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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

After review of the Salmon-Challis Forest Plan Revision #49464 and specifically the potential expanded wilderness designation I am very concerned about the economic impact to the local communities and region. Today we see the impact of regulation that has all but eliminated 2 of the 3 significant economic drivers for the area. Specifically almost all elimination of logging/wood processing and mining with the last agricultural base being substantially impacted if the wilderness designations were expanded. We do have secondary economic drivers with recreation and tourism, but the seasonality and employment as well as dollar contribution do not come close to matching agricultures contributions.

If wilderness designation was expanded and prevented grazing these lands it would significantly impact our community. Ranches in the area are not feasible without their grazing rights on public lands. If the ranchers go out of business the cash flow follows through with the local businesses and even the tax base for our schools and other county improvements.

Furthermore if the ranches go out of business their private lands run high risk of sales and subdivision and a significant impact and erosion of open land is lost. Keeping the private land open and not subdivided carries even more value than expanding wilderness areas when comparing disruption to wildlife and the ecosystem. Think of the impact to the Chinook Salmon recovery if you were now dealing with 50 fold the number of water right holders and riparian river bank owners? You would be complicating matters for your peers that are working hard to improve river and stream quality for the Chinook Salmon. I do not see any improvement in this area occurring on the subdivided creeks such as Williams, Agency, etc. The greater improvements are only manageable working with fewer landowners in areas with low residential concentration.

I want my feedback recorded clearly opposed to expanding Wilderness designation of the evaluation focal areas:

1. North Slope Pioneers
2. Burnt Creek Big Lost
3. JMJP Sagebrush
4. JMJP Pine
5. Spud Creek
6. Borah Plus
7. South Lemhi Range
8. Pahsimeroi Mountains

Evaluation Focal Areas

Remaining Forest

9. South Cabin Peak
10. Horsethief
11. West Fork Morgan Plus
12. North Lemhi Range
13. Leacock Point
14. Chipps Creek
15. Blackbird Mountain
16. Stein Mountain

We can continue with the good management practices that cooperatively exist between the BLM and Forest Service along with the current stakeholders and continue with a Forest Plan similar to what we have in use today.

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