

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 6/3/2019 7:57:23 AM

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Comments:

Wildlife is the biggest asset of the Gallatin portion of the Custer N.F. The continuation of the Yellowstone ecosystem through the Gallatin, make it unique. With this and with the long-term nature of the Forest Plan in mind, wildlife and habitat should take priority over all other assets/uses on the Gallatin portion of the district.

I was a Special-Use Permittee on the Gallatin back in the 80's and 90's. We were mountain biking (and hiking) in many areas that would be closed to mountain biking with Option D. During those years we usually would be the only group on the trail and in the parking lot, and our impact on wildlife was minimal. Today with the explosive growth of Bozeman and Big Sky, recreational use has exploded and will continue to explode. Forest managers need to provide space and solace for wildlife, specifically from Windy Pass south to the YNP boundary.

I have signed onto the Gallatin Partnership's version of Option C. This option, with the Hyalite Watershed protection of "Hyalite Basin" from Squaw Divide to Hyalite Lake is something that I was not seeing in the other options. The Gallatin Partnership Option may be the best compromise option, but I do not believe it is the best long-term option on the table.

The best long-term option for wildlife is Option D, and I hope that the Custer will seriously consider this option considering the long-term nature of the Forest Plan.