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First name: Anon

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Fwd: Custer-Gallatin National Forest Plan

Dear Ms. Erickson:

It's long past time to update the Custer-Gallatin National Forest Plan since it is extremely outdated and doesn't include provisions for our wild buffalo. Currently, the MT DOL can set up traps in the Forest to capture Yellowstone buffalo so they can ship them off to slaughter to keep the ranching industry happy. The buffalos' presence on these lands helps make them healthy, so they need to be able to migrate there to fulfill their purpose instead of being trapped and killed. Since they serve such an important function for the landscape, their migratory instincts need to be taken into consideration when coming up with a new plan.

Since the Custer-Gallatin's assessment "involves an evaluation of relevant information including existing ecological, economic, and social conditions and trends across the broader landscape that will help inform the need to change the 1985 Forest Plan," I urge you to:

Use the best available science to ensure a place for migratory buffalo on America's National Forests.

Adopt standards to manage habitat on America's National Forests to support viable populations and genetic diversity of migratory buffalo.

Assess local, traditional, and scientific knowledge of how migratory buffalo use America's National Forests.

Biologists view buffalo as a keystone grassland species whose presence on the land enhances animal and plant diversity. In Hebgen Basin, buffalo seek out fire burned lodgepole pine forest and help restore fire-dependent habitats. Buffalo don't linger near water sources, making a positive contribution to watershed recovery.

Assess using migratory buffalo as an indicator species for grassland recovery, animal and plant diversity, and watershed restoration.

Update your long-term habitat plan to include a keystone wildlife species that have made their presence known on America's National Forests: America's last wild buffalo.

The National Forest Management Act requires the Custer-Gallatin National Forest to "provide for diversity of plant and animal communities based on the suitability and capability of the specific land area in order to meet overall multiple-use objectives." 16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(3)(B).

As a driver of biological diversity, the health of grasslands and watersheds, the buffalo are well suited to indicate whether key conditions on the forest are declining or improving based on the natural distribution and migrations of this native keystone species.

It's up to you to see that migratory buffalo have a place and a secure future on America's National Forests.

The buffalo have every right to live and be free on our public lands since they are a native species, not the livestock who destroy the land and for whom the buffalo are sacrificed. We are sick and tired of our tax dollars being used to slaughter, harass, and torture our beloved buffalo.

Sincerely,

Gayle Janzen

Seattle, WA

Sent from my iPad