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Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bitterroot Front project. I've hiked or backpacked many of the canyons along the Bitterroot Front and this is one of my favorite areas for those activities. While I do agree in a general way with the project objectives, I'm very hesitant to support the project as described due to the sheer magnitude of the region involved, the lack of detailed information about what actions would be taken in different areas, and the obvious potential for major impacts to environmental health/quality and the experiences of recreational users like myself. My own inclinations would be (1) to restrict forest thinning and commercial harvest to the areas closest to the Bitterroot Valley and the private infrastructure located there, (2) to avoid the construction of any new roads, which would tend to increase motorized use and the likelihood of human-caused fires, and (3) to emphasize the maintenance of the region's character as a gateway to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. I was pleased to see that no roads would be constructed in Inventoried Roadless Areas, and that the maintenance of wilderness characteristics was to be prioritized in proposed wilderness, but it seems clear that a project of this scale deserves a full Environmental Impact Statement and consideration of a wider range of alternatives than are presented in the scoping document. Thank you for considering my comments.