

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/27/2022 1:01:59 AM

First name: Sheri

Last name: Kuticka

Organization:

Title:

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

[External Email]

If this message comes from an unexpected sender or references a vague/unexpected topic;

Use caution before clicking links or opening attachments.

Please send any concerns or suspicious messages to: [Spam.Abuse@usda.gov](mailto:Spam.Abuse@usda.gov)

Dear Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest,

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

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. The use of helicopters in Wilderness is prohibited by the Wilderness Act and the Forest Service's Wilderness implementing regulations, and this project is antithetical to protecting Wilderness in its untrammeled 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 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 cautiously 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 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.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sheri Kuticka

820 Weaver Ln.

Concord, CA 94518

925-798-6148