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Comments: My comments are for the Cottonwood Creek watershed.

I was a volunteer for the Inyo Forest in this area for many years. Mainly at the request of the Range Manger first Del Hubbs and later Lisa Simms (I understand now retired!). We recorded stream transects of both the South and North Fork along with general monitoring and maintenance of the area. The paiute cutthroat where the focus and concern. The upper grazing allotment was retired in the mid 90's and the area has been under recovery since. It is enjoyed by a regular and distinct group of users. The dispersed camping in the McCloud area seems to be stable and sustainable by users even with the continued decline of monitoring by the Inyo Forest. My last time there was to capture piaute cutthroat in order they be moved back to their native waters, Silver King Creek. Very fulfilling after so many years of watching over this place making it all the more special that it could deliver a vision of so many wildlife mangers over the past several decades who recognized how special this watershed is. Reviewing the CRMP proposal I find it encouraging but at the same time lacking...as follows:

Foremost all the tributaries of Cottonwood should be included especially Tres Plumas which holds at least 50% of the secluded population of paiute cutthroat and is a major source of the consistent stream flow for this watershed. The South Fork and Poison Creek are the main recreational areas and should come under the declaration as well.

The one grazing allotment held by Deep Springs has been "chronic problematic" since they regularly "slop" or allow their stock to wander over into the Big Basin Meadow on the main fork of Cottonwood Creek. The head cutting due this does not allow the Meadow to recover from the previous allotment there. Big Basin Meadow and the rock formation there has been historic as a remote rock-climbing venue and has fell out favor due to camps being overrun by ample summer stock that should not be there in numbers or presence. Range management by the Inyo Forest has been understaffed and deviating from good range monitoring for decades. Hopefully now with this effort to declare the Cotton Wood Creek Wild Scenic some consideration can be applied for better monitoring in future budgets and should be mentioned in this CRMP. A simple solution is not having to monitor an allotment altogether.

One issue not considered is the potential for renewed mining interests. Given what has come to pass with the proposed exploration drilling in the Mammoth Lakes/Hot Creek area some consideration should be given along these lines with this CRMP scoping.