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Comments:

I am writing you today in order to express my thoughts and concerns regarding the future of the Custer - Gallatin National forest management plan. My wife and I have lived year round in Big Sky, Montana since moving here in 2013. We moved here expressly for the opportunity to work and live in such close proximity to all activities the national forest has to offer. My wife and I spend many days a year, skiing, boating, fishing, climbing and hiking, so I feel as though we have a pretty well rounded understanding of the area and what we hope for with respect to future use and development.

We spend the majority of our time split between the Gallatin and Madison ranges. With so many unparalleled places to hike and fish after work or on the weekends it's hard not consider this place paradise! One of our most favorite places to go after work is the porcupine wilderness study area, just a few miles south. It's great having the ability to leave work and within a few minutes hit the trail for a de-stressing hike. And then after, grab a bite and beer at the River House!

Many weekends we find our selves staying close to home and camping just down the street in the Taylor Forks reign of the Madison Range. With wonderful creeks to fish, a plethora of campsites and hundreds of miles of trail it's a true gem located right next door.

For the reasons listed above, and the 100's I cannot list, I strongly encourage you abide by the GFP Alternative C with regards to the Gallatin Range and hope you will add the Taylor_Hilgard and Cowboy Heaven units to the Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area as well!

My wife and I have also spent lots of time fishing, floating and hiking in the Absaroka Mountains just one valley over. Many a summer day has been spent floating the tranquil Yellowstone River, who's crystal clear fresh water flows directly down hill from the mountains to the east. Without protection outlined in Alternative D, the Cut Throat Trout, eagles and otters that we all enjoy would not have such a wonderful place to call home.

I understand there are many things at stake and many parties involved when it comes to redrawing use permits for a national forest; which will last for decades. I truly hope that you will err on the side of caution and protect more acres for wilderness and back country designations. One thing I've learned since moving here is that this place will become more and more busy and solitude will become that much more difficult to find.

Warmest regards,
Justin Hotovy