

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 6/3/2019 9:35:20 PM

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Comments:

It has been years since I traveled the highway through or next to the Gallatin highway. In my mind it is one of the most beautiful places in the country. I beg you to please allow it to stay that way, as a wilderness.

Grazing degrades so much land, especially near waterways. Too many people allowed to pack in would lead to a much faster degradation. How many people do you know who don't leash their dogs, even when they KNOW it's the law, because THEIR dog wouldn't do anything (like act like a dog and chase or bite). To think that people would act differently in this setting is a false assumption. Too many people with horses, mules, dogs, bikes, motor bikes, etc, will degrade the environment, scare wildlife from their territories, and ruin the wilderness in the process. How many years would it take to recover wilderness to its natural state? It would be best to leave it alone.

Thank you.

I agree with what is written below.

The draft plan has little direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current wilderness management plans allows 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. The Forest Service should reduce group size limits accordingly so as to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm. 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.

The plan must address the issue of human and pack animal feces contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Eliminating fish stocking would likely go a long way toward solving this problem, but additional measures must be included if needed.

Vacant grazing allotments in the Wildernesses should be closed so these areas can return to a wild condition.

No 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.

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 Recommended Wilderness in the final forest plan. The following three points also expand on the importance for the wild Gallatin Range.

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.