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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Restrict motorized use in the proposed Great Burn Wilderness Area

Dear Supervisor Brazell:

I am writing to provide comments about the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests Plan revision.

The Forest Service should not open any portion of the proposed Great Burn Wilderness Area to snowmobiles. The agency just adopted a travel plan in 2011 that restricts motorized use in the Great Burn in order to protect the area and its wildlife. Doing away with these protections would harm wildlife and wilderness. It's also a slap in the face to members of the public who supported the 2011 travel plan.

While I am disappointed in the proposal for the Great Burn, I support the expanded boundary for the proposed Mallard-Larkins Wilderness Area. The new boundary follows readily identifiable geographic features and enhances protection for wildlife and wilderness.

I also support the proposal for wilderness in East Meadow Creek. The Forest Service should expand the wilderness proposal to include West Meadow Creek in order to protect the entire watershed, its anadromous fisheries, and its cultural resources. Protecting only the east half is like splitting the baby.

The Forest Service must also restrict motorized and mechanized use from all proposed wilderness areas on the forest in order to protect wilderness character and wildlife. If nonwilderness uses are allowed, then the special features and values of these areas will not be fully protected, nor will Congress ever designate these areas as wilderness. Of course, this is a well-documented strategy of off road users as a way of insuring that potential wilderness areas are dropped from consideration. Please don't fall into this trap.

Sincerely,
Mike Ihli

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