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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Protecting the Clearwater

Dear Sirs,

I am writing this letter to outline why I feel that the entire Clearwater river water shed should maintain the very highest levels of protection from development, logging and mining.

I am no outsider, even though I reside in Boise today. Let me begin by stating that I am a 4th generation Idahoan with deep roots in the Clearwater Country. My family homesteaded on the Weippe Prairie in the late 1870's. The cemetery is full of my relatives including my grand parents Walter and Elsie Carr. I grew up camping on the Lochsa and fishing Kelly Creek, White Sands and other tributaries. The giant bull moose that used to graze the meadows above Lochsa Lodge where always a big hit. Thanks to Plum Creeks horrible logging practices it is no more. What we do not need is more of that. Later we hunted elk on the Lochsa and our "camp" was typically at the mouth of Post Office Cree5, mile post 145. A portion of my fathers ash's are sprinkled right here. I shot my first elk at Colgate lick as a bright eyed and bushytailed 14 year old. My grandpa Walt has some of his ashes sprinkled at the "Lick". Walt, a former state legislature and a great grandpa rode his horse over the Lolo trail from Weippe in 1926 to hunt elk at the Lick and at Jerry Johnson hot springs as it was the largest elk herd in the Clearwater country. He work the look out on the North Fork at Moose Mountain and fought fires when necessary. I have ridden up The Weitas from the Bungalow to the flat above Renshaw's hunting camp, which the old timers called West Virginia Flat as it reminded them of from wench they have come. Fished Kelly and Monroe creeks, rafted the Lochsa and White sands. This last year we ran catarafts down both the south fork of the Clearwater and the Selway river. So suffice it to say, I think I know the Clearwater country pretty good. I also know that it is singular. There is not anyplace in Idaho or elsewhere that matches it in beauty, diversity or about any other way. Not the middle fork of the Salmon, or the south fork of the Salmon, the Payette is chopped to pieces and burned to smithereens. Cut to Pieces by old mine roads and littered with airstrips. Non campre'

If there was ever a place that cant be replaced in it's present form and needs to be protected it is the Clearwater Country. To stand at Indian Post Office, or the Sinque Hole or the Smoking Place and look south over the bitterroots is to see a landscape much as it was when Lewis and Clark starved by here in 1804. Such a large almost roadless expanse is a treasure for recreationist and wildlife. Certainly given the vast resources our country has at it's disposal and the absolutely uniqueness of this area it would be a shame if it were to experience the same fate as the state land along the lower Selway that our illustrious governor saw fit to clear cut.

I realize making a living in rural Idaho is difficult, but putting bread on Joe Smith's table in Orofino is not a good enough reason to mine, log and otherwise destroy this beautiful ecosystem at the expense of the entire country and all the generations to come. Down with Plum Creek, Down with land swaps, Down with unprotecting the Clearwater.

Sincerely

Mike Carr