

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/3/2019 11:16:49 PM

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Comments: I request that you carefully consider my following comments with respect to your Custer Gallatin Forest Plan revision process. I am very concerned about the current and future management of these and other federal lands in the West. These lands belong to all Americans and they should be managed for their long-term health and sustainability in the broad public interest.

The Trump administration seems hell-bent on allowing special corporate interests to exploit our public lands for short-term private corporate gain. Resource exploitation now appears to largely supersede responsible management and conservation. I ask that the Forest Service do its best to resist this current regressive political climate and to stand up for what is in the national interest.

My specific comments are concerns are:

The draft plan has little direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current wilderness management plans allows destructively large groups of up to 25 head of stock (horses and mules) and 15 people in most areas. Research shows that impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed eight head of stock and 12 people. The Forest Service should reduce group size limits accordingly so as to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm. Further, the forest plan should put an end to ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, which significantly alters the areas' natural conditions.

* The plan must address the issue of human and pack animal feces contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Eliminating fish stocking would likely go a long way toward solving this problem, but additional measures must be included if needed.

* Vacant grazing allotments in the Wildernesses should be closed so these areas can return to a wild condition.

* No trail construction or reconstruction in the currently trailless areas of the Absaroka Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. This provides remote areas for wildlife as well as premier areas for solitude.

* I support the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan; however, they must be improved by adding the entire 230,000 wild, roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommend Wilderness in the final forest plan.

* The plan should prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses, and any other activities not consistent with wilderness protection, in the Recommended Wilderness areas so as to preserve their wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Carolyn Borg

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