

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/20/2024 4:00:00 AM

First name: Rick

Last name: Bass

Organization: Yaak Valley Forest Council

Title:

Comments: Dear U.S> Forest Service,

I write to you from the "Black Ram" region of the Yaak, on the Canadian border, of the Kootenai National Forest, in northwest Montana. A valley that was once 50% old growth is now but 10%, and the KNF is racing to clearcut (with vast clearcuts consistently exceeding the Forest Plan) ancient forest in the name of "fuels reduction." The nation's artists have rallied and continue rallying to the Black Ram region—poets, luthiers, musicians, photographers—as do scientists to study this incredibly unique old primary forest. A short-term footprint for an ASQ will pale in the damage such clearcutting would do to the USFS and the idea of our public lands providing any timber whatsoever. Black Ram is so inherently wrong that this single sale (being appealed by AFRC in their compliance to the Supreme Court) is capable of singlehandedly shutting down the U.S. Forest Service's timber sale program. The inability of the USFS to put their chainsaws down and admit they made a mistake at Unit 72 and in other old and mature forests in this proposed sale will be read about in history books for a hundred years hence. It is my fervent hope that NOGA protect Black Ram and all places like it, for reasons you've heard ad infinitum: carbon storage, biodiversity, water. And the integrity of your agency.

Sincerely,

Rick Bass

Yaak Valley Forest Council

P.S. Here is a poem by the poet laureate, Ada Limón, after a visit to the Black Ram forest

Attachment - Ada's poem.pdf - Poem the author included in his initial comment