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Title:

Comments: Re: Custer-Gallatin Forest Plan Revision #50185

From Ken Sinay, Yellowstone Safari Company

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and thank you for your efforts in the creation of this Plan.

While I recognize the National Forest efforts to manage for sustainability and to work to ensure "natural processes play their role and human use leaves little permanent or long-lasting evidence," I also recognize and believe that management as "Wilderness" or "Recommended Wilderness" is the best way to achieve this.

Human population growth simply puts more pressure of various kinds on the Forest landscape. Coupled with climate change it is critical to leave the landscape as untrammelled as possible. Protection of the watersheds and wildlife should be paramount.

I also firmly believe that the ecological services and economic benefits of wilderness outweighs other uses. There is no way to totally quantify these benefits. It something that rational thought and experience have demonstrated.

Wildlands are becoming more rare and once lost are not replaced. We can have sacrifice and recreation areas that people use, but we can not replace what is lost which we have not defined or seen. Organisms and their interactions are not fully understood.

By all means, all Recommended Wilderness should be managed as designated Wilderness. Please emphasize this in the Plan.

The Cowboy's Heaven area should be expanded as Recommended Wilderness. In excess of 15000 ac. should be added. Complete connection of the Spanish Peaks and Bear Trap Canyon should be achieved. Larger units of Wilderness are more resilient and diverse.

Similarly, the Lionhead Recommended Wilderness should be increased to it's nearly 23,000 ac. It should include the Mill Creek area.

The nearly 4500 ac. Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) associated with the Taylor Hilgard should be added to the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. It should NOT be managed as "semi-primitive motorized." rather it should be managed as "primitive."

I support the Gallatin forest Partnership recommendation regarding the Sawtooth Inventoried Roadless Area.

The Crazy Mountains are of special significance to the Crow Nation. As little motorized activity as possible should be allowed there and as much as possible should be designated Roadless Area. I know it is a difficult area, but to leave it to the adjacent landowners will merely sacrifice it to a select group.

In the Pryor Mountains: Lost Water Canyon, Punch bowl, Big Pryor and Bear Canyon should all be managed as Wilderness. This area is truly unique. Maintaining its ecological integrity is critical. I would like to see the above area designated Wilderness. Recommended Wilderness is the contemporary title I believe. this area deserves a true management which will maintain fragile plant communities.

The Cook Mountain, King Mountain and Tongue River Breaks Backcountry Areas should also be designated Recommended Wilderness.

The Gallatin Range is possibly the most significant. While I support the NFS and Gallatin Forest Partnership proposal for Recommended Wilderness, I feel strongly that it should include other areas. Most notably the Big Creek drainage and roadless area adjacent to Hyalite Peak.

Why do I support more wilderness? Too much noise, too many disturbances on the landscape. Too few secure areas for wildlife of all kinds. And we aren't making more of it. It only goes away.