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Comments:

Attachment Hare

I've been a Montana resident since 1994 and over time have increasingly appreciated and valued firsthand what's at stake with the Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement. I lived in southwest Montana for over ten years and also served as a Yellowstone interpretive ranger for eight seasons, so know the region fairly well, and the importance of connectivity for wildlife.

I encourage you to implement the Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement. Also, I encourage the Custer-Gallatin National Forest to protect all existing recreational wilderness study areas within their administrative boundaries as if they were officially designated federal wilderness, by continuing to prevent mountain biking, motorized, and other unauthorized and illegal use.

Wilderness study areas including the Absaroka-Beaumonts, Dorn Mountain, Chico Peak, West Woodbine, Emigrant Peak, Red Lodge Creek, and the East Rosebud to Stillwater areas within

the Custer-Gallatin National Forest are especially at risk from such use and deserve the fullest protection of the law. Further, these lands merit full protection as designated wilderness.

In addition, public lands within the Crazy Mountains are also worthy of more rigorous protection for their wilderness values, their importance as a critical connective corridor and refuge for wildlife as an island range, and their significance to Native Americans in the Northern Rockies. Lastly, I urge you to also designate lands in Montana's Pryor Mountains as wilderness study areas, and, better yet, recommend their full protection as federally protected wilderness, including Lost Water, Big Pryor, Punch Bowl and Bear Canyon.

This would be a lasting, long-term gift further protecting many of Montana's last best wild lands. I urge you to take the longest, most conservation-minded view possible when it comes to protecting these places, so future generations can enjoy and appreciate what we have been able to experience and enjoy in our lifetimes, thanks to the efforts of those who came before us. Thanks for your time and consideration of the above.