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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest Plan Revisions

Dear Supervisor Probert,

Dear Supervisor Probert,

As one of the American citizens that are owners of public lands in the U.S., I am very concerned about the revisions of this forest plan. I lived in NW Montana for 28 years and visited the forests, streams and rivers of Idaho quite often.

I am a citizen who cares very deeply about our nation's rivers, I am writing to strongly URGE, to plead, with the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest to protect the clean water, free-flow, and outstanding values of its incredible Wild and Scenic eligible streams in its revised forest plan.

With four designated wilderness areas and five Wild and Scenic designated rivers, the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest is home to some of our nation's most ecologically intact public lands and waters. This beautiful and irreplaceable landscape TRULY DESERVES absolute and complete protection in order to safeguard these resources for ALL generations both now and in the future!!

Tributaries to the Clearwater, Lochsa, Salmon, Selway and Snake rivers feed the forests that support local timber industries, while simultaneously providing amazing world-class recreation opportunities AND jobs for local river guides and outfitters. These lands provide an incredible amount of monetary benefit to Idaho in the form of recreation and tourist dollars spent every single year and that money seems to go up as time goes by!! Stewarded for thousands of years by indigenous peoples, these rivers and streams are steeped in rich cultural history and are home to a large number of cultural sites, including one of three places indicated in Nimi'ipuu oral history as a place-of-origin for the Nez Perce Tribe. All these places surely must be fully protected forever.

The majority of streams on the Forest are designated critical habitat for one or more ESA-listed fish species, and many of them are projected to provide crucial cold water refuge for Westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout as the climate warms. This is hugely important for their survival!!! The lands adjacent to these waterways also support healthy populations of elk, moose, rare carnivores such as Canada lynx and fisher, and over a half-dozen endemic snail species. ALL species of all kinds and types are deserving of full and complete protection!!

These waters are truly the lifeblood of the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest, as well as countless communities AND ecosystems downstream. THEY DESERVE AND THEY NEED TO BE COMPLETELY PROTECTED!!!

After recognizing 89 deserving rivers and streams to be eligible for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Forest's 2018 Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Report dramatically reduced protections by finding only 42% of those to be "suitable" for continued protections! WHAT??? This is absolutely unwarranted and unacceptable!!! Within the four alternatives identified in the draft environmental impact statement for the revised Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest Plan, as few as zero and as many as only 37 rivers and streams would retain critical protections!! THIS IS HORRIFIC AND UNACCEPTABLE, DONE WITH NO REASONABLE, FACTUAL REASON!!!! This is a horrible threat to some of our nation's most cherished waterways! PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW THIS HORRIBLE PLAN TO TAKE EFFECT, NOT EVER!!!

As the Forest finalizes its new forest plan, determining the long-term fate of its lands, waters, wildlife and the rural communities that depend on those resources for their cultural and economic survival, I implore it to:

- Provide and select a new forest plan alternative that finds ALL 89 Wild and Scenic eligible streams to be suitable for designation;
- Retain protections for ALL 89 Wild and Scenic eligible 89 streams regardless of whether they are found "suitable" for designation;
- Show its work AND PROVIDE VALID REASONS for finding ANY stream to be unsuitable for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. THIS IS THE LEAST YOU SHOULD DO FOR CITIZEN INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY!!! THIS IS SIMPLY THE CORRECT THING TO DO FOR EVERYONE CONCERNED.

THANK YOU for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

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