

## **SLEEPING GIANT-BEARTOOTH**

The following is the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society's 1984-2005 canvassing questionnaire regarding roadless values for possible Congressional consideration of wilderness for Holter.

### **SUMMARY OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & HABITAT VALUES FOR ROADLESS AREAS**

**ROADLESS AREA** (name) Holter 1,743 net acres (#A1610-HNF Forest Plan 1986)  
National Forest Helena NF  
Direction and distance to nearest town Helena – 20 mi S; Wolf Creek – 12 mi. NW  
Hunting Districts in which Roadless Area occurs: HD339  
Individual providing this information: Gayle Joslin  
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**1) Please briefly explain the importance of the area to wildlife and fisheries. Consider wildlife use/habitat for as many of the following as pertinent: Elk, Mule deer, White-tailed deer, Moose, Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Other species of concern (important seasonal use, security, denning habitat, connectivity to other important habitats, spawning habitat, coldwater downstream fisheries, etc.)** Five separate parcels make up this Roadless Area. Two of the parcels lie west of the Missouri River in HD339, the others are east of the river in HD455 and HD392. Bighorn sheep, Mountain Goats, Mule Deer, Elk, White-tailed Deer, Black Bear, Mountain Lion, Turkeys, and Grouse occur as well as a variety of other wildlife. The northern four segments constitute important Bighorn Sheep and Mountain Goats habitat. The Missouri River provides important fisheries.

**2) Is there hunter/angler access to the area?** YES. From the Missouri River and the Beartooth Wildlife Management Area. The MFWP Beartooth Wildlife Management Area adjoins the most northerly Roadless Area parcel, while the next parcel down adjoins the Gates of the Mountains Wilderness and the Gates of the Mountains Game Preserve. The next two parcels to the south adjoin the Game Preserve and the river. The most southerly parcel is apparently an addition to the Wilderness Area addition along the scenic Beaver Creek-Refrigerator Canyon road, Hunters use the area heavily.

**3) Are there adjoining parcels of land that could be added to this Roadless Area?** No. These parcels fill out the missing pieces to other jurisdictional roadless areas.

**4) Does this Roadless Area provide a buffer zone between Wilderness and developed public or private lands?** Yes, four of the parcels provide a buffer between Wilderness and private lands, or they connect previously disjointed roadless/Wilderness lands or provide continuity to the Beartooth Wildlife Management Area or the Gates of the Mountains Game Preserve.

**5) Are there areas in this Roadless Area that should be removed from Roadless status?**  
NO

**6) Are there opportunities for reclamation within this area to improve its Roadless**

**character?** No, they are largely undeveloped.

**7) What are the threats to this Roadless Area? (motorized use/expansion; ski developments, etc.)**

There are few threats to these areas because of the rugged nature of the country.

**8) Does this area contribute to wildlife movement through the landscape?** YES. These parcels fill in the puzzle pieces that constitute a wildlife movement corridor across the Missouri River and ultimately between the Continental Divide to the west and the Big Belt Mountains to the east. Many species of wildlife are known to cross the Missouri in the vicinity of these parcels including bighorn sheep, mountain goats, mountain lions, moose, mule deer, elk, bear, and even pronghorn antelope.

**9) Is there good/poor travel planning on surrounding public lands?** N/A. It is not a matter of travel planning, rather it is a function of the rugged nature of the country that is not conducive to motorized travel. Surrounding lands are in private and state ownership.

**10) Would the surrounding areas of non-Roadless public lands be capable of providing yearlong functional habitat and security?** Yes, because much of the adjacent land are already in Wilderness or Wildlife Management Area, or Game Preserve status.

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Thank you for this opportunity to comment regarding recommendations for our valued Inventoried Roadless Areas. I commend the HLCNF for extending this opportunity and providing an informative and educational method to gather this information through the Interactive Mapping exercise offered at the Open House that was held at Jorgensen's Inn on March 7, 2016.

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Retired Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society**