

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/5/2016 10:13:23 PM

First name: Anon

Last name: Marc

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Forest Plan Comment

Hello,

My name is Marc Gauthier and I am a wildlife biologist living in Stevens County, WA. I appreciate all the hard work and efforts that have gone into this revision process. I know that the staff have been very diligent in ensuring comments can and are received from the public on this very important revision. With that being said I do have several concerns with the draft plan. First and foremost I believe that management of our National Forests should not only focus on benefits to Americans both recreationally and financially but also on benefits to our overall environment and to the wildlife who depend on that healthy ecosystem. The revision should be commended for including the buffers along water bodies in the managed parts of the forest, that follow the Best Available Science when it comes to protecting water quality and fish habitat. I definitely support the options that offer the greatest protections to those resources. When it comes to the designations for the roadless areas is where my major concerns lie. These areas combined only represent nearly 20% of the entire CNF. In other National Forests in the Northwest wilderness can and in some instances does account for over 40% of the entire forest. These wilderness areas offer the best buffers against climate change, provide the best wildlife habitat, and the areas least impacted by the spread of invasive weeds. They also best protect our headwater streams to ensure clean and cold water. By designating all the roadless areas as wilderness that still would leave 80% of the forest accessible for timber and resource extraction and offer the use of mechanized equipment and free range cattle opportunities. In all reality it should be more of a 50/50 split half for the humans and half for the wildlife and the water flowing downstream. It is very disconcerting to see options presented in this draft that would very seriously undercut the suggestion that I have just made. I believe these recommendations are a result of serious lobbying by certain local groups and individuals that have succeeded in convincing the agency that they were going too far. I want to be very clear saying that I do not believe that is the sentiment of the majority of local residents and definitely not the state and country as a whole, the people that this forest actually belongs too. I ask you to not succumb to local pressures but to stand up as the caretakers of this fantastic natural and public resource, to do your jobs as the publics trustee and to acknowledge that 20% is not to much to leave alone, to manage as it has been managed for millions of years, by nature, for nature. I also hope that everyone involved sees that the plan offers benefits for all and that 80% of 1.1 million acres is more than enough to manage. Please reconsider and provide an option that makes all the inventoried roadless areas wilderness and help ensure the endangered species including Grizzly Bear, Caribou, Lynx and Bull Trout can still persist in this incredible part of the world. The best way to accomplish this is to set aside areas that don't allow off-road vehicles, cows, humans with guns and chainsaws, roads and weeds, and the bad that comes with mechanized human encroachment.

I will hope and pray that you choose the right outcome for the forest, for the region, for the people and for the water and wildlife!

Marc Gauthier

