File Code: 2760
Date: September 21, 2018

Jon Raby
Montana/Dakotas Acting State Director
Bureau of Land Management
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, MT 59101

Dear Mr. Raby:

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Region One, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Montana State Office, has prepared a land-withdrawal application package for the purpose of withdrawing 30,370 acres of National Forest System lands within the Custer Gallatin National Forest from location and entry under the United States mining laws. The proposed withdrawal would be for a 20 year term and is subject to valid existing mineral rights. The proposed withdrawal does not include exclusion from leasing or geothermal laws.

These areas provide a unique combination of special places and outstanding resource values directly north of Yellowstone National Park. As part of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, the proposed withdrawal area provides important wildlife habitat and corridors for grizzly bear, Canada lynx and a variety of other wildlife species. Similarly, the area exhibits high quality outdoor recreation values because of its spectacular scenery, scenic integrity, abundance of wildlife and relatively undisturbed characteristics, the maintenance of which is significant to the local economy. The area proposed for withdrawal is also the headwaters of a number of streams that eventually flow into the Yellowstone River. Maintenance of water quality and high value aquatic resources are important economic values for local recreational fisheries and uses.

On May 30, 2018, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was signed as a result of the impacts disclosed by an environmental assessment (EA) prepared for the proposed withdrawal of approximately 30,370 acres of land in Park County, Montana, administered by the Custer Gallatin National Forest, known as the Emigrant Crevice Mineral Withdrawal. The Bureau of Land Management’s Butte Field Office participated in this analysis as a Cooperating Agency and approved the FONSI as directed by BLM guidance.

As the delegated official for the U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, I recommend withdrawal of the lands from location and entry under the mining laws to the Secretary of the Interior. All items outlined in 43 CFR 2310.3-2(b) have been addressed and the withdrawal application package is attached. Copies will be forwarded to the BLM’s Branch of Realty, Lands, and Renewable Energy in the Montana/Dakota’s State Office for final processing. I request a Public Land Order package with all appropriate documentation be forwarded to the Secretary for his consideration.
The BLM is authorized to use the Forest Service *Federal Register* billing code to publish the Order if approved by the Secretary. The Forest Service code is 3411–15–P.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Michael Huffine, Region One Minerals and Geology Program Manager, at (406) 329-3634 or mshuffine@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

LEANNE M. MARTEN
Regional Forester

Enclosure(s)

cc: Mary Erickson, Michael Huffine