



Forest Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## Custer Gallatin Land Management Plan – Sharing the Decision

# Introducing the Custer Gallatin Land Management Plan

***“We proudly present key aspects about the Custer Gallatin National Forest, the plan revision process, and highlights of the plan. We welcome your continued involvement; together we can sustain these landscapes and the values they support for generations to come.”***

***– Mary C. Erickson, Custer Gallatin Forest Supervisor***

The Custer Gallatin Land Management Plan represents the strategic vision and direction for the national forest. The plan is the culmination of six years of assessment, analysis, and rich public dialogue about how these public lands should be managed.

The Custer Gallatin National Forest encompasses more than 3 million acres in southern Montana and the northwestern corner of South Dakota. The forest is made up of a series of distinctive landscapes and “island” mountain ranges that transition between western mountainous terrains and eastern pine savanna. Stretching more than 400 miles from its westernmost to its easternmost boundaries, the forest is a highly diverse landscape ecologically, socially, economically, and culturally.

From southwestern Montana's rugged mountain peaks, including the highest point in Montana, east to ponderosa pine-clad hills rising over the surrounding rolling plains, the Custer Gallatin is home to hundreds of species of native plants, mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. The diverse ecological and geographic span contributes to the tremendous diversity of plant and wildlife species. The western three-fourths of the forest encompasses the northern portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, the largest functionally intact ecosystem in the contiguous United States.



Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service



Photo by Terry Jones, retired USDA Forest Service



Photo by USDA Forest Service



The Forest Service manages 154 national forests, 20 national grasslands, and one national prairie across 193 million acres. Each national forest is unique...as the Custer Gallatin National Forest personifies.

## **Custer Gallatin consists of:**

- Over 3 million acres
- Spread over 2 states – Montana and South Dakota
- 400 miles from west to east
- Hundreds of species of native plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates
- Rugged peaks to ponderosa pine-clad hills rising from rolling plains

# Vision for the Custer Gallatin National Forest



Photo by USDA Forest Service



Photo by Terry Jones, retired USFS

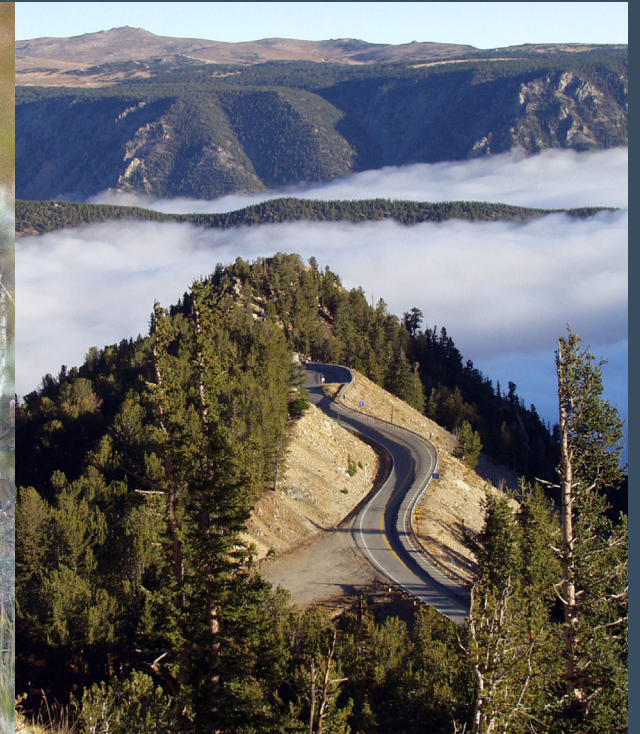


Photo by Terry Jones, retired USFS

The Custer Gallatin National Forest is a widely **diverse landscape** that **sustains abundant native plants and animals, clean air and water, and productive soils**, enhancing the quality of life for those who use and depend on the Custer Gallatin for life-enriching activities and livelihoods. **Ecological services and multiple use** products derived from this landscape are outcomes of management practices that are sustainable, enhance resiliency and adapt to societal and technological changes. Tribal members continue to have access to places of **spiritual, ceremonial, and traditional cultural importance** and the ability to collect traditional material. **The Pryor Mountains, Ashland and Sioux Districts, offer distinct ecological conditions** from the

surrounding plains. Pine savannas of the Ashland and Sioux ranger districts drive local economies whereas higher profile buttes and hills are ecologically distinct from the surrounding plains providing forage, wildlife, timber, scenery and recreation opportunities largely unavailable outside national forest lands. The Pryor Mountains retain its remote, backcountry character. **In the Greater Yellowstone Area, the Custer Gallatin is part of a large, connected expanse of core public lands** providing critical native habitats, outstanding scenery, opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation. **Front country areas** are actively managed for multiple uses and transition to private land beyond the national forest boundary.

# Land Management Plans

**The Custer Gallatin land management plan provides the framework for how these valued landscapes will be managed for about the next 15 years.**

## What is a Land Management Plan?

A land management plan creates a big picture view of how a national forest will be managed. The plan sets the overall management direction and guidance to support ecological, social, and economic sustainability. In contrast to site-specific Forest Service projects, land management plans do not authorize site-specific activities. The plan doesn't say where to put a new recreation trail or where fuels treatment activities will take place - these kinds of specific activities require further planning and public involvement. The plan provides the overall framework to guide future management activities across the Custer Gallatin.

## The Custer Gallatin Plan

The current Custer and Gallatin plans were developed in the 1980s. Major ecological, social, and economic changes have occurred since completion of the original plans. These changes include large wildland

fires, development in the wildland-urban interface, considerable population growth around communities such as Bozeman and Big Sky, land consolidations, the spread of invasive species, and changing recreation uses and expectations.

Plan revision entailed an intensive multi-year process beginning in 2016 and culminating in 2022. The Custer Gallatin hosted over one hundred in-person and virtual public meetings and a "Science of Forest Planning" symposium.

Cumulatively, hundreds of people attended meetings, and thousands of people across the nation provided comments. **Individuals, organizations, collaboratives, agencies, governments, and Tribes offered very diverse perspectives. The resulting revised plan is relevant and responsive to current perspectives, issues, and conditions.**

## Forest Plan Revision Youth Engagement

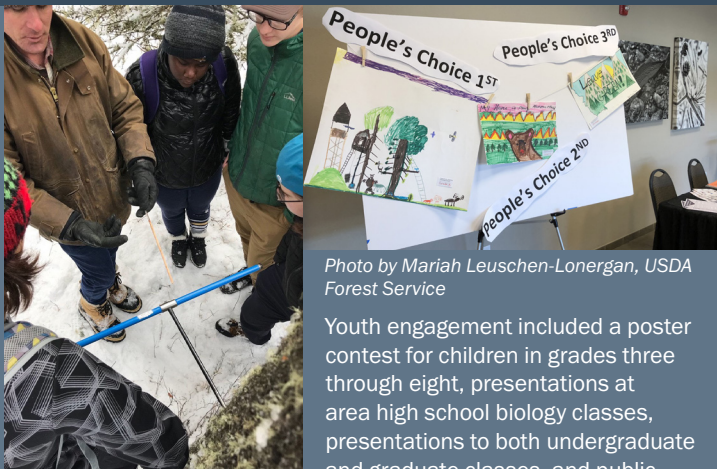


Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service

Youth engagement included a poster contest for children in grades three through eight, presentations at area high school biology classes, presentations to both undergraduate and graduate classes, and public meetings at Montana State University.

Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service

## 2012 Planning Rule

New forest planning regulations developed in 2012 focus on sustainability. The regulations require plans to integrate sustainable forest restoration, climate resilience, watershed protection, wildlife conservation, ecosystem services, recreation, and uses such as grazing, timber harvest and mining. Plans are designed to maintain and enhance ecological integrity, diversity, function, and resiliency while contributing to social and economic sustainability.

## Custer Gallatin Land Management Plan Process

2016

Assessment of Existing Conditions. 15 community meetings where people shared what they value about the Custer Gallatin.

2017

Plan Development. Two-day public meetings in 10 communities developing desired conditions. Public review of wild and scenic river eligibility and wilderness inventory.

2018

Public review of proposed plan. District Rangers led sixteen open houses. Over 1,000 comments received.

Spring collaborative public meetings to develop alternatives.

Science Symposium, Fall 2018.

2019

Draft plan and draft environmental impact statement released; over 20,000 comments received.

2020

Objection period on draft decision, final plan and final environmental impact statement; over 600 timely objections.

2021

Finalized plan and environmental impact statement.

2022

Plan decision.

# The Distinctive Custer Gallatin

**The Custer Gallatin is a highly diverse national forest; ecologically, socially, economically, and culturally.**

The spectacular scenery, iconic and abundant wildlife, and various recreation opportunities of the Custer Gallatin contribute to community quality of life and economic sustainability. This forest is an international destination, given the proximity to Yellowstone National Park and such renowned attractions as the Beartooth Highway and Big Sky Ski Resort. Year-round recreation opportunities include camping, wildlife viewing, hiking, mountain biking, rafting, motorized trail use, climbing, snowmobiling, skiing, hunting and fishing. More than one million acres of designated wilderness and about 844,000 acres of inventoried roadless areas provide landscapes that allow for more primitive recreation experiences.

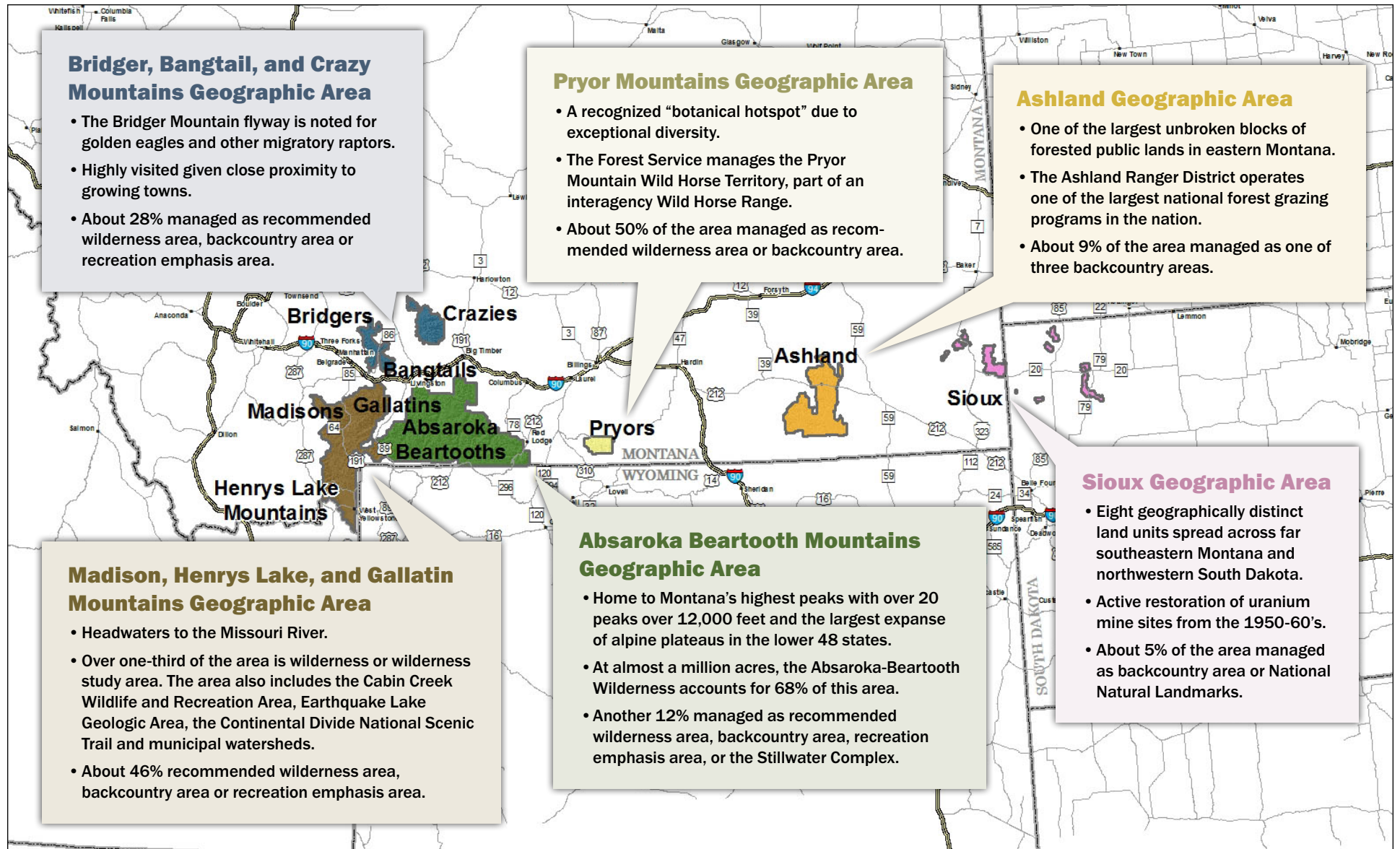
The Custer Gallatin contributes to ranches, agricultural communities, lumber mills, outfitters and guides, destination ski and recreation areas, large mines, gateway resorts, and small businesses that support recreation and tourism on public lands. Grazing is vitally important in rural counties. Outside of national grasslands, the Ashland and Sioux Ranger Districts together support the largest grazing programs in the National Forest System. The Stillwater Complex is the only primary producer of platinum and palladium in the United States and one of only three such producers globally.



All photos USDA Forest Service.

# Custer Gallatin Geographic Areas

**Six distinct landscapes, or “geographic areas”, have their own unique characteristics, visions and plan direction. The geographic areas are distinct land masses of the forest with a meaningful sense of place to the public.**



# Custer Gallatin Geographic Areas

## Sioux Geographic Area

**Vision:** The higher elevation, forested areas of national forest land offer distinct ecological conditions, wildlife habitat, and recreation settings from the surrounding plains. A resilient landscape supports the distinctive floristic and wildlife diversity. The land supports people economically through grazing, timber, hunting, and oil and gas production. The North Cave Hills, South Cave Hills, Chalk Buttes, and Slim Buttes are places of spiritual, ceremonial and traditional cultural importance to Tribes.



Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service

## Absaroka Beartooth Mountains Geographic Area

**Vision:** Largely wilderness and part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, the Absaroka Beartooth landscape provides outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and a diversity of wildlife species. Front country areas are actively managed transitioning to private land beyond the national forest boundary. Visitors find varied recreation opportunities, especially along rivers and streams. One of the world's few platinum and palladium mines co-exists on this landscape.

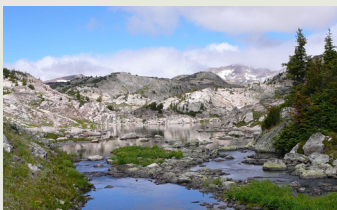


Photo by Custer Gallatin National Forest, USDA Forest Service

## Ashland Geographic Area

**Vision:** The higher elevation, forested areas of national forest land offer distinct ecological conditions, wildlife habitat and recreation settings from the surrounding plains. The land supports people economically through grazing, timber production, and hunting. The Cook Mountain, King Mountain, and Tongue River Breaks areas offer a unique opportunity for nonmotorized recreation. The Tongue River Breaks area contains important spiritual, traditional use and ceremonial sites for to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe.



Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service

## Bridger, Bangtail, and Crazy Mountains Geographic Area

**Vision:** The three ranges support diverse activities including motorized and nonmotorized use, summer and winter recreation opportunities, grazing, timber, and hunting. Parts of the Crazy and Bridger Mountains have large unroaded and undeveloped settings. The roaded northern Crazy Mountains is actively managed. The Crazy Mountains higher elevations provide for the exercise of reserved treaty rights, and the practice of spiritual, ceremonial and traditional cultural activities. The Bridger and Bangtail Mountains provide important community and economic value to one of the largest towns in Montana. The Bridger Mountains play an important role for wildlife connectivity, especially for wide-ranging dispersing species.



Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service

## Pryor Mountains Geographic Area

**Vision:** At the crossroads of three distinct ecological provinces, the Pryor Mountains offer exceptional plant and animal diversity, unique geology, and opportunities for research and education. Limited road access to high elevation areas and limestone-rimmed canyons offers visitors a sense of remoteness and discovery. The Pryor Mountain wild horse herd is valued and observed by many people. Livestock grazing supports local ranches. Tribal members continue to have access to the Pryor Mountains for the exercise of reserved treaty rights, and the practice of spiritual, ceremonial and traditional cultural activities.



Photo by Terry Jones, retired USFS

## Madison, Henrys Lake, and Gallatin Mountains Geographic Area

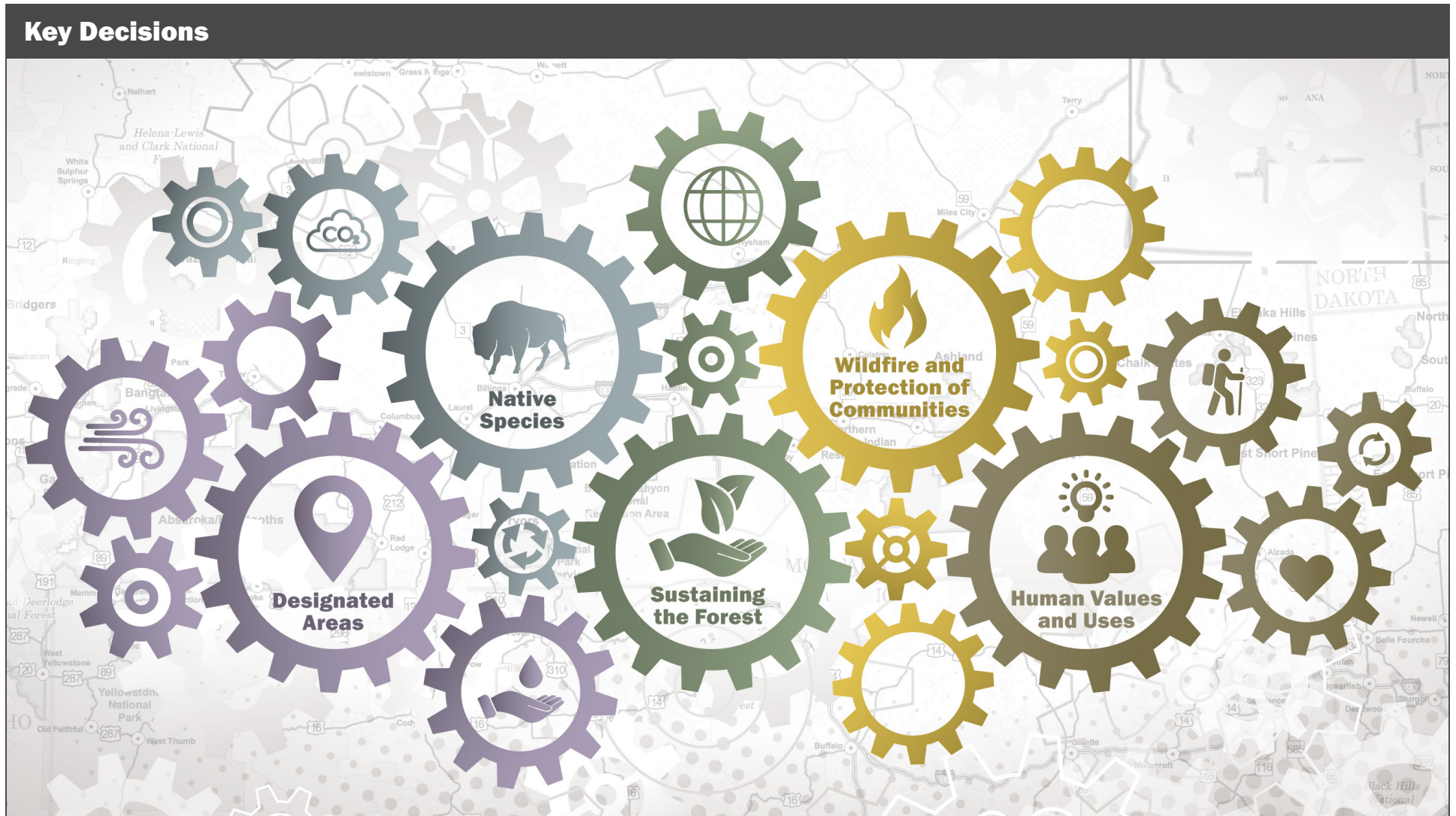
**Vision:** The land is part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, where grizzly bears, wolves, and bison roam. High elevations provide wilderness and non-wilderness type opportunities. Lower elevations are actively managed and provide a wide range of both summer and winter motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities, especially near the communities of Bozeman, Big Sky, and West Yellowstone.



Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service

# Key Decisions of the Custer Gallatin Land Management Plan

Many topics are included in the plan such as air quality, soil, water, plants and wildlife, as well as uses such as recreation, grazing, timber and mining. Together, this guidance provides integrated direction for social, economic, and ecological sustainability, and multiple uses of the Custer Gallatin lands and resources. Key decisions of the plan are summarized on the following pages.







# Designated Areas

The plan's forestwide direction applies to all National Forest System lands and supports the forest's ecological, social, and economic sustainability. Each of the six geographic areas on the Custer Gallatin has unique direction. In addition, certain areas have additional specific direction. The land management plan incorporates previous Congressional and administrative designations including:

- Congressionally Designated Wilderness
- Wilderness Study Area
- Wild and Scenic River
- Inventoried Roadless Areas
- Research Natural Areas
- Special Areas
- National Natural Landmarks
- Cabin Creek Recreation and Wildlife Management Area
- Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Territory
- Beartooth National Forest Scenic Byway
- Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
- Nez Perce National Historic Trail
- National Recreation Trails
- Earthquake Lake Geologic Area

Other designated areas were created through the plan revision process. The plan only applies an additional allocation where further emphasis is warranted.

See map of Designated Areas on the following page.

All photos USDA Forest Service.

## The plan allocations include:



### 8 RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS AREAS AT 139,425 ACRES

Retains or enhances wilderness characteristics, preserving opportunities for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.



### 30 ELIGIBLE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Retains their free-flowing conditions, classifications, and the remarkable values that provide the basis for their inclusion in the system.



### 13 BACKCOUNTRY AREAS AT 207,677 ACRES

Maintains a place's existing lightly developed character, most existing uses, and management such as weed treatment or fuels reduction.



### 2 WILDLIFE KEY LINKAGE AREAS

Maintains habitat connectivity and limits management disturbance.



### 1 STILLWATER COMPLEX

Recognizes the value of one of the world's only platinum and palladium mines.



### 10 RECREATION EMPHASIS AREAS AT 229,482 ACRES

Focuses on enhancing the unique recreational attributes of these locations, from rivers and lakeshores to snowmobiling destinations.



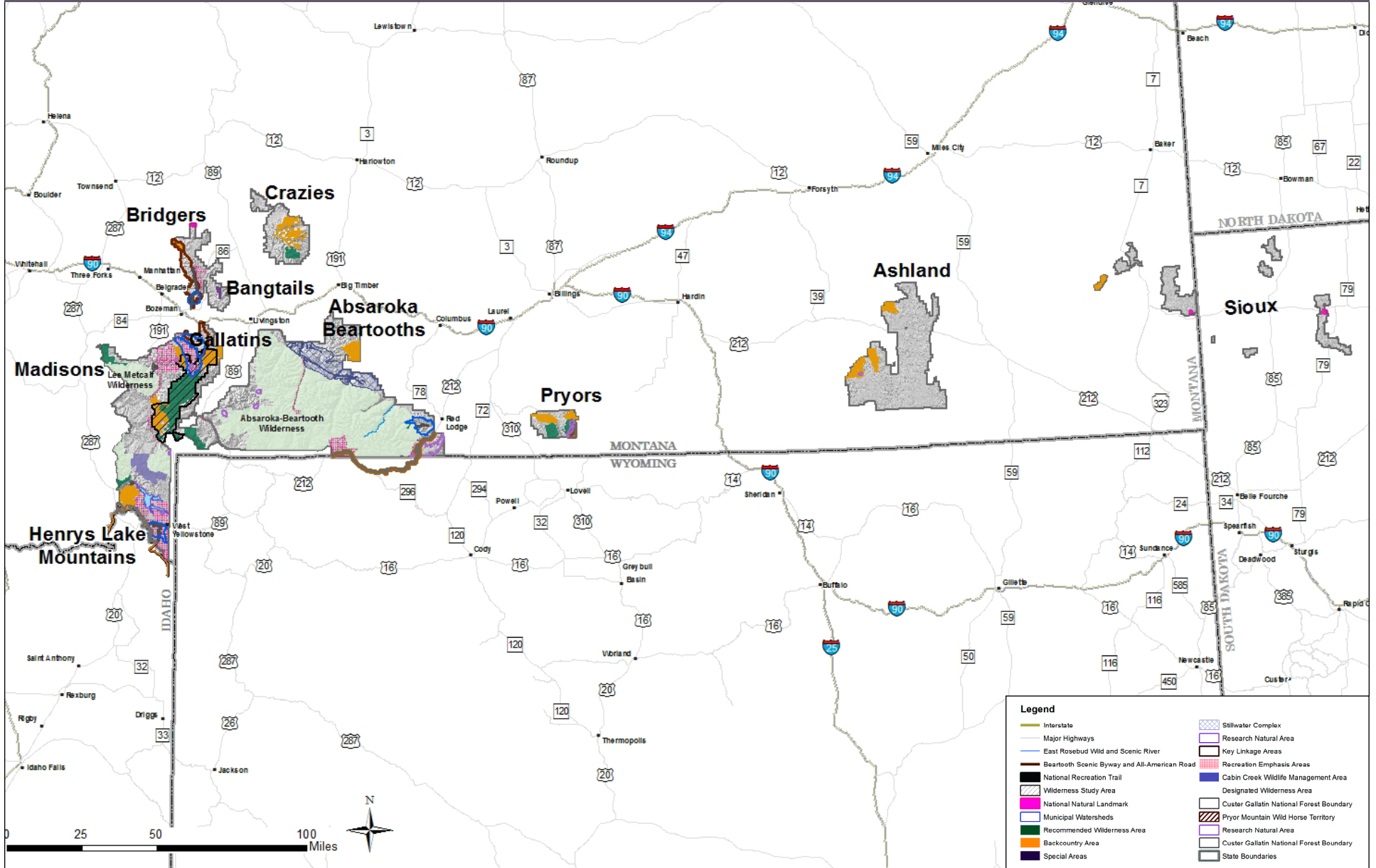
### RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT ZONES

Protects and conserves aquatic and riparian life and resources such as streams, rivers, woody draws, wetlands, springs, and seeps.



# Designated Areas

## Custer Gallatin National Forest Land Management Plan Designated Areas

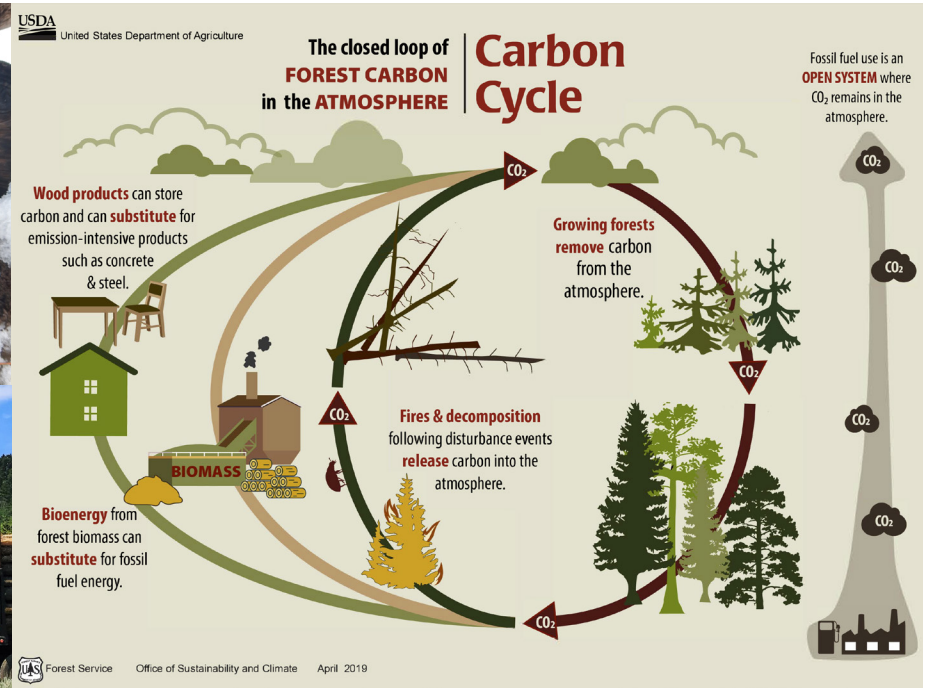




# Sustaining the Forest



All photos USDA Forest Service, Meghan Reedy, Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, and Morgan De Meyer.



## Healthy Forests

Healthy forests provide a range of social, economic, and ecological benefits now and in the future. Healthy forests purify the air; provide clean water for cities, homes, and agriculture; store carbon; provide wildlife habitat; maintain biodiversity; provide aesthetic, spiritual, and cultural values; and offer diverse recreational opportunities.

Maintaining the forest's ecological integrity and resilience to key stressors such as climate change is at the core of the new plan. The forest's plants and animals evolved over time in response to fluctuating environmental conditions. An analysis of the natural range of these conditions provided the basis for the plan's vegetation desired conditions.

The plan is designed to maintain specific, quantifiable

ecological conditions on the landscape, including a diversity of forest types and structures. Maintaining this range of vegetation conditions across the landscape, in turn, maintains habitat that supports the forest's native plant and animal species.

Although the natural range of variation is the underpinning, desired conditions also represent additional factors. These include wildlife habitat needs, existing or anticipated human use patterns, potential future climate conditions, resiliency to future disturbances, and ecosystem services (such as reducing fire hazards or producing forest products). Prescribed fire, non-commercial thinning, or timber sales are tools to modify vegetation to maintain or move towards desired conditions while protecting important forest characteristics such as large trees, snags, and downed wood that provide wildlife habitat.

## Carbon Sequestration

Forest ecosystems pull carbon dioxide from the air and store carbon in trees, grasses, other plants, and soils (a process known as carbon sequestration). Carbon storage in forests and wood products helps offset carbon dioxide sources to the atmosphere, such as deforestation, forest fires, and fossil fuel emissions. Sustainable forestry practices can increase the ability of forests to sequester atmospheric carbon while enhancing other ecosystem services, such as improved soil and water quality. Planting new trees and improving forest health through thinning and prescribed burning are ways to increase forest carbon in the long run. Harvesting and regenerating forests can also result in net carbon sequestration in wood products and new forest growth.

# Wildfire and Protection of Communities

## Wildfire

Fire has shaped and maintained forest and non-forest ecosystems, which in turn sustain native plants and animals. Over the last century, fire suppression on the Custer Gallatin altered natural fire regimes to the detriment of native vegetation, fauna, and ecosystem processes.

Fire management strives to balance fire's natural role and minimize the impacts from fire on values to be protected. This is especially important in the wildland-urban interface (where homes and structures meet the national forest boundary).

## Resilient Landscapes

The plan promotes landscapes resilient to fire-related disturbances. Hazardous fuels reduction lowers fire intensity and the probability of crown fire and spotting. This work can also restore and maintain natural fire regimes and reduce the negative impacts of wildfires to watershed health, wildlife habitat, community values at risk, air quality, and the safety of fire personnel and the public. The plan prioritizes hazardous fuels treatments in wildland-urban interface areas. The plan also embraces the role of unplanned, natural wildfire, which may occur on all acres, depending on expected fire effects and resource objectives.



All photos USDA Forest Service.



# Native Species



**Alpine Peaks**



**Coniferous Forest**



**Pine Savanna**

**Diverse habitats** on the Custer Gallatin range from alpine peaks and more temperate mid-elevation coniferous forest slopes in the west, to pine savanna in the east. Such diversity and complexity supports hundreds of plant species and **over 600 mammal, bird, fish, reptile, and invertebrate species**. Many species are residents while others are migratory.



Photo by USDA Forest Service

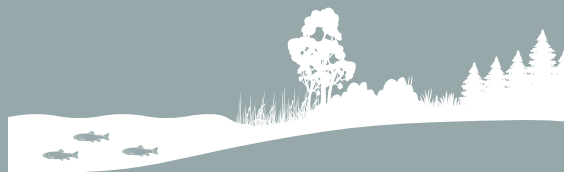
The plan contributes to the **recovery of federally listed threatened or endangered species** (such as grizzly bear and Canada lynx), **conservation of proposed and candidate species** (such as whitebark pine), and the **long-term persistence of 29 species of conservation concern** (25 plant, two wildlife, and two aquatic species). Together, these species constitute “at-risk” species. The plan also includes direction for aquatic species, bats, big game, bighorn sheep, and bison.



Photo by Molly Moore, USDA Forest Service

**Bison** naturally tend to migrate onto the Custer Gallatin when winter snows become too deep in Yellowstone National Park. The plan supports a **year-round, self-sustaining bison population on the Custer Gallatin in conjunction with bison herds in the park**.

This bison population is of **great importance to Tribes** and to local, regional, and national visitors.

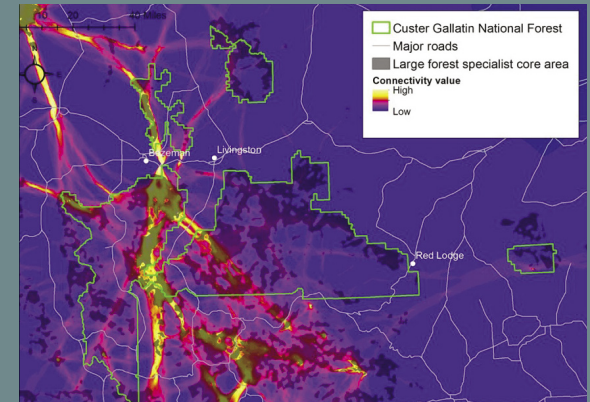


**Aquatic | Riparian | Upland**

**Strong aquatics and riparian protections**, the Conservation Watershed Network, and objectives for stream habitat enhancement will **improve stream conditions for fish and other aquatic species** such as westslope cutthroat trout, Yellowstone Cutthroat trout, and Arctic grayling.



**Bighorn sheep** are threatened by disease transmission from domestic sheep and goats. The plan direction aims to **prevent disease transmission** by limiting sheep and goat grazing allotments, and by requiring precautions for the use of pack goats.



**Habitat connectivity** is crucial to maintain plant and animal diversity and manage sustainable populations of native species. The Forest Service and the Center for Large Landscape Connectivity developed a connectivity modeling framework specific to the Custer Gallatin National Forest. The modelling effort led to wildlife “key linkage areas” in the northern Gallatin Mountains and the western Bridger Mountains. This route is an essential link between the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem.



# Human Connection

## Connections and Consultation with Tribes

Native American use of the Custer Gallatin over the centuries is manifest in hundreds of archaeological sites, sacred sites, and other areas of traditional cultural importance, many of which are listed or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Significant spiritual, traditional use, and ceremonial sites on the national forest are used today by Tribal members. The plan revision process involved 19 federally recognized Tribes located in North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

The plan incorporates Tribal requests for:

- Proactive bison habitat management and limits on domestic sheep and goats to limit the spread of disease to bighorn sheep.
- Incorporates the request of the Crow Tribe for protection of the Crazy Mountains by designating the highest elevations in this range as recommended wilderness area and backcountry area.
- Addresses treaty rights, sacred sites, and traditional cultural practices.

## Connections with Public Entities

County, local, Tribal governments, and other Federal agencies provided feedback throughout plan revision. Four governments or agencies participated as cooperating agencies: Park County, Montana, Sweet Grass County, Montana, the State of South Dakota, and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks. Many plan goals emphasize continued engagement with public entities.

## Values and Uses of the Custer Gallatin

People cherish the landscape of the Custer Gallatin for a diversity of services, uses and experiences. Whether providing clean water for communities, sustaining native fish, wildlife and plants, protecting prized scenery, offering life enhancing recreation opportunities, keeping forests resilient in the face of climate change, supporting



All photos USDA Forest Service.

livelihoods through the recreation economy, forest products, mining or domestic livestock, or preserving wilderness and wild places for future generations, the plan integrates direction for the use and support of these diverse needs.

## Sustaining Livelihoods

The plan supports local communities through the service-based economy that includes recreation and tourism, and commodity production, including permitted grazing, mining, timber, and other multiple uses. The plan will support 5,640 jobs in the local and regional economies and nearly \$242 million in labor income.

## Sustainable Recreation

The 2012 Planning Rule focuses on sustainability, including sustainable recreation. The plan designs recreation settings and opportunities in a way that is ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable now and into the future. Sustainable recreation is partly derived by mapping recreation opportunity spectrum

classes that range from primitive to rural settings. About one-third of the forest is in a primitive setting, and over forty percent is in a motorized setting. Plan direction balances recreation with the protection of wildlife, water, and other resources.

The plan establishes focused recreation emphasis areas in ten popular areas, with direction tailored to the unique recreation opportunities of each area. The plan includes objectives to increase and enhance recreational opportunities, such as:

- improving accessible design of recreation sites,
- adding shoreline access day-use sites,
- converting unsustainable dispersed campsites to more highly developed campgrounds,
- adding loop trail connections, and
- acquiring new road or trail rights-of-way for access to public lands.

# Moving Forward



Photo by Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service

## Projects that Add Up (not random acts...)

The Custer Gallatin Land Management Plan includes objectives to move towards desired conditions. An objective is a “concise, measurable, and time-specific statement of a desired rate of progress toward a desired condition or conditions.” Example objectives relate to weed treatment or trail maintenance. Taken together, the plan objectives reflect a diverse program that includes resource enhancement, hazardous fuel reduction, timber and wood products, new recreation facilities, and road, trail, and facility maintenance.

## Monitoring/Adaptive Management Cycle

Adaptive management is a cyclical process of assessment, plan development, and monitoring the plan’s effectiveness. With completion of the plan, the Custer Gallatin moves into plan implementation and monitoring.

Monitoring is designed to test whether assumptions made during planning were accurate and to track progress towards meeting the plan’s desired conditions. Monitoring informs the Forest Service and the public whether a change to the plan is needed.

Beginning two years after the revised plan’s effective date and every two years afterward, the Forest Service will evaluate the new monitoring information to determine how well the plan achieves desired conditions. The Forest Service will release a monitoring report to the public outlining the monitoring results. The report will indicate whether a change to the plan, management actions, or the monitoring program may be warranted. The biennial monitoring report is a critical element in the adaptive-management cycle because it tells the Forest Service and the public whether the plan is working.

## CARING FOR THIS PLACE TOGETHER

### Partners and partnerships – Caring for this place together

- The plan supports collaboration and coordination with Tribal governments, states, counties and other federal agencies, other entities, and the public.
- The Custer Gallatin will emphasize constructive partnerships with communities, individuals, organizations, agencies, and Tribes to implement the plan.
- We invite all those who have invested time and passion in the plan revision to bring this energy to future management.
- We look forward to working together to care for and sustain these lands.

### For more information:

🌐 <https://www.fs.usda.gov/custergallatin>

f @CusterGallatinNationalForest

🐦 @GallatinNF & @CusterNF

# Photos

All photos listed clockwise starting in upper left corner unless otherwise noted.

## Cover

Bear's Tooth, the namesake for the Beartooth Mountains, Beartooth Pass. Jacob Frank, NPS.

Elk bugling in rut, Yellowstone National Park. Terry Jones, retired USFS.

National National Landmarks on the Sioux Ranger District. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

## Page 2

Ross Pass with native wildflower Indian Paintbrush. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

Mountain goats alongside Beartooth Scenic Byway. Terry Jones, retired USFS.

Mountain biking in the Beartooth Ranger District. USDA Forest Service.

## Page 3

Natural Bridge Falls Yellowstone Ranger District. USDA Forest Service.

Grizzly Bear. Terry Jones, retired USFS.

Iconic Vista Point atop Beartooth Scenic Byway. Terry Jones, retired USFS.

## Page 4

Bozeman Field School Plan Revision Youth Engagement. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service. Youth engagement in 2018/2019.

Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

## Page 5

Families enjoy winter snowmobiling across the Custer Gallatin. USDA Forest Service.

Hiking and backpacking in the the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Brandon Spenser, USDA Forest Service.

Lauren Oswald, Sioux Ranger District. USDA Forest Service.

Bison forages outside Gardiner, Montana, on Forest. USDA Forest Service.

Hikers enjoying the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. USDA Forest Service.

Anglers enjoy rich fishing opportunities on across the Forest. USDA Forest Service.

## Page 7

Rolling Ponderosa Pine Savannas Sioux Ranger District. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

Native grassland interspersed with Ponderosa Pine landscapes Ashland Ranger District. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

Big Pryor Mountain, Beartooth Ranger District is an ecological crossroads, rich in biodiversity. Terry Jones, retired USFS.

Quake Lake ghost tree, Hebgen Lake Ranger District. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

nergan, USDA Forest Service.

East side of the Crazy Mountains looking into Big Timber Canyon, Yellowstone Ranger District. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

One of thousands of high-alpine lakes in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. USDA Forest Service.

## Page 9

Family backpack in the Absaroka Beartooth's. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

Sibanye-Stillwater is one of the world's largest producers of platinum and palladium, in part operating on NFS lands within the Custer Gallatin National Forest. Terry Jones, retired USDA Forest Service.

## Page 11

Reforestation planting Sioux Ranger District. Meghan Reedy, USDA Forest Service.

Native Whitebark Pine Saplings at our high alpine nursery in the Little Bear drainage. USDA Forest Service.

North Bridgers Forest Health Project removing diseased and insect infested trees pockets. Morgan De Meyer, USDA Forest Service.

Prescribed burning, Hebgen Lake Ranger District. USDA Forest Service.

## Page 12

Interagency firefighters from the BLM and Forest Service conduct burning operations to protect communities. Scott Studiner, USDA Forest Service.

Firefighters during initial attack. Terry Jones, retired USFS.

Robertson Draw Fire immediately outside of Red Lodge, Montana, 2021. USDA Forest Service.

## Page 13

Bison forages outside Hebgen Lake Ranger District. Molly Moore, USDA Forest Service.

Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout reintroduced in Soda Butte Creek Gardiner Ranger District. USDA Forest Service.

Modeling as depicted in the Connectivity studies with Center for Large Landscape Conservation, USDA Forest Service.

## Page 14

Petroglyphs. USDA Forest Service, Best Friends enjoying the Forest. USDA Forest Service,

Hikers heading into Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness. USDA Forest Service.

Anglers enjoying Hyalite Reservoir. USDA Forest Service.

Weed pulling. USDA Forest Service. Ranger documenting botany sample

of native plant. USDA Forest Service. Pack Train, wilderness maintenance. USDA Forest Service.

## Page 15

Overlooking Bozeman from M Trail. Mariah Leuschen-Lonergan, USDA Forest Service.

## Page 16

Heading on hitch into the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness, Terry Jones, retired USDA Forest Service.

This Zine is intended to provide information about the contents of the plan and record of decision. Readers are encouraged to refer to the plan, environmental impact statement, and record of decision for more information. [www.fs.usda.gov/custergallatin](http://www.fs.usda.gov/custergallatin)

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To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ProgramDiscriminationComplaint) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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