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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Nez Pierce-Clearwater NF's Forest Plan Revision #44089

To whom it may concern,

I have enjoyed motorized recreation in our National Forests, winter and summer, for over 45 years. Throughout my life I have seen many of my family's treasured motorized opportunities vanish.

I oppose the Nez Pierce-Clearwater Forest Plan Revision #44089 for the following reasons-

1) Additional closures of valued ATV/motorcycle single track routes.

It is a fact that motorized use is increasing. The proposed actions in this plan make no effort to meet this demand. It's answer to this increased need not only ignores it, but takes the bold step to reduce motorized opportunities even further. Studies have shown that 97% of the visits to the forest are for motorized recreation. Your forest plan sends a clear message to these 97%, "You are not welcome!"

The relationship between the public and the Forest Service has seriously deteriorated in recent years. This proposal will only deepen this divide.

The F.S. must reconsider these closures and make an effort to work with the public to develop a plan that supports the needs of the majority of visitors. Doing so will help to restore the damaged relationship between the F.S. and the public.

2) Creation of more roadless areas-

The lands within the project area have been designated by congress as "Multiple Use". By converting these multiple use lands to "Recommended Wilderness Areas" or any non-motorized designation creates de facto wilderness. This action is illegal and must stop. Only congress has the authority to designate "Wilderness". The F.S's action of designating more "Wilderness" will surely invite lawsuit.

3) Permanent shut down of the "Great Burn" area to snowmobile use-

Historically, the Great Burn area has been open for snowmobile use. Of the 200,000 acres, about 20,000 have been enjoyed by snowmobilers since the late 70's. Access to this area for snowmobilers was denied in the recent Clearwater travel plan, about three years ago. Does the F.S. have evidence of damage that has occurred to the environment, habitat, or wildlife caused by snowmobiles during the 70's up to the point of closure? It has been three years since snowmobiles were allowed in the Great Burn. Surely, the F.S. can provide data that clearly shows the damage caused by snowmobile use ceasing from 2017 to the present. Please provide me with this information.

The impact on wildlife by snowmobile use in the Great Burn is absolutely non-existent. The DEIS concludes that snowmobiles invade mountain goat winter habitat and impact the mortality rate of mountain goats. This is completely false. Mountain goats need to forage for food where the snow depth is two feet or less. This is not enough snow for snowmobile use. There are numerous studies that show snowmobile/wildlife conflict to be very minimal. One study, a Greater Yellowstone assessment (Olliff 1999), concluded that, "Because mountain goat winter range is inaccessible and precipitous, goats and recreationists are not often coming into conflict." There is zero motorized use in the Selway Bitterroot, but mountain goats are declining at a faster rate than they are in the Great Burn.

The F.S. has not provided adequate, site-specific data that supports their claim of a harmful impact to wildlife or

the environment by snowmobile use. The Great Burn should be returned to it's previous designation. Open for snowmobiles.

Thank you for this consideration,
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