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Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft management plan for the Nez Perce Clearwater National Forest. I would like to see the entire Great Burn area protected as wilderness. The Forest Service closed this area to snow machines several years ago. The area was closed to protect mountain goats, wolverines, lynx and other wildlife. It was also closed to protect the area's wilderness character. I am puzzled to learn that the Forest Service may now roll back these protections. Please keep the Great Burn off-limits to snowmobiles.

I also want to see the Mallard-Larkins, East Meadow Creek, and West Meadow Creek protected as wilderness. The Mallard-Larkins is a favorite destination for primitive backcountry recreation. East and West Meadow Creek harbor the most diverse assemblage of native fish in the Rocky Mountains. Wilderness designation will protect these areas and these values for current and future generations alike.

Finally, I want to encourage the Forest Service to protect the North Fork and South Fork Clearwater Rivers as "wild and scenic". The North Fork is a tremendous cutthroat trout fishery, and one of Idaho's few B-run steelhead fisheries is found in the South Fork. Wild and scenic rivers designation would protect these free-flowing rivers from dams and water diversions. Although no new dams have been built in Idaho for several years, it is possible that proposals for more dams could come back to life given projected changes to Idaho's climate.