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Comments:

I support The Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement. Many diverse groups have spent significant amounts of time and research in developing this action plan. This is significant because it allowed differing groups to come together to create a well thought out plan involving both recreation and conservation to use and preserve the backcountry which is so important to all of us.

I am an avid backcountry mountain biker, as well as hiker and camper. I strongly believe in the value of mountain biking stewardship of the backcountry. As such, I have spent countless hours helping with trail maintenance (from building, to clearing downed trees, to maintaining signage, to picking up garbage). Managing the Lionhead as a Backcountry Area (BCA) as described in Alternative E is the most consistent way to maintain this area. We have worked very hard in conjunction with other groups (like the Backcountry Horsemen) to do extensive trail maintenance in this area. We value the rugged and the remote, just as other user groups do and we feel that we do not degrade the area simply by riding a bicycle there. In fact, mountain bikers have done much to maintain the beauty and trail access of the Lionhead. It is one of my favorite places on earth and I will continue to pledge my heart and my soul (and hard work with saws and shovels and arms and legs) to keep it pristine. Access with my bicycle better allows me to keep this pledge.

Please continue manage Recommended Wilderness areas to allow bicycles. Excluding bicycles from RWA would remove 256 miles of trails currently available to bikes (and those who ride them who would also help maintain them), plus 172 which we share with motorized.

The more you take away our beloved backcountry trails, the more we are concentrated on front country trails which puts added pressure to those trails and degrades the experiences on those trails for all users. I am also helping raise another generation of thoughtful mountain bikers whose love of the backcountry is manifested by trail work and conservation projects. Bikes Belong in the backcountry, and as a biker, I am passionate about my experiences, opportunities, and my stewardship of those places. Please continue to allow my access.