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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,

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

THIS INTRUSION INTO DESIGNATED WILDERNESS LANDS IS 1- t o t a l l y u n n e c e s s a r y !!  
2- without benefit !! 3- A TOTAL WASTE OF OUR TAX DOLLARS!! IF YOU WERE DOING YOUR JOB,  
CARRYING OUT THE FS MISSION OF GENUINELY GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF OUR LANDS, YOU WOULD  
BE RESEARCHING THE EFFECTS OF GRAZING CATTLE ON OUR LANDS, ON THE EFFECTS OF A N Y  
AND ALL INTRUSIONS THAT HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT THUSFAR.

LEAVE OUR WILDERNESS AREAS BE! YOU CAN TEST WILDLIFE IN THE S U R R O U N D I N G LANDS,  
OUTSIDE OF THE WILDERNESS!!

I urge the Forest Service (FS) 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.

Helicopter pursuit and capture would cause undue stress on the bighorn sheep. Not only that, but the use of  
helicopters in Wilderness is prohibited by the Wilderness Act and the Forest Service's Wilderness implementing  
regulations, and this project is fundamentally antithetical to protecting 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. All told, this project has nothing to do with managing Wilderness and must be rejected.

Federal judges have admonished the FS and IDFG for their rushed implementation of unlawful helicopter  
projects in Wilderness in the past, with the courts warning the FS that it "must proceed very cautiously here  
because the law is not on their side if they intend to proceed with further helicopter projects in the [Wilderness]."  
It's wrong for the agency to entertain authorizing another such project following 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.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stephen Bailey

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