



Kinnikinnick Chapter of The Idaho Native Plant Society

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Kootenai National Forest
Three Rivers Ranger District
1437 N. Hwy 2
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Attn: Mike Herrin
District Ranger

Via email: comments-northern-kootenai-three-rivers@fs.fed.us

Re: Motorized Use Designations Project

The Kinnikinnick Chapter of the Idaho Native Plant Society would like to submit comments on the Motorized Use Designations Project currently being developed by the Kootenai National Forest's Three Rivers Ranger District. We wish to receive both paper and compact disc copies of the EA and decision for this project.

We support the proposed action to *prohibit cross-country motorized use on the Idaho portion of the district*. We also support the Forest Service's recommendation to protect natural resources by limiting motorized access for dispersed camping to the existing open route system.

As the project's scoping notice indicates, approximately 42,000 acres on the district lie within Idaho (Upper Callahan and Keeler drainages, and a small portion of the Buckhorn Ridge area). This area in Idaho is not covered under the 2001 Off-Highway Vehicle Amendment which prohibits motorized use off existing roads or trails. Much of this area lies within sensitive lands along the West Cabinet Mountain divide and drainages to the east. These lands are among the wettest habitats in Idaho as well as our region. They are valued for their diversity of native plant species. Both erosion and sedimentation cause significant harm to native plants and their habitats. The Callahan Drainage particularly is among the wettest drainages in Idaho, and as such is prime habitat for a range of sensitive plant species that merit strong protections.

Motorized use, as the Forest Service's preferred action indicates, is not compatible with the steep forested terrain, sensitive soils, and management goals of the inventoried roadless areas associated with these Idaho lands. The proposed action will protect sensitive land types, wildlife and native plant habitat, watershed resources and the natural integrity of these lands. Unregulated motorized travel also brings the introduction of invasive, exotic weeds, which are a major threat to native plants and their habitat.

Sincerely,

Carol Jenkins
President