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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my opposition to the draft forest plan for the Custer Gallatin National Forest, which includes the Lionhead area as Recommended Wilderness. I oppose it as it would mea no more bikes, in an area that begs to be explored and enjoyed on a bike.

I live in Los Angeles, but often travel to go ride my mountain bike. I often travel as far as Florida and Mexico to ride. I also travel to Montana, Utah, and Idaho, although not as often. Thus, the draft plan impacts me and my travel plans.

I will not lengthen this letter by repeating the arguments by the various mountain biking advocacy groups, but I do agree with them. I also support their proposals.

I will add that in my experience, what gives a place value and makes it worth bettering is the ability to use and enjoy it. If I am excluded from an area by virtue of it being designated "wilderness" (at least under the current interpretation), it may as well be a toxic wasteland. Since funding is always limited, I would oppose funding for the betterment of anywhere I am prohibited from going in favor of funding places I am welcome. The same for travel plans. While this sounds selfish, the reality is that most people feel that way, even if they are unwilling to say so publicly. Take a moment to search your own feelings and consider whether you ever declined funding for your agency so that HUD would have more funding for housing for disabled veterans, etc.

If I can't ride Lionhead, I have no need to go there. Hiking is not a viable alternative as I'm not capable of more than a mile or two on foot. For a mile or two I may as well stay home. Of course, I'd actually go I where my bike and I are welcome.

Finally, despite what certain advocacy groups -- who want access only for themselves -- say, alternative designations will not lead to the demise or development of Lionhead or other areas. Incidentally, I do not blame these groups for being selfish; its in the nature of advocacy groups and I've said, I, too, am being selfish, though not exclusionary.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and for your consideration.