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Comments: This is to express my concern with the amount of timber proposed to be extracted from the Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forest as proposed in the forest plan. The current plans permit timber harvest of fifty and eighty million board feet every year heading into the indefinite future, destroying wildlife habitat for grizzly bears, cougar, wolverine, bobcat, marten, fisher and other wild species. This is forest that belongs to the people of America, not to private lumber companies. Grizzly bears appear to be making a comeback in the Bitterroot after an absence of many years and the forest has the potential to harbor the diversity it carried many years ago. If this plan is implemented, the opportunity for that diverse ecosystem will be lost, probably forever. This roadless area should be given Wilderness protection to allow that to happen.

In order to harvest timber, the industrial operation would generate substantial greenhouse gas emissions that are the leading cause of the earth's rapidly changing climate and that would pollute the forest. These sources of greenhouse gas emissions are from equipment burning fossil fuels and from the deforestation of timber, which includes logging and clearcutting. The Forest Service's environmental impact statement for the forest plan fails to discuss this. It instead states that we are in a natural warming period, which is contrary to all current science. Trees can capture and store carbon dioxide, thereby reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Pacific Northwest forests can sequester more carbon than other forests in the West. The increased logging in all of the alternatives will reduce the potential of the Nez-Perce-Clearwater National Forests to mitigate global warming. Timbering should be eliminated from this forest plan.