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Comments:

Comment draft plan - CGNF

Jun 5, 2019

Forest Plan Revision Team

PO Box 130

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Dear Revision Team,

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Management Plan for the Custer Gallatin National Forest. I believe that it is important to recognize that the Absaroka Beartooth and Madison, Henrys Lake, and Gallatin geographic areas all provide valuable wildlife habitat, headwater streams, and diverse recreational opportunities within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Perturbations including climate change; urban growth; and increasing recreational use and accompanying recreation technology are intensifying pressure on our public lands. I firmly believe that the new management plan must address these threats by checking the negative effects of recreational use, protecting wildlife communities, and implementing strategies address issues associated with climate change.

Alternative C should be modified to more completely reflect the Gallatin Forest Partnership recommendations for wildlife protections and recreation monitoring. We must also protect wildlife corridors and existing wilderness, especially those aspects associated climate change.

I recommend the following revisions to the draft plan:

Ensure wildlife connectivity in portions of the Madison, Henrys Lake, and Gallatin Geographic Area that aren't otherwise protected by the grizzly bear recovery zone.

Extend habitat protections for grizzly bears wherever population health is monitored and into areas important for connectivity. Grizzly bears must be considered a Species of Conservation Concern.

West Pine and Porcupine Buffalo Horn backcountry areas must include wildlife protection and wild character plan components similar to the Cabin Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Recreational use must be monitored more extensively, and standards

must ensure that increasing recreation is balanced with wildlife protection.

Wilderness areas must be managed in concordance with the 2020 Vision statement.

Monitoring for vegetation, invasive species, aquatic resources, and fire must explicitly assess the effects of climate change and guide adaptive management, as required by the 2012 planning rule (219.12(a)(5)(vi)).

Taylor Creek, Hellroaring Creek, and the South Fork of the Madison must be added to the list of 30 rivers eligible for Wild and Scenic designation.

The Forest has done a good job so far, and the Draft Plan and DEIS exhibit numerous strong points; however, revisions are needed to make it a viable guide for future decades of sustainable forest management. I want my granddaughter to have the same opportunities that I have had to enjoy the National Forest Lands of southwestern Montana!

Thanks for your efforts!

Respectfully,

Dr. Robert Gresswell
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