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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Lolo Forest Planning Team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the new Lolo Forest Plan.

Growing up in Western Montana, I've always loved our rivers, and have spent my life living by them, recreating on them, and working on them as a hydrologist. Many of my fondest memories have been made on or besides the rivers of Western Montana and these rivers are part of what makes our homes so special. I understand that the quality of these rivers is not an accident and that a large amount of work has gone into protecting, conserving, and even restoring these waterways, and I have a large amount of respect for all the folks that have worked hard to do so, including those at the USFS. The revision of the Lolo Forest Plan presents an opportunity to continue the legacy of protecting the rivers of this region and offers a junction, where I hope that we continue to preserve the heritage and opportunity of Western Montana.

I support the protections of all of the 21 rivers currently deemed as Wild and Scenic eligible for their outstanding 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.

As a committed whitewater boater and enthusiast I also request that the USFS reconsiders if Fish Creek and the Thompson River are Wild and Scenic eligible for their river running qualities as well as their important ecological features which as important habitat and potential cold water refugia will be especially important.

As a hydrologist, I request that the USFS take management steps to protect our forest ecosystems as best as possible from the imminent disruptions due to climate change including working to conserve climate refuges and by protecting riverside shade cover, cold water seeps and springs, areas of persistent snowpack, microclimates, genetically pure fish populations, and riverine connectivity.

Thank you for all of your ongoing work and I hope that you consider these additions to the Proposed Action to best protect western Montana rivers.