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Title:

Comments: I am writing to request that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared for the proposed South Plateau Landscape Area Treatment Project (SPLAT) on the Custer Gallatin National Forest (CGNF). I have explored and enjoyed these scenic lands for many years and can assure you that the forest lands and habitat in this area of our National Forest should be preserved and protected for all Americans not destroyed to placate the logging industry. The proposed project will adversely impact our public lands and the wildlife that depend on these lands for critical habitat. There must be a comprehensive analysis to identify the likely ecological adverse impacts from the project. Clearly, building 71 miles of roads and logging over 20,000 acres of habitat will have a significant long-term adverse impact to the wildlife, soils, and water quality in the area. The CGNF should not be building new roads when many of the existing roads on the Forest are in serious need of maintenance.

There are many questions and issues that must be answered and analyzed.

What impact will the project have on migration patterns on the bison and other wildlife in the area?

Will the removal of forest and vegetation result in more automobile/animal collisions on nearby highways?

What impact will the project have on scenic values of trails in the area and along the Continental Divide?

What impact will additional roads have on the essential habitat such as food, hiding cover and protection that wildlife including elk, moose, bison, deer and grizzly bears, require to survive?

What impact will the logging and roads have on the watersheds in the area?

What are the plans and the costs to restore the area and will the sales of the timber offset the costs of the project to the taxpayers and the public?

What impact will a hotter and dryer climate have on the successful reforestation of the area after logging?

Will the deforestation reduce the critical water cycling services provided by trees and adversely impact the fisheries?

What is the expected release of carbon into the atmosphere caused by the project and how will the project reduce the carbon footprint of the CGNF?

Will the deforestation caused by the project endanger threatened wildlife and exacerbate the existential threats facing humanity and life on earth by increasing the impact of climate change?

Thank you for considering my comments.