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Comments: I am writing a second letter to state my opposition to the Bear Palmer Forest Health logging plan. The tree pathogens claimed to be a problem are all native with the exception of white pine blister rust. Healthy forests contain native trees and native pathogens that co-evolved with the trees. Claiming this plan will protect against wildland fire is a false hope. And I'm especially horrified that loggers will be paid with tax dollars to destroy 4400 acres of forest in the Jardine area.

The techniques proposed to achieve this alleged version of forest health are quite repugnant. Clear-cutting lodgepole pine leaves ugly scars for years and usually results in introduction of non-native invasive weeds. In a lodgepole pine forest, all roots overlap so trees are supported. Leaving just a few trees in a clearcut removes this support to the detriment of the remaining trees.

I've been a Gardiner resident for the past 12 years and I spend many days skiing in the Bear and Eagle creek areas, 30 days this past winter. I also hike in these areas to enjoy wildflowers like calypso orchids and a wide array of birds. I am happy to see snags with cavities drilled by northern flickers and other woodpeckers because these cavities are necessary for nesting by the boreal owls that I hear and the northern pygmy-owls that I see and hear during their courtship. I've also seen great gray owls nesting in a snap-top Douglas fir.

During this unnecessary project, vital recreational use by Jardine and Gardiner residents, along with other residents of Park and Gallatin counties, will be prevented. The destruction of forest patches will involve heavy equipment on area roads, will create large dust clouds and be audible and visible to thousands of visitors in the northern part of Yellowstone National Park, the world's first national park.