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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Great Burn Comments

Dear Forest Service,

I am writing to ask that you please maintain the 40 year legacy of Recommended Wilderness in the Great Burn by selecting Proposed Action Option A for the Hoodoo (Great Burn) Roadless Area and adding the Bighorn-Weitas Roadless Area to Recommended Wilderness status.

Only Option A for the Hoodoo Roadless Area guarantees traditional quiet recreation opportunities, critical winter habitat for sensitive species like mountain goats and wolverines, and connectivity for grizzly bears and other species between the Great Burn and the Cabinet-Yaak and Crown of the Continent ecosystems.

Option B should be eliminated because it creates a motorized recreation management nightmare for the Nez Perce-Clearwater and Lolo National Forests by carving unenforceable boundaries in Recommended Wilderness. Any boundaries established for snowmobiles would be largely unenforceable. Signs would be ignored or snowed over, enforcement would be minimal and prosecution would be difficult if not impossible. Creating snowmobile areas would invite other uses incompatible with Wilderness to assert their activities in the same area, including ATVs, motorcycles or mountain biking.

The impact to historic mountain goat habitat security cannot be overstated. Mountain goats winter range is extremely limited and often consists of a single windblown ridge in a drainage. Displacement due to snowmobile disturbance will mean goats will perish in unsuitable habitat, especially for young of the year.

Wolverine and lynx occupy the Great Burn. Snowmobiling creates hard surfaced travel corridors on the snow that allow coyotes and other competing predators to penetrate wintering areas for these species.

I encourage you to select Option A for the reasons stated above.

Thank you for your consideration,

Julie Schaffer  
Spokane, WA