

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/6/2017 1:32:35 PM

First name: Judy

Last name: Merrick

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Assessment of Existing Conditions/Need to Change Feedback

Dear Supervisor Erickson and the CGNF Forest Plan Revision Team

I write in support of Buffalo Field Campaign's evaluation of the Custer Gallatin's Draft Assessment and agree there is a need to change the Forest Plan to identify wild buffalo as a Species of Conservation Concern and Focal Species.

I support the Regional Forester identifying wild buffalo as a Species of Conservation Concern on the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

Please review the best available scientific information that qualifies wild buffalo for the list of Species of Conservation Concern to be decided by the Regional Forester. There is substantial concern among the public about the viability and future of wild buffalo in the Yellowstone ecosystem. Habitat on our National Forests is critical to ensuring the persistence of this beloved migratory species.

I also support the Custer Gallatin identifying wild buffalo as a Focal Species on the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

Please review the best available scientific information that supports identifying wild buffalo as a Focal Species in the Custer Gallatin Forest Plan. Wild buffalo are a keystone species, and ecological engineers that shape grassland diversity and provide habitat for many plant and animal species that the U.S. Congress requires you protect.

The best available scientific information and public concern for wild buffalo support changing the Forest Plan to list wild buffalo as a Species of Conservation Concern and Focal Species on the Custer Gallatin National Forest. It's time for the Custer Gallatin to do more for wild buffalo on our National Forests.

Judy Merrick
5528 Ranier Drive
Lisle, IL 60532