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Comments: The greater Yellowstone ecosystem contains some of the most diverse and preserved wildlands in the Continental United States. It provides essential habitat to all the major species of mammals that were present on this continent prior to the arrival of Europeans.

Outside of Yellowstone National Park, wilderness is the greatest means of protecting the habitat and wildlands so crucial to preserving the diversity of wildlife in the Yellowstone region, as well as providing the necessary refuge as the effects of climate change become more pronounced.

I join the Park County Environmental Council in supporting Alternative D, which recommends a suitable percentage of forest as wilderness, not only in the Gallatin Range, but in other vital regions of the Custer Gallatin like the Crazy Mountains. To ensure that the greater Yellowstone continues to maintain its vital importance for wildlife, intact habitat and ecological diversity for generations to come, the Forest Service must enact a management plan that can provide for protections that will make that a reality.