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Comments:

I am a current Bozeman resident, and long-time user of Gallatin National Forest lands. My primary uses of the National Forest have been for recreational activities such as backcountry skiing, backpacking, trail running, rock climbing and mountaineering, downhill skiing, and snowshoeing. Other activities have included (personal) Christmas tree cutting and collection of rocks (Bangtails) for landscaping use.

My primary concerns in the new Forest Plan are to (a) maintain viable populations of current and historical wildlife, (b) conserve the scenic quality of region, (c) provide for recreational summer and winter use (non-mechanized, mechanized, and motorized, to the extent that it does not compromise the first two principals), and (d) conserve areas appropriate for non-development (Recommended Wilderness Areas). In general, I favor the elements offered in Alternative D, except as indicated below; I feel this option provides the greatest consistency, on a general basis, with my own values and priorities.

For the most part, my comments apply specifically to the 3 western geographical areas (Madison/Gallatin/Henry, Bridger/Bangtail/Crazies, and Absaroka-Beartooth). I rarely visit the Priors, Ashland, or Sioux GA's.

I believe the Gallatin Crest, from Hyalite Peak south to the Yellowstone NP boundary, should be recommended for Wilderness designation. This area is a key wildlife corridor between Yellowstone and the northern ranges (Bridgers, Bangtails). This area is best preserved as a non-motorized, non-mechanized region.

I support the designation of the Recreation Emphasis Areas defined in Alternative E, but believe the Bridger Bowl area should be expanded northward to include the areas covered by Crosscut Ranch, Brackett Creek, Ross Peak, Fairy Lake, and Hardscrabble Peak. These other areas mentioned are seeing significant backcountry use, and should be managed in a consistent manner across this region of use.

I believe trapping is not an ethical means of animal harvesting, and should not be included as an accepted use. Almost all current wording includes "trapping" alongside "hunting", but I do not think they should be coupled - hunting is an acceptable use; trapping is not. I support removing trapping from all applicable paragraphs.