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First name: Barbara

Last name: Tylka

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I encourage you to designate the bison as a species of conservation concern in the Revision of the Land Management Plan for the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

The bison is an American icon. People travel from all over the world to see these majestic animals in a wild setting. In southwest Montana, especially near Yellowstone National Park, the bison is a tourist draw that significantly contributes to the economy. Undertaking steps to preserve the bison population, encourage its biological diversity, and provide it adequate habitat to survive and thrive only contributes to the economic health of this area.

Bison are integral to the local ecosystem. As we have repeatedly learn to our dismay, impairing or removing one organism from an ecosystem weakens it. Designating the bison as a species of conservation concern enables it to keep its place in this ecosystem and to contribute to the health of that system.