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Comments:

February 27, 2019

Mr. Jeff Hunteman Wilderness Study Coordinator

Salmon-Challis National Forest 1206 South Challis Street Salmon, Idaho 83467

RE: Comments on Salmon-Challis Proposed Wilderness "Final Inventory" and "Current Evaluation Phase"

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed wilderness study. I am writing formal public comments regarding the Salmon-Challis National Forest Wilderness Study.

I have lived, worked and recreated in and around most of the proposed wilderness inventory and evaluation areas for over 40 years. I live in this area due to opportunity and choice. I have had the opportunity to make a living in and around the inventory and evaluation area in the mining and construction field. I have chosen to stay in and around the inventory and evaluation area due to the many multiple use opportunities in this area. I have been an avid backcountry skier, dirt bike rider, UTV rider, hunter, fisherman, bicyclist, horseback rider and hiker. This area has offered me the ability to share with family and friends many life-changing experiences.

After looking up the 1964 Wilderness Act and reading the definition of wilderness in the Act, (reprinted below), it surprised me that the inventory and evaluation has so much land involved in the processes. Years of snow machining to our favorite backcountry ski mountains, riding dirt bikes and UTV's on roads, trails and single track, being able to get to high mountain lakes to fish in a weekend and travel back to our favorite hunting areas and using manmade systems to do all of this does not sound "untrammeled by man."

"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

I will comment on the areas that I have experienced throughout my 40 years of working and recreating in the area. The first set of comments are to address the sections marked in the color salmon on the Salmon-Challis National Forest Wilderness Inventory and Evaluation Process Map (Focal Wilderness Evaluation Areas):

South Cabin Creek Peak

Every summer we camp in the Yankee Fork and Seafoam areas to access the many manmade jeep, UTV and single-track trails to explore, enjoy the scenery, access high mountain lakes and gather firewood. Several in our group would never be able to see this area or fish in the lakes if these manmade routes were not usable to motorized equipment. Every winter we use this area with snow machines to access remote mountains for backcountry skiing. I know this area is heavily used by the bicycling community because we see them every time we are in this area. At this time this area is being logged and thinned out which will help in producing a healthier and more useful forest.

Without accesses, this recreation would be taken away from the public except for the very few that are privileged enough to have the resources and time to use this area. Wilderness would take this area out of multiple use and lock it up from the average person forever.

Comment:

I did not see where all the improvements by man in this area were used in the inventory. There are many miles of manmade roads and trails in this area that are maintained by the Forest Service and/or private individuals. This area has been trammled by man for over a century by cattle ranchers, miners, hunters/ fishermen , recreationist, loggers, firewood gathers and the Boy Scouts of America and does not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." This area does not meet the definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

West Fork Morgan Plus

I hunt and trail ride in this area and have seen remanences of past logging. Several roads and trails give me better access into the Frank Church Wilderness area especially around the White Goat Lake area and Camas Creek area that borders the Frank Church Wilderness. If this area were to become wilderness, it would take away motorized use for recreation, logging, and ranching and take it out of multi -use and close it to the average person. Wilderness would make the approaches to the Frank Church Wilderness unattainable for many people due to the length of approach and time. Wilderness would remove any industries ability for use.

Comment:

I did not see where all the improvements by man in this area were used in the inventory. There are many miles of manmade roads, trails stock water troughs and fences in this area that are maintained by the Forest Service and/or private individuals. This area has been trammled by man for over a century by cattle ranchers, loggers, hunters/fishermen, and recreationist and does not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." This area does not meet the definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

Spud Creek

My family and I frequent this area quite often as it is just a short distance from our home. It has become a favorite short UTV ride in an afternoon to have a picnic, walk around the old mining equipment that has been left behind and enjoy the vistas of the Spud Creek drainage.

Comment:

I did not see where all the improvements by man in this area were used in the inventory. There are some manmade roads, trails, and fences in this area that are maintained by private individuals. There has been historic mining in all the finger drainages and retains good motorized trails for hunting access. This area has been trammled by man for over a century by cattle ranchers, miners, hunters and recreationist and does not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." This area does not meet the definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

JMJP Pine

This area has a good loop trail that takes in several numbered Forest Service trails, 4186, 4187, 4189, and 4051.

Comment:

I did not see where all the improvements by man in this area were used in the inventory. This is a very small area but still has several Forest Service trails that border the JMJP Wilderness and retain an area that is still accessible to hunters, ranchers and recreationist and has definitely been trammled by man and does not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." This area does not meet the definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

Pahsimeroi Mountains

This area is in my backyard and is where I taught my kids how to ride motorcycles, hunt, and fish. Many times, we have gone for a ride to Grouse Lake and back after work/school or have taken a day ride from the house over into Pahsimeroi and up to Quake Lake to go fishing. Often, we would take a ride up to Crane Basin to explore the old airplane bomber wreck and access the many canyons to start our hunting expeditions or snowmachine into this area to begin our backcountry skiing expedition. I have family and friends that use this area for mountain climbing expeditions, and if this area was removed from multiple use by changing it into wilderness, they tell me the approaches to the mountains would be too far and it would eliminate their recreation opportunities.

Comment:

I did not see where all the improvements by man in this area were used in the inventory. There are many miles of manmade roads, trails, fence lines and water troughs in this area that are maintained by Forest Service and/or private individuals. This area has been trammled by man for over a century by cattle ranchers, hunters/fishermen, and recreationist and does not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation ." This area does not meet the definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

Borah Plus

My family and friends spend time at Carlson Lake every year. We ride in with motorized equipment and fish and camp at the lake. These mountains were one of our favorite places until the closure (Wilderness Study Area) in the southern portion of the Borah range. I used to frequent Mariam Lake, Pass Lake, and Swauger lake several times a season but with the closure of this area, the approaches to the lakes are too far to make a weekend trip . Several of my family and friends are unable to make the extended approach on foot to these lakes once this area was put into Wilderness study area and motorized access was taken away. We also use this area to snow machine into and start our backcountry skiing expedition. I have family and friends that use this area for mountain climbing expeditions and if this area was removed from multiple use by changing it into wilderness, they tell me the approaches to the mountains would be too far and it would eliminate their recreation opportunities.

Comment

I did not see where all the improvements by man in this area were used in the inventory. There are many miles of manmade roads, trails, fence lines and water troughs in this area that are maintained by Forest Service and private individuals. This area has been trammled by man for over a century by cattle ranchers, hunters/fishermen, and recreationist and does not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." This area does not meet the definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

North Lemhi Range

I have spent many years in this mountain range on a motorcycle exploring, hunting and fishing. I have fished many of the lakes in this area, from Basin, Bucks and Bear Valley lakes to the north and Yellow, Everson, Mill and Devil lakes to the south and most of the lakes in between. I have been on every trail that links Pahsimeroi Valley to the Lemhi Valley from Mores Cr. Trail - Hayden Cr. at the north end of the North Lemhi Range to Saw Mill Canyon - Middle Fork Little Timber Cr. in the southern end of the North Lemhi Range and everything in between. I have explored the many mining sites that existed in this mountain range. We also use this area to snow machine into and start our backcountry skiing expedition. I have family and friends that use this area for

mountain climbing expeditions and if this area was removed from multiple use by changing it into wilderness, they tell me the approaches to the mountains would be too far and it would eliminate their recreation opportunities.

Comment

I did not see where all the improvements by man in this area were used in the inventory. There are many miles of manmade roads, trails, fence lines and water troughs in this area that are maintained by Forest Service and private individuals. This area has been trammled by man for over a century by miners, cattle ranchers, hunters/fishermen, and recreationist and does not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." This area does not meet the definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

This section will discuss the wilderness evaluation areas that are marked in yellow (Wilderness Evaluation Areas) on the Salmon -Challis National Forest Wilderness Inventory and Evaluation Process Map. I will not discuss these areas one by one, but talk about them in a whole since it seems apparent, they have not made it into the "Focal Wilderness Evaluation Areas" at this time. The areas that I (family and friends) use in this class are:

Seafoam Bubble Lola Creek Copper Mountain South Motorway

Spring Basin Squaw Grouse Peak

Spring Hill Sunset King

Sheephorn Mountain Yellow Jacket

Talyor Mountain Porphyry Ridge Cobalt

In my opinion, the above-listed areas are no different from those listed in the "Focal Wilderness Evaluation Area." In my use of these listed lands, there is no clear distinction from one section to another that makes you aware that you just crossed over into a wilderness like area, as when you cross from multiple use land to the Frank Church Wilderness. I work in one of the proposed areas and retrieve firewood fuel to heat my home in many of the areas. I feel that I am being singled out as the common man and being discriminated against by a select few, and most of which don't even live close to the area.

I have not had the privilege to visit all the Salmon-Challis National Forest Wilderness proposed areas, but I would think, with the majority of them closer to populated areas, they most likely have been trammled by man and do not meet the "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation."

It appears that roads, trails (motorized and none moto rized), fences, mining claims, water rights, grazing allotments, logging, and many other items were left out of the inventory stage. All the areas listed above have U.S. Forest Service numbered and/or named roads, trails and single-track. The majority have some reminisce of historic mining, as well as active mining, trapping and timber harvest, equipment and structures. Almost all have fencing and watering troughs. It seems that we have been led to believe that the areas in question meet the definition of wilderness. It looks as though the inventory stage of this process could have been whittled down a lot more. I do not understand how the fine print at the bottom of the Salmon-Challis National Forest Wilderness

In ventry and Evaluation Process Map can call any of the proposal "Unroaded". Every bit of this inventory map has roads within its boundaries. Also, what about all the trails and infrastructures? I would hope that the evaluation stage identifies all factors and not just those that favor only one side.

It is disturbing to see tax dollars so frivolously spent in a reevaluation of a reevaluation of an evaluation. The land in the Salmon -Challis proposed wilderness inventory and evaluation were inventoried and evaluated 40 years ago and deemed not to meet wilderness characteristics at that time. What has changed to the land in question? Besides having more use from people to make it even more out of spec with the wilderness definition. Tax dollars have paid for this review several times in the past. Why must we pay for it again? The

policy is broken and needs to change. It seems that certain entities want to take multiple-use public lands and lock it up from the masses for a select few that have the resources to use it.

Thank you for reviewing my comments. I look forward to seeing the outcome.

Bran Tritthart

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