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Organization:

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Comments: I write to express my frustration and disappointment with the Forest Service's updated management plan for the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest. Many of the plan's features that remove land protections are intolerable, and the removal of wild and scenic eligible protections from hundreds of miles of clean, free-flowing streams are especially indefensible.

The plan seems written explicitly for industry interests, blatantly ignoring the hundreds of comments made to not only retain but expand protections for rivers in the Nez Perce-Clearwater. Wild and scenic eligibility for rivers does not mean that the forest cannot see multiple uses, including extractive uses - it simply means that all uses must be conducted in ways that protect our water. I doubt you need to be reminded that the water flowing from our forests is the water that flows throughout Idaho and determines the quality of water that we drink and swim in. Without clean water to drink, we literally cannot live. In a world without clean water, a few more million dollars of timber coming from the forests seems irrelevant.

While protecting our rivers is a logical, economically defensible effort, I can't help hoping that you might share my soul-level instinct that we must not lose these sacred places. From the peace of sitting next to a clear-flowing creek, to the euphoria of launching off of Lochsa waves in the spring, to the quiet serenity of eating lunch under a cedar tree in the White Sands Creek canyon, I urge you to recognize how essential wild rivers are to our humanity. Do you remember the joy of jumping into a clear river with friends on a hot summer afternoon? Have you seen the wonder and laughter of children growing up exploring pools of a creek in the woods? Please, I urge you, do everything in your power to make sure that these places remain protected for generations to come.

At a minimum, all 88 rivers that were deemed eligible for protection during the study process should get that protection.

Yours in loving our wild places,

Chelsea Liddell

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