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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).

I HEARTILY URGE the Forest Service (FS) to REJECT Idaho Fish and Game's (IDFG) USE OF HELICOPTERS to PURSUE, CAPTURE && 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/capture CAUSE UNDUE STRESS on the bighorn sheep AND... the use of helicopters in WILDERNESS IS PROHIBITED by the Wilderness Act AND the Forest Service's Wilderness implementing regulations, AND this project is COMPLETELY 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. IN SHORT, this project has NOTHING TO DO W/MANAGING WILDERNESS. IT NEEDS TO BE REJECTED.

FEDERAL JUDGES have admonished the FS AND IDFG for their RUSHED implementation of UNLAWFUL helicopter projects in Wilderness in the past, 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 OUTRAGEOUS for the agency to EVEN THINK ABOUT 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, LIKE THE REST OF US, and REJECT IDFG's proposal for motorized INTRUSION && 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. LET'S LEAVE WILDERNESS WILD. ISN'T THAT WHAT I PAY MY TAXES FOR?

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Deborah Temple

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