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First name: Zachary

Last name: Altman

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Mary Erickson,

Thanks for facilitating the public comment period on the Proposed Action for the Custer Gallatin National Forest Plan. This is an enormous project, and you and your team are doing an excellent job.

In the coming century, and even half-century, our world will undergo significant changes. Human populations growth, climate change, urban development, intense recreational pressure, wildlife connectivity and ecosystem stability, changes in global water distribution, resource extraction - the list of issues that affect the Custer Gallatin National Forest is daunting. However, it is my belief that the future is born of the present. These prospects and more must inform our long-term thinking as human beings, and it is on this assumption that we must look to the future, and plan accordingly.

I support the Gallatin Forest Partnership's recommendations for the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

In addition, please:

1. Add the Gallatin Forest Partnership proposal as an alternative in the next phase of forest planning.
2. Include the Taylor Fork of the Gallatin, South Fork of the Madison, and Hellroaring Creek of the Yellowstone as eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers.
3. Manage Forest Service lands in the Paradise Valley to protect the highest value resources of the region including scenery, recreation, tourism, wildlife, water protection for the Yellowstone River and the tributaries. Hard rock mining is not the highest and best use of lands bordering Yellowstone National Park.
4. Manage for wildlife first in all areas of the forest particularly in the highly recreated areas like the Gallatin Range.
5. Monitor all recreational impacts on wildlife in the Madison and Gallatin ranges.
6. Designate grizzly bears as a Species of Conservation Concern with habitat protections both inside and outside the Primary Conservation Area to support a stable population and promote connectivity to other grizzly bear populations to the north and west.
7. Work with neighboring land managers and owners to identify and manage wildlife corridors to support habitat and wildlife connectivity.
8. Add Recommended Wilderness: roughly 132,000 acres in Madison and Gallatin Ranges, including Cowboy Heaven in the Madison Range connecting Spanish Peaks and Bear Trap units of the Lee.
9. Add Recommended Wilderness: The entire Gallatin Crest is in Recommended Wilderness from Hyalite Lake south to YNP boundary as is the Sawtooth IRA on south side of Tom Miner.
10. In the two Recommended Wilderness areas mentioned above, close these areas to motorcycles, snowmobiles, and mountain bikes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Zach Altman