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Comments:

The Pryor Mountains need special attention for a variety of reasons. Due to its proximity to Billings, Montana and Lovell, Wyoming and the relative ease it is to reach them, the Pryors attract a multitude of users. This has led to haphazard and confusing demands that often are at odds with others wanting different outcomes. This is unfortunate because it subjects the Pryors to intense pressures when in fact it needs protection. This small group of island mountains sustains an incredible diversity of plants and animal; it houses archeological wonders; it is recognized for its many climate zones; and there are rare but vulnerable aspects yet to be discovered. It needs protection, strong and specific, now.

I support Alternate D because it is the only one that protects the RWA's and even adds acreage to these specific areas. I am opposed to the development of a new designation called "Backcountry Areas" because it waters down the restrictions set forth in RWA's and can be easily abused due to its ambiguous wording and potential for whims to replace science. All four of the now existing RWA/s need study, not elimination. It is foolish to identify them as potential and then reclassify into non-existence because the study and decision weren't done in a timely manner. These four RWA's, Punch Bowl, Lost Water Canyon, Bear Canyon, and Big Pryor Mountain are still worthy of consideration for wilderness status as they were when they were recommended.

Please understand, that exploitation of the Pryors has already led to many lost opportunities while the remains of that exploitation dot the landscape and will for years to come. We shouldn't pursue more exploitation at the expense of preservation. We can't divide up the Pryors like a cherry pie without losing the beauty and majesty of this unique mountain cluster. We need to protect these mountains now so that the future has a clear chance of experiencing what we are presently experiencing.