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First name: Jeff

Last name: Wentzel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I strongly object to the Flathead Forest Plan Suitability Changes: Winter Travel Management and Recommended Wilderness for USDA Forest Service. The following are just a few of the reasons I object to the amendment and believe the Flathead National Forest is acting outside the authority given to it by congress.

First, we just spent years creating a new Flathead National Forest Plan, released in 2018, that was decades overdue and is required by law to be revised every 15 years. The "old Forest Plan" became essentially meaningless because of all the amendments added to it made the original plan obsolete. The Forest Service is creating Forest Plans that it has no intention of implementing and just "managing by amendment" that does not require the same public input and analysis as a Forest Plan. I find the Forest Service actions to be unfair and the Forest Service should be required to pass an entirely new Forest Plan rather than keep amending one that is only a few years old.

Second, the Forest Service has failed to "identify a necessary need" to make the changes to a Forest Plan revised just a few short years ago. These areas have been managed for decades that have allowed limited mechanized use. The Forest Service saw no reason or need to close these areas when creating the 2018 forest plan to meet their so-called "desired forest conditions". Now just a few short years later they claim an amendment is needed to achieve the Forest Plan objectives that they couldn't even include in the original plan. What conditions have changed in the past 6 years that are different from the past several decades? I see no studies done in the past 6 years that have shown any change in threatened and endangered wildlife species, including Canada lynx and wolverine, as well as whitebark pine restoration. If these areas were open for decades and there has been no observable change in the last 6 years I can see no reason to change the uses allowed in these areas.

Third, the Forest Service has no legal authority to create wilderness. This authority alone rests with the Congress of the United States. The Forest Service cannot arbitrarily disallow all mechanized use in large areas under their management treating it as de-facto wilderness without legislation passed by Congress. These areas are intended to be managed for the benefit of the public. Locking these areas up to almost all uses and not preventing active management will just lead to more forest fires.

The population around the Flathead National Forest is exploding and the public is demanding the Forest be managed properly for all sorts of different uses. So as the population grows the Forest Service is reducing the pitiful amount of open roads and trails we have for mechanized use. This just leads to more and more user conflicts and illegal activity. It is time the Forest Service stop ignoring the local community and illegally locking up our forests. NO MORE WILDERNESS. We want a larger well managed mechanized trail system and a forest managed by a well thought out plan not an amendment process that doesn't have the same scrutiny as a Forest Plan.