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Comments: To the Forest Service decision makers,

I strongly urge you to keep the existing elk habitat standards of the forest plan and close all of the 2011 travel plan trails to motorized use. Quality elk habitat is tied to their level of security from human impacts, especially during hunting season. Motorized access drastically increases noise pollution and hunting pressure. There are millions of acres throughout Idaho with motorized access; damaging remote wildlands hurts hunting by reducing secure elk habitat. These protections also benefit other species like bull trout, lynx, fisher, wolverine, and grizzly bears.

The Forest Service should follow their own regulations and adhere to federal law. Responding to repeated court decisions with this amendment is a slap in the face to accountability. In a time of unprecedented wildlife and biodiversity decline, the USFS should defend nature, not undermine it.

Threatened grizzly bears are in recovery in the west. These wildlands are excellent habitat and an important corridor for bears expanding their range beyond the Northern Continental Divide and Cabinet-Yaak ecosystems.

A unique extremely threatened population of bull trout exists in Fish Lake. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has concluded that motorized use, bringing more people to the area, would harm this population and possibly lead to its extirpation.

Four wild areas would be affected: The Great Burn/Kelly Creek, Weitas-Bighorn, Fish and Hungry Creeks, and the Elizabeth Lakes area of the Mallard-Larkins. Wild areas of this size and habitat quality exist nowhere else in the lower 48. All of them should be open to hikers, backpackers, and horse riders without the impacts of motorized use. All these areas would be protected as Wilderness in the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

These pristine areas MUST remain pristine and safe habitats for the native plants and animals who live there. Motorized vehicles damage trails, bring in too many people and often pollute the area with noise, exhaust fumes and trash. Do not destroy these amazing Idaho treasures!