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Comment on South Otter Landscape Restoration and Resilience Project, Custer Gallatin National Forest

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above project. In review of the project documents and limited familiarity of the project location, I have the following comments:

*The proposed size (300,000 + acres) and duration (15 + years) of this relatively complex project, over an extensive landscape, should have a longer public scoping comment period than just 30 days.

*Is the project in accordance with the President of the United States Executive Order on Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies? How will the project preserve "old growth" trees?

*In consideration of the project area being a carbon sink, analysis supporting this project contends that the proposed activities would be inconsequential in terms of global carbon storage. I would offer that every effort we make to store carbon, maintain forests is consequent and is important. Therefore, my opinion is that this project should be implemented to maintain carbon storage, maintain shade, and cool this area of land with as many as possible, existing and future trees.

*The public might be better served with a programmatic NEPA analysis compared to a one-time EA and NEPA analysis for the scale and duration of this project. Climate change and change of existing conditions may render different results over time, than what the existing EA and NEPA documents provide us at present. Professionals in the field of this type of project analysis recommend (and I am in favor of this) a programmatic NEPA document that commits to tiered, site-specific (within the project area) NEPA analyses.

*Project parameters for thinning and clearcutting, should take into account maintaining and enhancing cover and habitat for wildlife.

*Following completion of the treatments at each site within the project area, roads should be closed and reclaimed. This is in consideration of restoring habitat and returning relatively wild and un-accessible (project area) landscapes for wildlife occupancy.

Thank you again, for the opportunity to provide comment on this important project.

Sincerely,

Mark F. Pearson