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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Wilderness and W&S rivers are the core of what makes Clearwater Country tick.

Rafting, backpacking, fishing, hunting, and other outdoor activities that are economic drivers in Idaho County all rely on large tracts of wild lands and pristine wild rivers. As a whitewater and fishing guide who works during the spring and early summer on the NP/CW, protecting this area is both important to me personally, as well as economically.

I am commenting in support of eligible wilderness areas and suitable wild and scenic rivers in the Nez Perce / Clearwater National Forest. While I support all recommended wilderness and wild and scenic rivers, some rise above others in their importance.

W&S Rivers:

The South Fork of the Clearwater and its major tributaries. The SFC is a tremendous fishery. Finding the SFC suitable for W&S river designation, even at the 'recreational' level along its main stem is an important step in protecting a wild stream for future anglers and recreationists. Tributaries such as American River, Red River, Johns Creek, and Silver Creek should receive scenic or wild level suitability recommendations.

Meadow Creek and its forks should be suitable as wild W&S rivers. Meadow Creek is a little known jewel and deserves the highest levels of protection for its values as wilderness, anadromous and resident fish habitat, and wildlife habitat. Meadow Creek is the most obvious choice for protection!

North Fork of the Clearwater and tributaries. The NFC is a beautiful place. In order to protect it from any future dam proposals or development, it should be found suitable for W&S designation. Additionally, tributaries such as Weitas Creek, Kelly Creek and its forks, Cayuse Creek, and the upper NFC tributaries should be found suitable as well.

Wilderness:

The Mallard Larkins should be eligible for Wilderness designation due to their value as wildlife habitat and their place in improving migration corridors. Mountain goats, elk, deer, wolverine, and moose, among other animals need this critical habitat to be protected into the future.

The Great Burn. This portion should also be found eligible. Its wild values are obvious.

Meadow Creek. For the same reasons as its suitability for W&S status, Meadow creek (both east and west) should be found eligible for wilderness. It is an incredible and wild watershed that should be preserved for future generations of both humans and animals.

Additionally, wilderness is wilderness. No consolations for seasonal snowmobile or other motorized/mechanized use should be allowed in potentially eligible or current wilderness areas.

Thank you!