Mark Rhodes

2029 Alder Ave.

Lewiston, Idaho 83501

February 15, 2024

Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest

ATTN: Objection Reviewing Officer, Northern Region 1

26 Fort Missoula Road

Missoula, MT 59804

**Regarding: Interested Person Request to Participate in the “*2023 Land Management Plan for Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests*” (“Forest Plan”) and the “*Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Land Management Plan Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests*” (“FEIS”) Objection Resolution Process**

Dear Objection Reviewing Officer:

**Objection Issues that I have an interest in:**

* East Meadow Creek should not be a Recommended Wilderness Area (RWA)
* Recommended Wilderness Designations impacting motorized Off-Highway Vehicle opportunities. Current uses in Meadow Creek areas need to allowed and continue.
* No objectives addressing the need for more open trails for motorized use.
* There is no objective for Users with Disabilities in the 2023 Land Management Plan.
* Wildfire. There is nothing addressing how a fire will be fought in the event that more Wilderness is created near towns/communities in Community Protection Zones.

**Brief Explanation of Objection:**

* Recommended Wilderness Areas proximity to local communities. Orogrande residents witnessed how devastating a wildfire can be when a community is less than 5 miles away and Roadless Area Boundary butts up to private property. Areas in and around East Meadow Creek, Elk City, Dixie, Newsome Creek and other Roadless Areas like Burpee Mountain should not be designated as RWA.
* Roadless Areas should not butt up to private property.
* The forest service changed a section of road designation from full size vehicle to 50” without informing the local community, nor informing us back in 2008 when we were working closely with the district office to identify all our routes.
* There is nothing in the 2023 Land Management Plan addressing our growing motorized recreation user groups.
* There needs to be something added into the Land Management Plan addressing how the Forest will address wildfires instead of letting play there role, which is what happened in Orogrande. The Land Management Plan states the Forest will embrace and let wildfire play its role. This is unacceptable and not what our greater Elk City Area wants or needs. We need the forest service to take a more active role in vegetation management in Community Protection Zones.
* Non-motorized ROS kills sets the stage for motorized closures to Off-Highway Vehicles and up to Full Size Vehicle classifications.
* My comments back in 2020 were not considered in the 2023 Land Management Plan for the Nez-Perce-Clearwater National Forests.

**Statement Demonstrating the Requestor’s previous participation in the Planning Process:**

Since the start of the Forest Plan Revision, I have been providing comment information as seen by my 2020 comment letter. Tangible data has been provided and ignored. I own a family cabin in Orogrande and experienced what a wildfire can do and seen how the forest service responded. There should have been more that the Forest Service could have done with the fuels reduction project to create a better community protection zone and direct the fire back into itself or another direction.

Sincerely

Mark Rhodes

cc:

Idaho County Commissioner Board, Skip Brandt

Senator James Risch  
Senator Mike Crapo

Representative Russ Fulcher