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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello forest planning team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIS and DPlan for the Nez Perce Clearwater NF. I greatly appreciate the team for allowing and facilitating this process.

There are a few points that I would like to make in comment to the plan, and to have considered in the review:

1) Please maintain the existing boundaries and regulations prohibiting motorized recreation in the Great Burn. This area is beautiful, and provides the rare opportunity for quiet recreation year-round. Even though I do not live directly bordering this forest, I gladly spend resources in the neighboring communities while I access this protected landscape. As a citizen I also value the presence of wildlife in the landscape such as wolverines. The idea of maybe being able to see this species one day while hiking in the back-country gets me excited, and I do not approve of the forest taking action to increase motorized use in wolverine denning habitat, particularly in the winter. Please do not decrease the size of the Great Burn to allow snowmobile access.

2) The revised plan needs to effectively manage grizzly bears for re-colonization of the Bitterroot Recovery Zone. I greatly value seeing grizzly bears on the landscape, and want to see Forest Service able to pro-actively manage campgrounds, recreation, and other forest management activities. I grew up in grizzly country, and the thought of a forest not provide campgrounds with proper food-storage devises when they know grizzlies are in the area makes me very nervous. Grizzly bears are an important part of the ecosystem, and recommended standards should be included such as:

- bear-resistant food storage and garbage containers shall be used at development sites and at any campgrounds or dispersed sites where exploration or production-related human occupancy is anticipated;

- garbage shall be removed in a timely manner;

- road kills shall be removed daily during active operating periods to a designated location determined in close coordination with respective agencies;

- feeding of wildlife shall not be allowed; and

- locations of work camps shall be approved in advance of operations. Food storage requirements shall be strictly adhered to in all work camps.

3) It is also really important to me that wildlife are able to cross highways and interstates safely. Please consider including these guidelines:

-Within areas specifically identified as being important for wildlife connectivity across highways, the Forest should cooperate with highway managers and other landowners to design approaches and crossings that contribute to wildlife and public safety.

- During the construction or reconstruction of highways that cross national Forest lands, or high use Forest roads, wildlife crossing features should be included in the design where necessary to contribute to connectivity of wildlife populations.

- Management activities within one-quarter mile of existing crossing features, and future crossing features developed through interagency coordination, should not prevent wildlife from using the crossing features. The vegetative and structural components of connectivity, including snags and downed wood, should be managed according to the desired conditions for vegetation.

4) Please take actions to protect the North Fork and South Fork of the Clearwater as Wild and Scenic. These are important rivers for ecological health, and there has never been a dam or diversion project that does not adversely effect aquatic connectivity. There are a multitude of different options for power rather than hydro-power that have drastically lower impacts on the landscape, and that do not takes decades to recover from. Dam removal is an expensive process and it would be advantageous for the FS to avoid having to go through the process.

Thank you for considering my comments, and for working so hard to manage a landscape that everyone can value and enjoy. I am from the west, and immensely value our public lands.

Kind regards,

Hannah Rasker