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Title:

Comments: [External Email]Comments on 2022 IDFG Sheep Collaring Project (Salmon and Red River Ranger Districts)

[External Email]

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Dear Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest,

Following are my comments on the 2022 IDFG Sheep Collaring Project (Salmon and Red River Ranger Districts).

The Forest Service (FS) needs to reject Idaho Fish and Game's (IDFG) request to use helicopters to pursue, capture, and collar up to 20 bighorn sheep in the Gospel Hump and Frank Church-River of No Return Wildernesses, including the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor. Another 15 would be captured outside of Wilderness.

The noxious noise and chaos caused by helicopters chasing and hunting down bighorn sheep is for starters stressful enough. But also helicopter traffic in the Wilderness is prohibited by the Wilderness Act. This project does nothing to protect Wilderness in its untrammled state. The use of helicopters in the Wild and Scenic River corridor is also prohibited by the Frank Church-River of No Return Management Plan. This project has nothing to do with managing Wilderness and is likely some form of welfare for BigPharma related to the manufacture of mycoplasma vaccines, and/or mycoplasma testing equipment and materials.

Remember that Federal judges have admonished the FS and IDFG for their hurried implementation of illegal helicopter projects in Wilderness in the past. In fact, the courts have even warned the FS that the law is not on their side if they intend to proceed with further helicopter projects in the [Wilderness]. The agency should remember decisive legal opinions on past helicopter use for similar wildlife collaring projects.

The Forest Service needs to uphold the law and reject IDFG's latest proposal for motorized intrusion and intentional trammeling of the Gospel Hump and Frank Church-River of No Return Wildernesses in Idaho. IDFG needs to conduct this project outside of Wilderness before proposing to go into Wilderness.

Helicopters chasing and tormenting bighorn sheep could cause such stress so as to cause some deaths among the sheep, most likely more death and stress that could ever be caused by a strain of mycoplasma that might move through a herd.

Just say NO to helicopter-assisted capture of bighorn sheep in Wilderness.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Linda Tanner

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