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First name: JOhn

Last name: Ryter

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1:

Address2:

City:

State: MT

Province/Region:

Zip/Postal Code:

Country: United States

Email: ryternotritter@yahoo.com

Phone:

Comments:

Please work to preserve wilderness and the wilderness character of as much of the lands in the Custer Gallatin National Forest as possible. The Crazy Mountains and Absaroka Beartooth area in particular hold special places as important migratory routes, with the Crazies being an island mountain range, and it is important we preserve these sorts of regions and maximize their roadless character. Similarly, Emigrant Peak and the edges of Paradise Valley are part of a vital wildlife corridor and their preservation as wilderness will help maintain clean water and healthy ecosystems, which benefit local economies by fostering recreation (fishing especially) as our climate warms. Preserving large regions will better enable our unique wildlife to adapt to the changing climate as well, helping to keep Montana the last best place. I also support collaboration with Native American groups, especially the Crow Nation in the Crazy Mountains, and see them as valuable stakeholders in the decisions surrounding the lands that hold such importance to them. I support the Gallatin Forest Partnership Agreement, and that areas recommended for wilderness should continue to move toward being designated as such and should be treated as wilderness until decisions regarding their status are finalized. Thank you so much for your time - I know there are several other possible areas the Montana Wilderness Association is hoping will be recommended as wilderness, and I trust that you will consider the good of Montana in making those decisions. I have not personally visited those areas and cannot speak to their character, but I understand the need for balancing motorized use and more complete protection. I hope you will consider wildlife corridors in any plan you adopt, and the good of the ecosystems and the benefits they provide us.

Thanks again,

John Ryter