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Comments: Dear USFS,

As you craft a Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Pacific Northwest Scenic Trail (PNT), please consider the fragile grizzly bear population in the Yaak valley of northwest Montana. A potentially high-use scenic trail, which the PNT could quickly become, is counter-productive to helping this population be restored. Presently there are maybe 3-5 breeding females in this sub-population. They have very limited alpine habitat for summer. The PNT bisects the small bit of high-elevation land the bears do have for forage. Even with the usage of recent years on the PNT in Yaak, grizzly bears are likely being displaced. This is all without mentioning the web of USFS roads in Yaak. There are only pockets of larger, roadless country for these bears...and yep, the PNT goes through some of these areas.

The bottom line is that the trail should be rerouted south of its existing path from Eureka, MT to Idaho. Dr.

Charles Jonkel, the esteemed grizzly bear biologist, said exactly this when the PNT was being proposed decades ago. He even loosely mapped out a route south of Yaak, through the Salish Mountains, connecting over to Idaho.

I do hope, as you craft a CMP, you'll keep the Yaak grizzly bears in mind and re-route the PNT south of Yaak.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Best,

Matt Holloway