

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/4/2022 5:14:11 PM

First name: Kristine

Last name: Ellingsen

Organization:

Title:

Comments: 04 November 2022

To Whom it Concerns at Custer Gallatin National Forest Service:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the South Plateau Logging. I appreciate the measures already taken in the proposal-such as preserving snags and fostering aspen and white bark pine- but please! Retaining pockets of old growth forest? I encourage you to utilize awareness of Island Biogeography in order to understand the relationship between 'patches' of habitat and species longevity. Island Biogeography has accumulated a long and robust literature, not to mention practices around the world. It's not new science, but it is science.

In my opinion, science and ecological knowledge aren't driving this proposal. Instead, a current Zeitgeist favoring commercial concerns (over non-human environmental realities) and also fear of fire (mostly caused by human development and myopic practices) is driving many so called 'solutions.'

Lodgepole pine is a fire species! If ever there was a forest designed to make the best of fire, these trees are the ones. A little thinning here and there, okay. But this project threatens to bulldoze right through and over essential wildlife habitat. Grizzly bears (still "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act), Canada lynx and countless other species need dense trees. Yellowstone National Park is, in part, a mental construct. The lands bordering it are a contiguous part of the Park; the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is a living, breathing web of life. Let's use some systems thinking and put long term ecological balance in the center of our decisions and activities.

Custer Gallatin needs to employ an Environmental Impact Statement for any logging and road-building in the Hebgen Basin. Please go back to the drawing board to rebalance priorities based on science. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kristine Ellingsen

B.S., Zoology

M.S., Ecology and Evolutionary Biology