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Comments: Karen Sheets comments on Draft Assessment and Species of Conservation Concern

The Draft Assessment appears to cover most criteria for Forest Planning. Although it may be mentioned, it did not stand out: Cumulative Effects on Lolo National Forest lands AND adjacent private timberlands and other private developments must be considered. In the past this really was not done. Treatments on private timberlands (and especially potential treatments) should always guide decisions on public land use.

As a note: Whitebark Pine populations are being significantly reduced by wild/man-caused fire, not just beetles and (as stated in the Draft Assessment) whitepine blister rust. The Thorne Creek Fire of 2021 took out a lot of the subalpine area north of Thompson Falls including many stands of Whitebark Pine.

Species of Conservation Concern: Although the Executive Summary says that the wolverine is being considered for listing it should be on the potential list. Because it is NOT on the US Fish and Wildlife Threatened or Endangered list for Montana (as T, E, or C). I do agree with the Potential additions from the Animal Appendix. All bats should be on the list due to whitenose disease. The Coeur D'Alene Salamander (as I understand it) was found along the St. Regis cutoff in the 1990s. Perhaps there is just habitat there. I do know that we were on the lookout for it in the 1990s in the Falls Creek/Muchwater area. The local (Rocky Mountain?) rattlesnake should also be on the list.