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Comments:

As an avid outdoors-person, I care about maintaining wilderness. 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 Recommend Wilderness in the final forest plan. Most importantly, the plan should prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses, and any other activities not consistent with wilderness protection, in the Recommended Wilderness areas so as to preserve their wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

The draft plan doesn't have directions for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The Forest Service should reduce group size limits accordingly so as to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm. The current plans allow destructively large groups of up to 25 head of stock (horses and mules) and 15 people in most areas. Research shows that impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed eight head of stock and 12 people. Further, the forest plan should put an end to ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, which significantly alters the areas' natural conditions.

Vacant grazing allotments in the Wildernesses should be closed so these areas can return to a wild condition. And there shouldn't be trail construction or reconstruction in the currently trailless areas of the Absaroka Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. This provides remote areas for wildlife as well as premier areas for solitude. We need that. We don't need to take up every inch of land in this country.

Thank you.