

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/2/2020 9:11:30 PM

First name: Mary

Last name: Lagenderfer

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for traveling to Missoula and having the open house. I appreciated the chance to talk with various foresters.

I began backpacking in the Great Burn in 1982 and have visited the area at least 2-3 times a year. It is so accessible, wild, and just a beautiful landscape. I never get tired of it! I love seeing the mountain goats on the cliffs above Heart Lake.

It seems to me that allowing snowmobiles access to the west side of the recommended wilderness is not wise for several reasons. 1) Once snowmobiles are allowed to use the area soon then other mechanized and motorized vehicles will be present. Then the likelihood of this area ever becoming designated Wilderness is doomed forever.

2) The Forest Supervisor "wants to hear our voices" but the true inhabitants of this area animals and plants have no voice! Their needs are easily forgotten in the din of human voices. Snowmobiles have a negative impact on mountain goats and their reproduction. Other animals, especially wolverines and lynx need these critical habitats to survive. Bears need these wildlife corridors. Please listen closely to these quiet voices. Again once they are gone, we are big losers.

3) It seems that if snowmobiles are legally allowed into this area it simply rewards illegal behavior and promotes further disregard of other restrictions/laws. It is time to think beyond one's own self-interest to the needs of the planet, plants and animals.

4) As the population continues to expand these wild places will have even more economic draw as people search for solitude, quiet and more peace. Once wilderness characteristics are degraded the area will be less inviting and bring less income to local communities.

Therefore, please do not open any portion of the Great Burn to snowmobiles. Please protect the entire area as Wilderness until that designation is made.

I would also like to support the Mallard-Larkins and East and West Meadow Creek areas for wilderness protection.

As for suitable wild and scenic river designations, I would like to see the North Fork of the Clearwater have this designation due to its cutthroat trout and bull trout populations. The South Fork of the Clearwater also should be protected due to the B-run steelhead fishery. Dams or diversions in these streams would lessen their draw for fishermen and thus lose economic benefit for the surrounding communities.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely, Mary