Jean Poxleitner

118 Wheatland Lane

Grangeville, Idaho 83530

February 16, 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:**

* Recommended Wilderness Areas
* Users with Disabilities not addressed in Land Management Plan
* No objective creating an opportunity when they lose a motorized or non-motorized opportunity somewhere else locally in the forest
* No objective saying that when roads are selected for decommissioning that the forest will consider transforming the road into a motorized trail or non-motorized trail
* Wildfire. There is nothing addressing how a fire will be fought in the event that more Wilderness is created near towns like Elk City, Newsome, Dixie, Orogrande.

**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.
* Forest Service removed Umatilla foot bridge and never replaced access for equine users to enjoy trails that they were once able to enjoy. This bridge could have allowed fire fighters access to fight the Orogrande fire.
* There was another access road to the Frisco Mine pit that Orogrande residents used prior to the Roadless Rule enactment. The road existed during the Fuels Reduction Project. In 2018, the road was decommissioned when a State Legislature and Roadless Commission came out for a field trip. Friends of the Clearwater noticed the road and said that it needed to be decommission. This road was not created during the Fuels Reduction Project and should not have been decommissioned. I used to ride this road with my horse and access up on top of the mountain for enjoyable ride. Wildland Fire Fighters commented that it would have been nice to use that road to access the forest quicker during the Williams Creek Fire. The road needs to be re-established.
* There needs to be something added into the Land Management Plan addressing how the Forest will address wildfires instead of letting play its 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.
* There is plenty of opportunity around Orogrande, Elk City and other outlaying areas to take the gates down and creating loops for equine, bicycles, hikers, users with disabilities and motorized users. I have provided two prime examples of the forest restricting access for non-motorized users. All we see is the forest restricting access.
* We’ve experienced and seen the devastation of the Williams Creek Fire and believe something more could have been done instead of letting the fire play its role, and still to this day, the campgrounds have not been re-established for recreation users.
* I have consistently commented about letting handicap and elderly spend time recreating in the forest and do not see where the Land Management Plans for those users.

**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 to the local office and supervisor office. I have also provided input to Karen Crosby who champions the Greater Elk City Area Community and residents’ concerns and issues. I have also personally attended Forest Revision Plan Sessions held in Elk City and spoken comments at townhall meeting held by Cheryl Probert in Elk City, and commented orally and written throughout this process. The Idaho County Commissioners submitted a Resolution Advisory Vote with Idaho County voters saying that they did not want any additional acres of Wilderness or Wild and Scenic Designations. I voted in favor of this ballot vote. I helped with a signature drive showing over 1,000 recreation users who do not want any additional RWAs, Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Designations. This tangible data has been ignored, and the residents and recreation users feel let down.

Sincerely

Jean Poxleitner

cc:

Idaho County Commissioner Board, Skip Brandt

Senator James Risch
Senator Mike Crapo

Representative Russ Fulcher