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Comments: Comments on Nez Perce Clearwater Plan revision

First, I want to say that the alternative submitted by Friends of the Clearwater should be analyzed in the Draft Plan Environmental Impact Assessment. That alternative used the best available science to advocate for measurable quantifiable standards to be included in the new plan. Thousands of public comment supported that alternative, including my own. The alternative based on one local county's desire to radically increase logging levels is unacceptable.

I am the leader of Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Bozeman Broadband. We have almost 200 supporters. We use the voices and activism of elders to advocate for clean air, clean water, wildlife and preservation of wild lands under the 1964 Wilderness Preservation Act. My family and friends visit Idaho regularly to enjoy the natural amenities, camping and floating rivers, and hiking. We spent four days several years ago at a conference learning about the landscape and the issues around conservation of Idaho's fantastic wild lands. There are serious issues facing the forest, especially due to climate change. We have observed that intact magnificent cedar forests have recently experienced virtually 100% timber die-offs, particularly south of Lowell, Idaho. The local ranger station informed us that the tree mortality was due to heat stress, part of climate change. I was appalled, and I have been participating in Forest Advisory Council meetings in Montana, including one today, where I offer that observation as a warning to timber interests and agency officials, that we must incorporate caution in forest planning now in this time of future uncertainty.

In particular, I would like to see all roadless areas, 1.5 million acres, considered for Wilderness designation. E.O. Wilson has said we need to set aside 50% of the planet as protected wild lands, and this is obviously an important place to take such action. Greenhouse gas emissions are the leading cause of the earth's rapidly changing climate, and the leading sources are from burning fossil fuels, and deforestation, which includes logging. We need to practice carbon sequestration, which trees do naturally. Your draft plan fails to acknowledge this human-caused phenomenon, instead referring to a "natural warming period."

Endangered species and threatened species command our attention, but the 'everyday' species that make the forest what it is are disappearing at alarming rates. Bird populations are plummeting. The National Forest system is required to assure successful populations of native wildlife on our public lands. It is not sufficient to yield responsibility for wildlife populations to state agencies. A study published by scientist Martin Nie of University of Montana, subtitled Debunking the Myth of State Supremacy, established this fact.

In this time of massive environmental change, pandemic, catastrophic wildfire, we need the protections that our nation has developed over generations, more than ever. The current administration of the United States, under President Donald Trump, is illegitimate. The Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue is corrupt. We all know it. I am sorry for the career foresters who are forced to comply with the administrations efforts to gut our legacy of environmental law, and to destroy our nation and our planet in the process.

Here's to those who are brave enough to act as whistleblowers, at peril of losing their jobs, to stand up for what they know is right, and protect what is left of our precious wild lands.

Thank you.

Nancy Ostlie

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