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Comments:

A historian and outdoor enthusiast, for the past three decades I have frequently hiked in the Custer Gallatin National Forest region, one of Montana's most prized and valuable wilderness areas. Wilderness is a necessary component for the well-being of wildlife and humanity alike.

Wildlife biologist Frank Lance Craighead's studies have identified the critical importance of wilderness to iconic Montana wildlife such as bighorn sheep, mountain goats, elk, grizzly bears, wolverines and cutthroat trout. Many studies have also demonstrated the importance of wilderness experiences to the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of humans.

Therefore, for wildlife and humanity alike, it is imperative to fully protect the remaining wilderness within the Custer Gallatin National Forest. By applying the best available science in the evaluation of healthy and sustainable wilderness, Alternative D, "emphasizing natural processes and restoration" in recommending 39 wilderness areas covering over 700,000 acres, best fulfills the important task of protecting the remaining wilderness within the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

For the well being of wildlife and humanity alike, please choose Alternative D.