

Connie Kees

December 14, 2018

Mr. Keith Lannom  
Forest Supervisor  
Payette National Forest  
500 N. Mission St., Building 2  
McCall, Idaho, 83638

Mr. Lannom,

I have been a full-time resident in McCall for the last 44 years. For the past 27 years, I have lived in Bear Basin. My property is approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a mile from the Payette National Forest boundary. The Bear Basin portion of the proposed Granite Meadows Project is in my neighborhood and is of great interest to me. Many private landowners in the Bear Basin area, including myself, have worked diligently through a grant agreement with the county to reduce hazardous fuels on our property to do our part for fire mitigation. To date, approximately 80 acres have been treated in the Bear Basin area on private property. My neighbors and I are committed to improving

the health of our forested land and are continually working to help create a fire adaptive neighborhood to help insure a safer and more effective wildfire response should the unthinkable happen.

I support the goals of the proposed Granite Meadows Project CPLRP that pertain to thinning, pre-scribed burning, livestock grazing and all activities that help reduce the threat of unmanageable wildfires. Due to increased wildfire activity across the nation, millions of acres have burned in the United States. Thank you for the hard work, effort, and careful planning that the Payette Forest Coalition and the local U.S. Forest Service staff have put forth to be pro-active in creating a fire-smart, resilient landscape in the proposed Granite Meadows Project for now and the future. I appreciate the fact that you are tackling the wildfire challenge head-on, by using thinning and pre-scribed burning as a pro-active strategy to address the Wildland Urban Interface fire potential in the Payette National Forest near my home, but also near the community of McCall.

It's important to also note that livestock grazing has had a positive impact on my private land at Bear Basin. It has been an excellent, effective treatment to reduce fuels and I always look forward to the sheep's arrival each summer. The sheep have also been valuable in suppressing noxious weeds.

As I drive in to the Payette National Forest above my

house, I am greeted by a U.S. Forest Service sign which says, "Payette National Forest, Land of Many Uses." For the last 27 years, I have had the opportunity to daily observe individuals and families entering the forest via the Bear Basin Road. Historically, users have been:

U.S. Forest Service Smokejumpers

Wood gatherers

Loggers

Shepherders

Horseback riders

Hikers

Bikers  
 Joggers  
 Hunters

Campers

Mushroom & huckleberry pickers

The Bear Basin area is well loved and well used by many. It is the "crown jewel" of McCall in terms of close proximity to town, easy accessibility, and the fact that it is "land of many uses," just as the Forest Service sign conveys. People love using this area for many different reasons. In recent years, there has been increased activity with the addition of summer biking trails, and winter x-country ski trails. (Many of these trails were originally game and stock trails).

Explosive growth in Valley County has brought many changes to our beloved community. I believe we now have the opportunity

to find a balance on the many, varied interests of everyone in our community. All should have access to the Bear Basin area, without giving any one group special privileges at the expense of longtime historical users. It's important for wood gatherers, loggers, and sheep herders, whose livelihoods depend on it, to have continued access to the Bear Basin area, as well as those who use it for recreation. It is my hope that we can all come together to work through any obstacles and objections to bring forth the goals of the proposed Granite Meadows Project CFLR.

Thank you for considering everyone's point of view.

Sincerely,

Connie L. Kes