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Organization:

Title:

Comments: In 1983 I bicycled across the country, including down from Lolo Pass along Highway 12 into Missoula. The very long downhill was lovely, of course, but the thrilling part was knowing that the road itself (a) was younger than I and (b) bordered some of the last wild and, nearby, legally designated wilderness areas of the Lower 48. Had I stopped along the way and walked into National Forest, I would have been in bear and wolf country, as it was centuries before I passed through.

I plead that you make every effort to preserve and protect and leave untouched absolutely as much of this land as you can. I appreciate that the proposed action has retained the 1986 Recommended Wilderness Areas as a starting point, and I would like to offer some suggestions for what the Forest Service should include in the plan alternatives.

The Great Burn is one of the wildest areas in the Lower 48 and provides vital habitat for wolverines, mountain goats, grizzly bears, and other sensitive species. It is critical that the Forest Service continues to designate the Hoodoo recommended Wilderness along the same boundaries that have been in place for nearly 40 years. I would also like to see the Ward Eagle and Meadow Creek-Upper North Fork roadless areas managed as recommended Wilderness to protect the areas incredible wild character.

I also support retaining the 1986 recommended Wilderness for the Lolo Creek and Quigg/Slide Rock Areas. The Forest Service should also consider recommending Wilderness for the Stony Mountain roadless area, which is also important for the Rock Creek watershed.

The Cube Iron-Silcox area is a wild roadless complex that provides excellent connectivity between the Cabinet, Bitterroot, and Mission Mountains. I would like this area to be managed as recommended Wilderness to protect species connectivity and ensure opportunities for quiet recreation.

Furthermore, I support the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act and would like to see all of the plan components of the collaboratively created agreement reflected in the Forest plans analysis.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed action and for all the work that has gone into the plan revision process so far.