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Title:

Comments: Comments on Proposed Plans for the Great Burn

Hello! I live in Missoula. I'm writing today to express my support for designating the Great Burn roadless area an official Wilderness Area. Despite historic mining and logging activity within its boundaries, I believe this area of our country is today a special place, one that demonstrates how an ecosystem recovers from massive wildfire over the course of a century and allows both local residents and out of state visitors a chance to get away from it all in an easily accessed alpine zone. Both of these biological attributes are unique in the Lower 48.

The Great Burn is home to some of the Northern Rockies' most majestic wildlife. Elk, wolves, bears, wolverines, mountain goats--all deserve the relative peace and quiet that comes with a wilderness designation. They're surrounded by heavily used federal land all around the Great Burn; this area gives them a chance to recover their populations each year. Motorized recreationalists in particular have hundreds of miles of old logging roads they can play on in my state (on the Lolo National Forest) and in Idaho in the immediate vicinity of the Great Burn. No one is losing any access to those parts of the forest they already currently enjoy.

I've hiked some the trails of the Burn from Kid Lake in the south to Hub Lake in the north. I'm not in the best physical shape myself; the hard work it took to reach these special places made preserving their beauty and wildness that much more important to me. The Going to the Sun Road in Glacier National Park also allows easy access to an alpine zone full of wildlife, but something of its majesty is lost when you're in a traffic jam of thousands of impatient tourists.

In a time of increasing human populations and climate change future generations will also appreciate the Great Burn for all the reasons above.

Thank you very much for your time reading my comments on this part of the Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest Plan.

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