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First name: George

Last name: Wuerthner

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Custer Gallatin NF

I am most interested in your recommendations for wilderness. I want to commend the FS for proposing wilderness for the Pryors, Lionhead, Gallatin Range, and various other smaller parcels like Line Creek Plateau, Republic Mountain by Cooke City and so forth.

However, I believe the recommended wilderness leaves out many important areas.

For instance, the Grazy Mountains are one of the more significant mountain ranges in the state. The main reason for not recommending them as I can tell is due to checkerboard ownership. However, as you know, this can be resolved as was done in the Gallatin Range and elsewhere. I believe the entire roadless component of the Crazy Mountains should be recommended for wilderness.

Beyond the Crazies, another deficiency is the lack of any proposal for the Bridger Range. The roadless component is something on the order of 45,000 acres, and I would like the FS to recognize this in its recommendations. The Briders, in particular, as a critical corridor that some animals may use to connect with other wildlands further north.

In terms of the AB Wilderness, I was glad to see Line Creek proposed, but this area should be expanded. In addition, Dome Mountain, Emigrant Peak, Chico Peak, Paradise Face, Tie Creek, Mount Rae and the Deer Creeks should all be added to the AB wilderness additions.

The lack of any recommendation for Cowboys Heaven is also obvious. There is at least a 15,000 acre area that could be added to the Spanish Peaks portion of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness.

However, the biggest disappointment is with the Gallatin Range recommendation. This a 230,000 acre roadless area that should be protected in its entirety. It is some of the best unprotected wildlife habitat left in the GYE. And it has high wildlands values as well.

In particular, it is not clear why the FS separated the range into two segments. The Sawtooth segment is immediately adjacent and contiguous to the Gallatin Crest. This should be one unit. The lack of any recommended wilderness for Big Creek, the largest roadless tributary of the Yellowstone flowing from the Gallatin Range is also obvious.

However, the biggest disappointment is the lack of wilderness proposals for the Buffalohorn drainage. This is one of the best wildlife habitat areas on the entire forest. It should be the number one priority for wilderness protection.

Of course the lack of recommendation for the Hylite Canyon region and other northern drainages is also obvious as well as no protection for Windy Pass.

Keep in mind that the Custer Gallatin is one of the best national forests in the country for wildlands. It's what it does best. Protecting Wildlands is the highest priority.