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Comments:

Cumulative Effects

Cumulative Effects of changes to the Gallatin Range must be addressed

Lack of Protection for wildlife habitat by the Forest Service

* The US Forest Service (FS) final plan recommends substantially reducing the amount of land currently protected by Congressionally designated Wilderness Study Areas (WSA). The FS fails to protect these iconic wildlands of northern Greater Yellowstone and the wildlife that depends on them. Rare and imperiled wildlife species such as grizzly bear, wolverine, lynx, bison, moose and wolves all depend on these lands for survival and ability to migrate. The WSA (in its' congressionally designated size) is incredibly important for wildlife.

* The WSA now includes the Gallatin Crest at 77, 631 acres (a small portion of the 155,000 acre Hyalite Porcupine Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area) . I did a wildlife count on the Crest and found that wildlife do not use the Crest for most of the year, so it is not important wildlife habitat.

Land Use Category changes do not protect wildlife, wildlife migration or meeting wildlife needs like WSAs do

Recreation Emphasis Areas, like South Cottonwood does not protect wildlife habitat

* Regarding "Recreation Emphasis," the FS states (Page 131 Forest Plan): "Recreation emphasis areas are suitable for a high density of recreation development." Recreation Emphasis use is evident in the motor use maps for the South Cottonwood project. My response: This sort of intensive, industrialized recreational development will not benefit sensitive wildlife, and will be seriously detrimental to many species.

Emergency Action on the scale that Forest Service mapping shows, destroys habitat and is not necessary, other measures can greatly minimize the fire dangers

* The Emergency action that the Forest Service is advocating for (the first project is South Cottonwood) This negates the fact that this forest is much too important as wildlife habitat and wilderness to keep prioritizing saw logs. Nor is logging any kind of cure for forest fire despite FS rhetoric .

* Address the main causes of fire, 79% human caused in Gallatin County and 21% lightning caused.

* There are many steps that can be taken to diminish the chances and effects of wildfires , home hardening, remove vegetation away from homes , address causes of fires and more.

Migration Corridors are going to be destroyed

* A plan to protect and connect the fractured habitat around Bozeman Pass and Interstate 90, a major barrier to grizzly bear migration north and south , is an emergency project and a key habitat for bears , leaving poor prospects for grizzlies.

* South Cottonwood will negatively impact wildlife movement at the mouth of the Gallatin Canyon, where wildlife can move to protected lands at the northern end of the Madison Range

The Cumulative Effects that the Forest Service is supporting will have a hugely negative impact

on wildlife, especially the listed Grizzly Bear, Canada Lynx and the Wolverine. I support wilderness designation for all remaining roadless public wildlands in the Northern Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, especially the Gallatin Range, and the congressionally designated size of the HPBH WSA.

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