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Dear Forest Plan Revision Team,

Thank you for hosting the field tours this past week on the Wild and Scenic Rivers process. It was impressive to see the number and diversity of interests represented at the tour I attended at Wildhorse Creek. We are pleased to see that level of public involvement in this process. I was not able to attend the Saturday field tour - could you provide me with a rough list of the people/organizations who attended that one?

As a follow up to Friday's field tour, I had a few thoughts that I would like to convey to the forest plan revision team:

1) I think the revision team should to develop a better answer to the question "Why Wild & Scenic Rivers?" beyond just referencing that "we have to do it because it is in the regulations." This specific question came up a couple times on the Wildhorse tour. It is important to make the public aware of why the Wild & Scenic Rivers system exists and counter the common (and misguided) refrain that this designation is just another stacked restriction that doesn't have any purpose. Clearly, the WSR Act has had some huge successes in protecting special waterways throughout the country in the last 50 years. While I fully understand that it is not the Forest Service's role to specifically advocate for WSRs, it is important that you provide the public with a complete picture of that process and why we're going through it as part of forest planning. It is worth noting that the Idaho Legislature passed a bipartisan resolution earlier this year commemorating WSRs that does an excellent job highlighting why they are important. I would suggest that the revision team draw upon that resolution for talking points at upcoming workshops to emphasize why WSRs are part of the forest plan revision process.

2) Does the revision team have specific examples of how WSR designations can enhance the values of the river? That would be helpful to have on hand to respond to an anticipated line of questions from the public.

3) I think it would be helpful for the revision team to have the chart showing the interim protection measures for different W&S classifications on hand for all future field tours/workshops. There was a lot of discussion and confusion around what you can and can't do if a river is deemed eligible. That chart (found in previous FS presentations regarding W&S rivers) is really clear and helpful, and should be used to help clear up any future confusion on that topic.

Thank you for encouraging public involvement throughout this process.

Regards,

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