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Comments: Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest Plan comments

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Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest Plan

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[cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?project=44089](https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?project=44089)

We need wilderness, designated wilderness and wild rivers, standards for watersheds and fish and for wildlife habitat, standards for old-growth, and allowance for grizzly bear recovery.

A 2001 World Wildlife Fund study identified the Clearwater Basin as having the best habitat for large carnivores, including grizzlies, in the entire U.S. Northern Rockies and Southern Canadian Rockies. Last summer, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service confirmed that multiple grizzly bears were in the Clearwater.

The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests needs more rigorous standards for clean water, more emphasis on preservation of the wild landscape.

None of the proposed alternatives is acceptable. All seem worse than the existing plan. I support the Friends of the Clearwater's Citizen Conservation Biology Alternative. It is based on the best available science.

Going from 26 plus 17 management areas to 3 is a drastic reduction. It indicates a too-broadbrush management plan.

Carbon sequestration is very important - analysis must include the carbon cost of logging operations, road building, etc. In the age of climate disruption and the covid-19 pandemic we must do our utmost to reduce releases of carbon and stop any further unraveling of the web of life. We can not afford to lose more species; rather we must retain as much habitat as we possibly can for wildlife and plants. We must reduce timber harvest, and keep our distance from nature.

There are no quantitative standards for protecting watersheds and fish habitat in the new draft plan. The current plan has enforceable standards that establish upper limits or thresholds to protect old-growth, sensitive soils, riparian areas, water quality and wildlife habitat. These standards are legally binding, and the Forest Service must adhere to them when planning a project. The draft plan lacks measurable standards. Standards should be retained and not loosened. The draft plan would allow logging in designated old growth.

We need to increase wild and scenic river protections in places such as the North Fork of the Clearwater, and Colt Killed Creek.

We need to keep roadless areas roadless (and recommend to Congress that they be designated as Roadless Areas). These areas are irreplaceable. Prime examples include the areas adjacent to the Gospel-Hump Wilderness, and Weitas Creek.

We need to retain wilderness areas and designate them as such. Grizzly bears, Canada lynx, gray wolves, fishers, wolverines, salmon, steelhead, bull trout, salamanders, and all of their brethren need to retain their habitats and keep or expand connectivities. This includes all older trees. The Clearwater is unique in its coastal disjuncts. It is imperative that we retain these habitats.

The Friends of the Clearwater Citizen Alternative would ensure that quantitative standards and public accountability would be included in the new forest plan, that all remaining roadless wildlands would be off-limits to road building and logging, and seeks to reduce carbon emissions and promote carbon sequestration in our National Forests.

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