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Comments: Comment on Colville National Forest Plan Revision

Dear Forest Supervisor Rodney Smoldon,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Colville National Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan Revision. The Forest and its roadless areas are important to me and many other Washingtonians, and they provide a home for many fish and wildlife species. It's important to protect and conserve the Forest for future generations.

I do not often get to recreate in the Colville National Forest, but despite its great distance from my home, I greatly appreciate its beauty. The Kettle Crest from Sherman Pass offers easy hiking to spectacular views. The famous open ponderosa pine parklands of 13 Mile roadless area have been famous for decades for their uniqueness. Abercrombie-Hooknose has ridgetop rambles with 360-degree views, and the roadless areas adjacent to the Salmo-Priest Wilderness protect the last chance for survival of our mountain caribou, as well as the views from Sullivan Lake.

Despite its vital habitat and connectivity values for wildlife and cherished recreation areas, only a small fraction of the Colville National Forest is currently protected. Wild roadless areas on the Forest should be protected in perpetuity for future generations of people and wildlife. They conserve critical habitat, preserve wildlife connectivity, support outdoor recreation, and benefit local economies. I urge you to adopt conservation and wilderness measures to ensure a wild, healthy future in northeast Washington. The first short list of recommendations for wilderness put forth by the Colville National Forest a few years ago were simply inadequate.

Please recommend the following wild roadless areas on the Colville National Forest as wilderness: Profanity, Bald Snow, Hoodoo, Abercrombie-Hooknose, Salmo-Priest Adjacent, Thirteenmile, and Quartzite.

The wild roadless areas of the Kettle Crest are of paramount importance and must be protected as wilderness. I oppose the proposed Special Interest Area designation because it is toothless and too weak, and request wilderness recommendations for all deserving roadless areas on the Kettle Crest, including at least the Profanity, Bald Snow, Hoodoo, and Thirteenmile roadless areas. Other national forests have also shown that special interest areas can easily be erased by future administrations-- Gifford Pinchot National Forest once had a special interest botanical area "protecting" the tallest firs on the planet, and conveniently removed the classification to log almost the entire grove in the 1970s. Wilderness is the only way to truly protect these special places.

I most like Alternative P for its goals to restore ecological resilience, reduce damaging roads, and increase use of fire as a restoration tool. But Alternative P falls far short in protecting large old trees, watershed health, and wilderness quality lands, and in other areas. As part of the Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan revision, I urge you to adopt Alternative P after adding explicit safeguards for large old trees, improving aquatic habitat protections and habitat connectivity, and adding the wilderness recommendations noted above.

"Matrix" lands will remain plentiful on the Colville National Forest even with maximizing wilderness potential. There are thousands of acres of overstocked plantation lands to be thinned and hundreds of miles of non-wilderness trail for other users, but the special vestiges of pre-settlement lands on this forest deserve full

protection and your support as wilderness.

Thank you again for accepting public comments on this important issue.

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