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Comments:

I support Alternative D. Wilderness is a valuable resource that is essential not only to ecosystems and wild habitat, but to human health and well-being. Modern technology is depreciating wilderness character in Wilderness Areas by increasing access to cellular networks, increased overflights, and illegal use of mechanized transport such as snow machines and mountain bikes. As the modern world continues its encroachment into pristine areas, we must act proactively to continue to recommend and designate new areas that are worthy of wilderness designation. There is no question that areas such as Emigrant Peak, Chico Peak, and Dome Mountain should be included in the ABW. As these places become more popular, their locations and proximity to roads will make them targets to over exploitation through vehicular use. These areas are vital habitats to mega fauna and provide remarkable recreational opportunities. Not only should these areas be considered for recommendation as Wilderness areas, all mining claims adjacent to, and within these areas should be purchased by the USDA at the earliest opportunity. Mining has no place in the Paradise Valley, and recommending these areas for Wilderness Designation would be a step in the right direction to ensure these areas remain undeveloped and will assist a positive trend towards preserving and enhancing wilderness character throughout the AB. There are plenty of places in the West, in Montana, and in the Custer Gallatin for multi-use/mechanical transport recreation, but the greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is not a place for such recreation. This area should be preserved as a Wilderness Area without fragmented sections or enclaves of multiple use. Additionally, the Crazy Mountains should be managed as a recommended wilderness area, and no new multi-use roads or trail segments should be developed. The Forest should work with private land owners to increase access, and punish land owners who shut the public out of the land we all own and have a right to access. Billionaires should not be permitted to lock up public land for their own enjoyment. I support every effort made by local Forest Service employees to disregard the illegal actions of private land owners to shut us out.

Thank you for your efforts to protect Montana's wild places!

Sincerely,

Carrie Palmer