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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Forest plan revision comments

Hi,

I have lived in Bozeman nearly three years and have worked on conservation crews focused on trails and habitat restoration through out the Greater Yellowstone region. I also spend much time recreating in the forest hiking, camping, biking and climbing. My primary concerns with the new forest plan are as follows:

Wilderness areas:

Please recommend as much suitable roadless areas for wilderness as possible to keep this amazing forest as pristine of a resource as we can and a great home to all the plants and wildlife. I have recommended areas I know best but I also support expanded wilderness designations in the Absaroka Beartooth and the Pryor ranges.

- 132,000 acres in Madison and Gallatin Ranges, including Cowboy Heaven in the Madison Range and connecting Spanish Peaks and Bear Trap units of the Lee Metcalf and the entire Gallatin Crest from Hyalite Lake south to YNP boundary as is the Sawtooth IRA on south side of Tom Miner.
- 90,000 acres of roadless areas within the Crazy mountains
- 45,000 acres of roadless areas in the Bridger range

Wild and scenic rivers:

Include the Taylor Fork of the Gallatin, South Fork of the Madison, and Hellroaring Creek of the Yellowstone as eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers.

Mining:

- Ensure that mining is done in the most environmentally responsible ways and that it is done in areas that do not already have high scenic and recreational value or are sensitive areas for wildlife and aquatic species
- 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.

Livestock:

I strongly oppose any grazing on designated wilderness areas and encourage the forest service to work with grazers to swap any allotment on wilderness or WMA or any other sensitive habitat to another area that can allow the grazing to be beneficial to the ecosystem without detriment or disturbance to the native wildlife.

Timber:

Practice selective logging as opposed to clear cutting whenever possible in areas that are not highly recreated in. Use the best available science to ensure that timber harvests will not affect the habitat of endangered species or species of concern such as the Lynx.

#### Wildlife:

- Creation of two wildlife management areas: West Pine WMA 25,000 acres and the Porcupine Buffalo Horn WMA 31,000 acres
  - Monitor recreational impacts on wildlife in the Madison and Gallatin ranges.
  - Designate wild bison as a species of concern and work with NPS to ensure safe seasonal migration of the herds into the Hebgen basin and Gardiner basin onto forest service land working to minimize hunting, hazing and vehicle deaths our national mammal must face.
  - 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.
  - Work with neighboring land managers and owners to identify and manage wildlife corridors to support habitat and wildlife connectivity.
- Work with DOT and private landowners to develop wildlife crossings on interstates near highly valuable ecological areas such as the Gallatin Canyon. Just this morning I saw two deer and a big horn sheep freshly killed alongside 191. I strongly urge development of wildlife crossings and more signs to alert drivers in highly sensitive areas.

#### Recreation:

- Achieve compromises to let motorized users enjoy the forest too but not in areas that are highly valuable ecologically and biologically
- Concentrate motorized use and mountain bike use in the forest as opposed to using schedules to share the same areas with hikers and equestrian users
- Allow mountain biking expansion but not motorized use in the west pine WMA if it is found to not negatively affect the wildlife

#### Noxious weeds:

- Focus treatment along popular trails and trailheads, as well as climbing areas.
- Improve noxious weed education at trailheads by allowing users to report weeds
- Utilize smart phone apps to allow trail users to identify and document removal of noxious weeds ( such as Ed maps west)

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration!

Sincerely,

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