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Comments:

Dear Custer Gallatin Forest,

By 2030, National Geographic states that global water demand is expected to outstrip water supply by 40%! The time is now to address this global water supply crisis, starting with our own state, forests, and the waters that flow through them.

What I like about Montana is its wildness, clean waters for blue ribbon fishing and boating, and clean water to drink. I live upstream of Rock Creek and the West Fork, our source in Red Lodge for municipal water, and flowing downstream to thousands of community water sources. Keeping these watersheds protected from pollution and/or run-off, within the CGFS revised plan, is a very important consideration.

Article IX of Montana's Constitution states:

#### ARTICLE IX

##### ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Section 1. PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT. (1) The state and each person shall maintain and improve a clean and healthful environment in Montana for present and future generations.

(2) The legislature shall provide for the administration and enforcement of this duty.

(3) The legislature shall provide adequate remedies for the protection of the environmental life support system from degradation and provide adequate remedies to prevent unreasonable depletion and degradation of natural resources.

Section 2. RECLAMATION. All lands disturbed by the taking of natural resources shall be reclaimed. The legislature shall provide effective requirements and standards for the reclamation of lands disturbed.

Section 3. WATER RIGHTS. (1) All existing rights to the use of any waters for any useful or beneficial purpose are hereby recognized and confirmed.

(2) The use of all water that is now or may hereafter be appropriated for sale, rent, distribution, or other beneficial use, the right of way over the lands of others for all ditches, drains, flumes, canals, and aqueducts necessarily used in connection therewith, and the sites for reservoirs necessary for collecting and storing water shall be held to be a public use.

(3) All surface, underground, flood, and atmospheric waters within the boundaries of the state are the property of the state for the use of its people and are subject to appropriation for beneficial uses as provided by law.

(4) The legislature shall provide for the administration, control, and regulation of water rights and shall establish a system of centralized records, in addition to the present system of local records.

Section 4. CULTURAL RESOURCES. The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Protecting our watershed means keeping its sources wild. Alternative D is my preferred choice, for the protections that "Wilderness" implies.

No mining, no livestock grazing allowed in the watershed perimeters, is crucial. Livestock grazing produces trampled riverbeds, e-Coli contamination, and other problems, and potential risk. Half the world's population depends on seasonal melt from high-elevation snow and ice, deposits that are dramatically threatened by

warming of the weather patterns, and the changes of wind patterns seen recently, makes our snow-pack watershed vulnerable.

Decline of blue ribbon rivers and native trout like the westslope cutthroat is happening. MDEQ lists 34 Montana streams as impaired in water quality. The CGFS has been implementing best practices, yet funding for this is still needed. The Watershed Condition Framework Assessment completed in 2016, determined that 83% of watersheds on the CGFS are functioning appropriately (Class 1), and 37% are functioning at risk (Class 2). Headwater tributaries and other numerous water features shall be protected, as per "Watershed and Aquatics (WTR) 2.3.5" in the Draft Revision Forest Plan of CGFS.

I agree with the CGFS revised "2.3.6 Riparian Management Zones. Alternative D is my preferred WTR choice, which states, per decade, "complete 800 acres of lake, pond, and wetland restoration projects across the spectrum of montane and pine savanna habitats." Funding from the legislature is key, using "future best practices." I support 2.3.7 of the Conservation Watershed network (CWN) again, relying on "future best practices."

Follow the lead of the Good Neighbor Agreement's commitment to being "precautionary and proactive" in protecting the CGFS East Boulder and Stillwater Rivers from pollution via the wet tailings ponds developed upstream on the Stillwater River and the East Boulder River at the sites for waste rock disposal for the Sibanye/Stillwater mine. I believe one of the goals for waste management from the mining operation is to dry out the wet storage impoundments which lie upstream from thousands of people, and to create dry waste ponds, which would lower the probability of breach of wet waste ponds.

Monitoring of water quality is a key enforcement tool for compliance. MSU-B has put in more than a dozen monitoring wells in Carbon County along the West Bench flowing off the north face of the Beartooth Front. I don't know who is doing the monitoring today, but I feel this is another gap in funding these monitor positions have suffered, for compliance and follow-up remediation. Funds need to be appropriated from the Legislature. Multi-millions of \$\$\$ are brought into Montana via tourism. Keeping our watersheds healthy is necessary for so many reasons, and the economy is a big deal!

I fish, raft, hike, camp, ski, all the while enjoying clean water. Let's keep it that way. Thanks for reading my comments.