



File Code: 1920
Date: July 9, 2020

Subject: Release of 2020 Land Management Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Record of Decision for Custer Gallatin Forest Plan Revision

Dear Interested Parties:

On July 9th, the Custer Gallatin National Forest is releasing our 2020 land management plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), and draft Record of Decision. The release of these documents is a milestone in the plan revision process and initiates a 60-day objection period. Formal objections can be filed by those who have previously submitted substantive formal comment during an official comment period.

The 2020 land management plan represents the preferred alternative. The FEIS analyzes the preferred alternative, four additional action alternatives and the existing no action alternative, weighing the benefits and tradeoffs of each alternative over the life of the forest plan. The draft Record of Decision (draft ROD) documents rationale for approving the Custer Gallatin National Forest Land Management Plan (referred to as the 2020 Plan).

Key aspects of the land management plan include:

- Direction to guide sustainable recreation, grazing, mining and forest products.
- Direction for a range of land allocations including recommended wilderness, eligible wild and scenic rivers, backcountry areas and recreation emphasis areas.
- Direction to guide vegetation management, reflecting current science to support plant and wildlife persistence.
- Direction that integrates the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and supports active fuels management near communities and homes.
- Direction promoting partnerships to facilitate getting more work accomplished on the ground.
- Direction for wildlife and aquatic species habitat management including lynx, grizzly bear, bison, bighorn sheep, native fish and other wildlife species.
- Identifies key linkage areas within the Custer Gallatin National Forest that promote further connectivity and movements of species across the landscape.

All documents and release material, including a helpful Guide to Understanding the Next Step: Objections and Interested Parties is available for download online at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/custergallatin/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fseprd482956> or by navigating to www.fs.usda.gov/custergallatin and click on Forest Plan Revision, then FEIS and 2020 Plan or desired documents/maps.

Limited printed versions of the documents are available at our seven district offices for reviewing by appointment only. Twelve area libraries and the Cooke City Chamber of Commerce have a thumb drive available for checkout within the library only (request materials at reference desks). All documents are



available electronically and upon request a thumb drive can be mailed to a requestor by calling 406-587-6735 or emailing SM.FS.cgplrevision@usda.gov.

The Custer Gallatin National Forest is grateful for the excellent and wide variety of respectful public review, dialogue and comment that has been displayed throughout the four-plus year plan revision process. This level of review and engagement truly helps build a more robust, stronger and comprehensive plan.

A land management plan is the comprehensive overarching document that guides forest management, use, and protection providing broad direction, standards and guidelines for the Custer Gallatin National Forest for years to come.

Understanding the Objection Process

The objections period is open for 60 days from the publication date of the Federal Register (posted online at address previously noted). Please visit online to review the objections process next steps.

Electronic objections are strongly preferred by submitting to the Objection Reviewing Officer via the Comment Analysis Response Applications (CARA) objection webform at: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=50185>.

Electronic submissions must be submitted in a format (e.g. Word, PDF, Rich Text) that is readable with optical character recognition software and be searchable.

Online submittal of objections is strongly encouraged given respective health and safety guidelines. They may also be submitted by mail or fax. If you are unable to submit electronic, fax, or postal objections and must submit them by hand to the Northern Regional Office, please refer to signage at the front door regarding the delivery of hand delivered items, which will include a phone number to arrange delivery of your objection.

Objection Reviewing Officer, USDA Forest Service, Northern Region,
26 Fort Missoula Road,
Missoula, MT 59804

Objections can be faxed to the Objection Reviewing Officer at (406) 329-3411.

Information received is part of the public record including names and contact information. It is the responsibility of the person submitting objections to submit information by the close of the objection period.

Thank you for your interest in plan revision.

Sincerely,



MARY C. ERICKSON
Forest Supervisor