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Organization:

Title:

Comments: RE: Great Burn

Forest Plan Revision

Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

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To Whom it May Concern:

I've just been notified of this transgression of our public lands by the Forest Service. What are you thinking? Whose drum are you dancing too? This is critical habitat and should be put away as Wilderness. I use Wilderness constantly, whether climbing mountains, backcountry skiing or hunting and these areas are precious few in a country this big. I'm copying the Lands Council's recommended options and comments because it's too late to come up with another letter of my own - but I believe in their analysis completely. Please select Option A for the following reasons:

- Only Option A for the Hoodoo Roadless Area guarantees traditional quiet recreation opportunities, critical winter habitat for sensitive species like mountain goats and wolverines, and connectivity for grizzly bears and other species between the Great Burn and the Cabinet-Yaak and Crown of the Continent ecosystems.
- Eliminate Option B which creates a motorized recreation management nightmare for the Nez Perce-Clearwater and Lolo National Forests by carving unenforceable boundaries in Recommended Wilderness. Any boundaries established for snowmobiles would be largely unenforceable. Signs would be ignored or snowed over, enforcement would be minimal and prosecution would be difficult if not impossible. Creating snowmobile areas would invite other uses incompatible with Wilderness to assert their activities in the same area, including ATVs, motorcycles or mountain biking.

The impact to historic mountain goat habitat security cannot be overstated. Mountain goats winter range is extremely limited and often consists of a single windblown ridge in a drainage. Displacement due to snowmobile disturbance will mean goats will perish in unsuitable habitat, especially for young of the year. Wolverine and lynx occupy the Great Burn. Snowmobiling creates hard surfaced travel corridors on the snow that allow coyotes and other competing predators to penetrate wintering areas for these species. One more thing, snowmobilers have "throttle brain". They've been caught chasing down animals with these machines many times and, in fact, a wolf was just chased down with a four-wheeler and shot in Washington. On facebook there was a video of a group of snowmobilers chasing a moose, which finally got exhausted, turned around and attacked the driver of the leading sled. We cannot trust these people to do the right thing.

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