

I appreciate this opportunity to provide comments on the draft Gallatin Plan Revision Assessment. I reviewed the National Trail management direction that is found in the existing Forest Plan and see that it does not provide adequate direction for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST). As such, I agree that, “[t]here is a need to incorporate direction for management of...the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail....” However, the assessment also describes that, “[n]ational scenic trails...cannot be modified in forest plan revision,” which is vague guidance that could be inconsistent with NFMA integration requirements. The revised Plan needs to address the National Trails System Act provisions as implemented through the CDNST Comprehensive Plan, FSM 2353, and FSH 1909.12 policy direction. To assist the planning team with finalizing the assessment and preparing the NEPA proposed action and alternatives, I have attached a CDNST Planning Handbook and a map of a potential CDNST management corridor for the planning area.

Wilderness evaluations and NEPA assessments should describe the positive CDNST benefits if the Lionhead roadless area is recommended for wilderness designation. Protecting wilderness values would include establishing a plan component that identifies recommend wilderness as not being suitable for motor vehicle use and mechanized transport. Management of recommended wilderness to protect wilderness characteristics supports the conservation purposes of this National Scenic Trail and is fully compatible with the CDNST nature and purposes.

To assist with public review of the proposed action and DEIS, please post at the appropriate time geospatial data that supports DEIS alternatives and maps. In addition to the Geospatial data layers currently available, the posted NEPA proposed action and alternatives data should also include the following geospatial information:

- Recommended Wilderness, Special Emphasis Areas, and the extent of proposed and established Designated Areas including the proposed management corridors for National Scenic and Historic Trails (FSH 1909.12 24.43 and FSM 2353.44(b))
- CDNST travel route as an independent data layer
- Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class to be established - Summer
- Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class to be established - Winter
- Scenic Integrity Objectives/Levels to be established
- Lands that May be Suitable for Timber Production

Please contact me at NSTrail@comcast.net if you have any questions. Thank you for accepting and considering these comments.

Greg Warren