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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Regional Forester, R-1

Attn: Nez Perce-Clearwater new forest plan objection (#44084) 26 Fort Missoula Road

Missoula, MT 59804 Dear Sirs:

I am writing to object to the awful decision to delete from Wilderness consideration two key components-of the proposed Great Burn Wilderness, a place that I have previously supported for designation as Wilderness. The new forest plan has wrongly and dangerously decided to dedicate the roadless-area north of Fish Lake to Hoodoo Pass, and also the Blacklead Mtn-Goat Lake area to high elevation snowmobile use.

This decision should be undone by the Regional Forester and the Reviewing Officer for these reasons:

Blacklead/Goat Lake

My previous trips to camp at Goat Lake saw so substantial a goat presence that my campsite had to be almost defended from the large numbers of curious and pesky goats. Now, their numbers have seriously declined. Snow machine use will surely further this decline, and the new wilderness boundary is unclear and unenforceable. This area is also poorly suited to machine use of any kind.

Fish Lakenorth

The new proposed wilderness boundary here is also unclear and could not be enforced, and also could not be limited to just winter machine use. Worse still, this is fragile, high elevation country. The snow machines capable of use here are extra noisy, high powered, and are also Very expensive. The proposal in the new forest plan prioritizes the use of noisy, winter toys, by rich people. But bad as that is, this plan also contradicts the goals of the Fish and Wildlife Service's new wolverine listing, as this whole area is key habitat for this rare and vanishing creature.

The Great Burn in general

The plan's awful deletions are ahistorical. No mention at all is made of the fact that for over 20 years there has been a clear, ecologically sound, broadly supported plan to establish the Great Burn. There is no evidence that the thousands of volunteer hours spent helping this great wilderness meant anything. Instead, much of the area has been handed over to new, mechanized arrivals of the toys of the wealthy. Good Forest Service decision making should always consider and fully understand the historical context of decisions. That did not happen here.

Please consider proposing an intact and undamaged Great Burn in your final decision.

Dennis Baird