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First name: Jennifer

Last name: Nitz

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support protecting the following 21 rivers and streams as Wild and Scenic eligible. These streams have outstanding recreation, fish, and wildlife values:

\*Rattlesnake Creek

\*Rock Creek

\*Lolo Creek, South Fork Lolo Creek

\*Clark Fork River (St. Regis to Quinns)

\*Blackfoot River, North Fork Blackfoot River

\*Clearwater River, Colt Creek

\*Morrell Creek

\*Monture Creek, Middle Fork Monture Creek

\*Lodgepole Creek

\*North Fork Fish Creek, West Fork Fish Creek, Straight Creek, Cache Creek

\*Deer Creek, Cromie Creek, Up Up Creek

\*West Fork Thompson River

In addition to the 21 rivers and streams listed, Wild and Scenic eligible protections are also needed for the Thompson River, Fish Creek, South Fork Fish Creek, and the St. Regis River. The Forest Service dismisses these streams as neither unique nor important within western Montana, yet they possess remarkable values that are unique within the region of comparison.

The Thompson River contains important habitat connectivity between the Clark Fork River and cold water climate refuge headwaters in the West Fork Thompson River

Fish Creek possesses important habitat connectivity between the Clark Fork River and cold water climate refuge headwaters within the Great Burn

South Fork Fish Creek has important habitat connectivity between the Clark Fork River and cold water climate refuge headwaters in Cache Creek

St. Regis River is critical spawning grounds, and cold water climate refuge habitat

Westslope cutthroat trout must be added to the Species of Conservation Concern list due to lack of distribution of high genetic integrity and the potential for increased distribution resulting from restoration. The Forest Service needs to better operationalize climate refuge within its Conservation Watershed Network by protecting riverside shade cover, cold water seeps and springs, areas of persistent snowpack, microclimates, genetically pure fish populations, and riverine connectivity.

Consider these improvements within the Proposed Action to better protect western Montana rivers.