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Comments:

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 of the wild Gallatin Range.

The plan should prohibit all motorized and mechanized uses and all other activities not consistent with wilderness protection in the Recommended Wilderness areas to preserve their wilderness qualities until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations.

The draft plan has little direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current wilderness "management" 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. The Forest Service should, but I'm sure will continue to refuse to, reduce group size limits accordingly to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm (as if that were really your intention). Further, the forest plan should put an end to ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, and that 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 go a long way toward solving this problem, but additional measures must be included as needed.