

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/15/2020 10:58:01 PM

First name: Saunie

Last name: H.

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Forest plan revision Nez Perce/Clearwater

The draft plan poses a severe threat to the remaining 1.5-million acres of undeveloped wildlands in the Clearwater. The FS has indicated that any roadless areas not recommended as wilderness in the new forest plan could be developed (logged). These irreplaceable roadless areas, which provide some of the best habitat in the Basin, should instead be recommended as Wilderness, including the roadless areas adjacent to the Gospel - Hump Wilderness, which were wrongfully omitted in the 2008 Idaho Roadless Rule. Weitas Creek, in particular, deserves to be recommended.

The draft plan barely addresses existing designated Wilderness, and omits any mention of improving old wilderness stewardship plans. Idaho Rivers United has a good analysis of the flawed study of wild rivers eligible for permanent protection.

Furthermore, current forest plans on both forests acknowledge the potential for grizzlies to return to the Clearwater Basin. Several grizzly bear observations in the Clearwater were in fact confirmed last summer. The Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) recently sent the Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest Supervisor a letter stating that the agency must consult with the FWS when projects may potentially impact grizzlies. Unfortunately, the new draft forest plan barely mentions grizzly bears, much less discusses essential migration corridors and the habitat security necessary for recovery. This is gross negligence on the part of the Forest Service.

A key missing component of the forest plan revision on the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests is adequate protection for grizzly bears and their necessary habitat to recover.

Sincerely,
Saundra Holloway