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Comments:

As an individual with a strong interest in the preservation of wilderness values, I find the draft plan for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses inadequate in several regards. My strongest objection is to the plan to allow groups of up to 25 head of stock and 15 people in most areas. Research shows that allowing groups in excess of 12 persons and more than 8 head of stock unduly increases the impact of these groups. What is more, the plan fails to address the contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness by human and animal feces.

I also find fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes to be incompatible with wilderness values. Eliminating fish stocking would be of some help with the contamination issue.

Supporting and/or restoring genuine wilderness conditions in this area should be served by closing Vacant grazing allotments and refraining from trail construction or reconstruction in the currently trailless areas of the Absaroka Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses.

I support the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan; however, they must be improved by adding the entire 230,000 wild, roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommended Wilderness in the final forest plan: All motorized and mechanized uses, and any other activities not consistent with wilderness protection should be prohibited in the Recommended Wilderness areas until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

Thank you for considering my views