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Comments: Please note my comments on the Draft Custer-Gallatin Plan

Beginning as a teenager living in Livingston, I have participated over the decades in planning and legislative processes pertaining to the preservation of the outstanding natural values of the Crazyes, the Gallatin, and the Absaroka-Beartooth mountain ranges. Based on those natural values and furthermore on aesthetic and economic values, I am advocating that the Custer-Gallatin Plan as finalized establishes the retention and preservation of all remaining unroaded lands in the Forest. Those currently unroaded lands should be set forth in the Plan as recommended for formal National Wilderness designation by the United States Congress.

I recall how the planning in the 1970s for the Absaroka-Beartooth ranges seconded tiered the wildland natural, aesthetic and economic values. Despite the broad public support at that time for an extensive singular wilderness unit, the plan proposed three units of lesser area and allowed for greatly increased extractive resource development. Today we can fully appreciate the foresight of all who advocated for extensive wilderness protection for the area of the two ranges. Thankfully, Congress appreciated that foresight and acted to legislatively establish the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness.

This current planning process should be the start of the final dedication of the remaining wildlands of the Forest to intact wilderness protection first through the administrative measures of planning and later through the legislative action. This will serve the economy of the region which is substantively predicated upon its outstanding natural qualities of intact ecosystems, outstanding aesthetics, internationally noted streams, and other important values.

Thank you for the consideration of my comments.

Cary B. Lund