

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/11/2018 7:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am commenting today to add my support for the Granite Meadows Project.

I would like to commend the projects stated goals of "emphasizing

creation/retention of old forest characteristics." I am not aware of the inventory of "old growth" forest on the Payette, however I support any efforts forest management takes to maintain old growth on this forest, as I assume much of it has already been removed in commercial treatment, or stand replacement extreme fire events. As a previous college student of fire and forest ecology in the Pacific Northwest, and a hotshot and smokejumper for 10 years, the fire resistance the forests have adapted to over the millennia is the best road map to forest health available to us. Furthermore a landscape with old forest, and old growth character is the most desirable from a recreationists standpoint. This rings true whether one is hunting, birding, peak bagging, riding in a saddle, on a dirt bike, mountain bike, atv, snowmobile, utv, skiing, or boating. The recreation economy is a major financial driver in our community.

I fully support the forests proposals for prescribed fire regimes. I urge forest management to increase its public relations, and education in regards to prescribed fire. Smoke, increasingly at unhealthy levels during the summer, from local fires, and large fires in adjacent regions create a problem that may very well create push-back on Spring and Fall prescribed fire activities. Due to this real possibility, I recommend increased public outreach showing steps local fire managers are taking to mitigate this health risk, to an already weary public. I happen to know first hand how talented, and committed many of the Payette's prescribed fire managers, and staff are, let's make sure that awareness increases.

I would urge forest leadership to give special attention to legitimizing user created trails, particularly any trails that connect to, and or enhance the newly completed Payette Lake Trail. Forest involvement on future phases of the Payette lake Trail (East side) where applicable would be wise, and I strongly encourage it.

I also urge the Payette to continue strengthening its relationship with CITRA (Central Idaho Trail Riders Association). Utilizing volunteers on dirt bikes, who are able to carry chainsaws, power hedge-trimmers and tread tools is an opportunity not to be missed. Forest leadership would be on the right side of history if it takes strides to listen to this organization's leaders.

Lastly, with the rapid increase in the UTV industry, the Payette would be smart to begin planning for UTV specific trails. If forest leadership is slow on this, they risk increased resource damage, and public relations blemishes in this growing recreation group.

Keep up the good work.