly bears, wolverines, Canada lynx, elk, and many other species; and to protect the Red Creek and Silver King areas adjacent to the Scapegoat Wilderness, and keep in place the Electric Peak recommended wilderness from the 1986 plan _ while I appreciate of these protection, I would also like to see more wilderness in the Big Belts protected _ in the 1986 plan, recommended And Camas Creek and key portions of Baldy_Edith. And there needs to be wilderness protection for the Little Belts, which includes Middle Fork Judith Wilderness Study area* and Deep Creek/Tenderfoot area along the Smith River. That area* have more than a thousand elk migrate to the WSA's parks year after year, while thousands of Mountain and Montana lovers vie each year for a permit to experience the smith River corridor, of which Deep Creek/Tenderfoot is part. Speaking of an "economic landscape", that in itself boosts Montana's economy considerably.

And why are the Elkhorn Mtns. Not protected in the HLCNF plan? The historic remoteness of the Elkhorns 70,000-acre wild core does need protection for reasons already mentioned.

If the Forest Service is looking for protecting forests from beetle infestation, present logging practices, use of soil destructive and forest wasting feller bunchers, plus huge waste pile are certainly not the ways to solve that problem. Removing the sick infested trees manually (yes, like in the old days) or with horses would be a much more appropriate solution to that dilemma. As I have observed in the last thirty years.

I thus hereby encourage you to consider the (illegible) of our Montana Wildlands, and be vastly more generous in your protection of wilderness so as to hand a wealthy and more intact (illegible) to future generations, and for our present wellbeing and quality of life, beauty, peace, health of Montanans and visitors alive.