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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My comment represents multiple interests and concerns. I grew up and live in Colville. I am a science teacher and outdoor club advisor at Colville High School. My wife and I have three children ages 5, 8 and 12. We do a number of non-motorized recreation activities (mountain biking, backpacking, hiking and back-country skiing). We are lucky to live here with this amazing resource. I believe firmly in the ideas of Wallace Stegner's "Geography of Hope" and the value of Wilderness for those who don't visit. This value is not only legitimate but vital for our collective psychological well-being.

My students at Colville High School studied and prepared public comment on the Forest Plan. They had near-unanimous conclusions - Maximum Wilderness Protection. Students see that once land is "ruined" from human interference it can never be fully recovered - they are frustrated at the level of "ruin" from previous generations and see a chance to save what is left in our area.

There is room on the CNF for all forms of recreation. I am a non-motorized advocate but I see the value for those who travel the forest by motorized routes. I am NOT an advocate of additional roads in the forest. I urge decision-makers to maintain or shrink road densities on the Colville.

I understand the economic impact of the timber industry. I believe Forest Plan logging levels and practices are collaborative and science-based. Vaagen Brothers and the Forestry Coalition are a model for other forests and stakeholders. I struggle with the cattle issues on the forest. Local cattlemen have been confrontational - not collaborative. The cultural value of ranching should not trump the fact that cattle are often incompatible with best practices for water quality, soils and biodiversity. As a science teacher I preach data-driven over emotional decisions and data on cattle grazing in the forest is often not positive. There are a few excellent, open-minded and earnest cattle ranchers who are in the minority.

Our outdoor recreation depends on public lands. As a hiker, backpacker and back-country skier I love the idea of maximum Wilderness designation. I see the huge potential of increased economic impact with a much larger portion of the Forest under Wilderness protection. As a mountain biker I do not want to be kicked out of excellent areas on the Forest but could live with Alternative R because I value Wilderness over my personal use. The ideal designation would mimic "backcountry" within Alternative P except with protection in perpetuity. This designation provides protections for water, wildlife and soils while allowing non-destructive use and maintenance (mountain bikes and chain-saws as necessary).

In conclusion, Wilderness and Wild/Scenic Rivers are preferable to non-perpetual protection. Maximum permanent protection is my hope and our duty to future users of the Colville National Forest. My prioritization of Forest Plan Alternatives would favor Alternative R followed by Alternative B with Alternative P as the bare minimum.

Thank you for your consideration of my ideas.

Scotty Stalp

Colville, WA

6/30/16