

# Clearwater Defender

## News of the Big Wild

Friends of the Clearwater

Summer 2000, Vol. 1 No. 1

### Lochsa Appeal Victory

By Kristin Ruether

On July 14, the Forest Service Regional Office in Missoula reversed the decision by Clearwater National Forest Supervisor James Caswell approving the North Lochsa Face project. The ruling came in response to appeals of the sale spearheaded by Friends of the Clearwater and other groups as well as the Nez Perce Tribe.

The North Lochsa Face (NLF) project was the biggest timber sale proposed by the Clearwater National Forest in years. It quickly became a poster child for the national roadless protection policy movement. The project proposed cutting 75 million board feet over 8,000 acres of forests sandwiched between the Lewis and Clark Trail and the Lochsa River. Over 3,000 acres of the logging was to be conducted in the North Lochsa Slope Roadless Area, including a 1,000 acre clearcut (almost two square miles).

Careful study of the project's Final Environmental Impact Statement and project file revealed many serious flaws in the project. Perhaps most serious were the potential impacts on water quality. The Clearwater NF continues to cling to a belief that it can implement its massive timber sales with no impact to the water quality, as long as it does a little road obliteration on the side to "cancel out" the effects of the logging and leaves streamside "no cut" buffers.

This rosy idea has (unfortunately) been thoroughly disproved over the years in the Forest, resulting in severely degraded streams and many mudslides, many of which slid through the entire streamside buffers. Furthermore, this "rob Peter to pay Paul" strategy is a completely bankrupt watershed restoration strategy; it strives to maintain the status quo instead of striving for serious restoration.

The proposed logging in the NLF project was so extensive that the Forest Service needed a lot of road obliteration to cancel out the sedimentation. The men and women in green proudly

### Lawsuit a Big Win for Big Wild

By Natalie Shapiro

Just days after the North Lochsa Face timber sale was reversed by appeal, a coalition of Idaho and Montana conservation groups including Friends of the Clearwater won a major federal court victory over management of the Clearwater National Forest. The Land and Water Fund of the Rockies litigated the lawsuit.

Federal Magistrate Leif B. Erickson's July ruling stopped the planned logging for the Fish Bate project on the North Fork Clearwater River, ruling the Clearwater NF has not met its standard for old growth forest preservation. In his 70-page ruling, he also found the Forest's reliance on Best Management Practices to be arbitrary and capricious as an unproven means of preventing landslides. The ruling may have a far-reaching effect, since the rulings on old growth and BMPs will apply to all timber sales on the Forest.

The Fish Bate project planned to cut 500 acres of old growth redcedar at lower elevations and steep slopes near the North Fork Clearwater River. The project has been in planning for almost a decade and we have fought it because of potential damage to fisheries, water quality, and old growth habitat. The area is very sensitive to disturbance and was ravaged by landslides during the mid-90's.

The Fish Bate area is also very rich in rare, "coastal disjunct" plant species, which are plants normally only found west of the Cascades.

We established the inadequacies of the Forest's old growth assessment using aerial photography and GIS mapping analysis from Conservation Geography. The independent review found that the Forest had far less old growth than claimed, due to counting extensive forests as old growth which had been logged, roaded, or were too young or small in size.

In addition, the Land and Water Fund found documentation that 50% of the time that tentative old growth is field verified, it is found not to be old growth. "Tentative" old growth stands are those which are estimated to be old growth, through tech-



Bonjour mes amis,

We are pleased to report two big victories in this newsletter, the North Lochsa Face appeal and our Clearwater National Forest lawsuit. We are newly energized by the victories and thankful to all who helped achieve them.

The Clearwater country buzzed with the release of the administration's roadless protection Draft Environmental Impact Statement. To our disappointment, if not surprise, the preferred alternative banned road construction, but failed to address logging. We here at FOC will keep our eye on the prize and continue to advocate for a complete end to corporate resource extraction from our public land. We turned out in force for the hearings in our region.

While the Forest Service is attempting to change its policies in the direction of actually protecting our forests and not cutting them down, we are also experiencing some changes. If you didn't already notice, the FOC newsletter has changed: our board agreed that it was a good idea to change the name of the newsletter from the Salmon-Selway Defender to the Clearwater Defender.

There are many reasons for this change. The most obvious explanation is that we are Friends of the Clearwater. Although we certainly are friends of the entire Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem and will do what we must to defend her, we focus the majority of our protection efforts on the Clearwater basin. The SSD was coined many years ago when folks from the Cove/Mallard Coalition (in Missoula at the time) started a newsletter. FOC eventually took over producing the newsletter, but never changed the name. We hope that putting the word Clearwater on the cover will make our watershed, and henceforth its threats, more well known.

Even though change can be a little painful (there are some of us who really like the name Salmon-Selway Defender), it is necessary and often for the best in the long run. Now if only we could get Clearwater Supervisor Jim Caswell to embrace the changes that are happening within the Forest Service and support roadless protection . . . that would be positive change!

Happy Trails,  
Emily Loeb, President

## The Clearwater Defender is a publication of:

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Friends of the Clearwater is devoted to the protection of Idaho's Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem, the largest relatively intact wild area left in the lower 48 states. This undiscovered gem on America's public lands contains many unprotected roadless areas and provides crucial habitat for countless species. Friends of the Clearwater helps defend this ecosystem through an aggressive Forest Watch program and a proven track record.

Friends of the Clearwater is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions the Friends of the Clearwater are tax-deductible.

The Clearwater Defender welcomes artwork and articles pertaining to the protection of the Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem. Articles in the Clearwater Defender do not necessarily reflect the views of Friends of the Clearwater.

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for generously funding our  
vital programs.

# GETTING BURNED BY THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

By Chad Hanson

In the wake of the fires in the West, the timber industry is mobilizing its public relations machine to try to convince the public of the need to increase logging on our national forests, supposedly to protect them from catastrophic fires.

To imagine timber executives sitting around their quarterly board meetings talking about the pressing need to save forests is to realize the absurdity of this posturing. The U.S. Forest Service is now parroting this doublespeak, using it as a means to sell huge volumes of public timber to logging corporations under the guise of "forest stewardship."

The truth is that commercial logging doesn't prevent catastrophic fires, it causes them. The 1996 scientific study of the Sierra Nevada forests, which was commissioned and funded by Congress, found that "timber harvest, through its effects on forest structure, local microclimate and fuel accumulation, has increased fire severity more than any other recent human activity."

Another Forest Service report, "Forest Resources of the United States" (1994), revealed that tree mortality in the West due to both fire and disease increases in logged areas. The worst rates were on private lands where logging levels are highest and where the least natural forest remains. For example, in western forests from 1986 to 1991, mortality due to fire and disease on private lands increased 20 percent, while it increased only 3 percent on national forests and decreased 9 percent on other public lands. Logging makes forests more susceptible to both fire and disease.

Forests that have been logged are drier, have less shade and have accumulated flammable debris known as "slash piles" comprising unmarketable branches and limbs left by logging crews. Fires tend to start in logged areas and occasionally spread into old-growth stands, which are naturally fire-resistant due to the thick bark of older trees. If a fire does kill an old-growth stand, the burned trees still provide valuable nesting habitat for birds of prey and countless other forest species. Wildlife has little use for stumps.

In April 1999, the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), a federal department that often watchdogs agencies at the request of congressional leaders, released a report on the Forest Service's approach to fire management, calling into serious question the use of the timber sales program to address fire issues. The GAO noted that "most of the trees that need to be removed to reduce accumulated fuels are small in diameter and have little or no commercial value."

The report nevertheless found that Forest Service managers "tend to (1) focus on areas with high-value commercial timber rather than on areas with high fire hazards or (2) include more large, commercially valuable trees in a timber sale than are necessary to reduce the accumulated fuels." The "low-value materials," said the GAO, "are unattractive to timber purchasers." So much for the timber industry's rhetoric about "thinning understory brush."

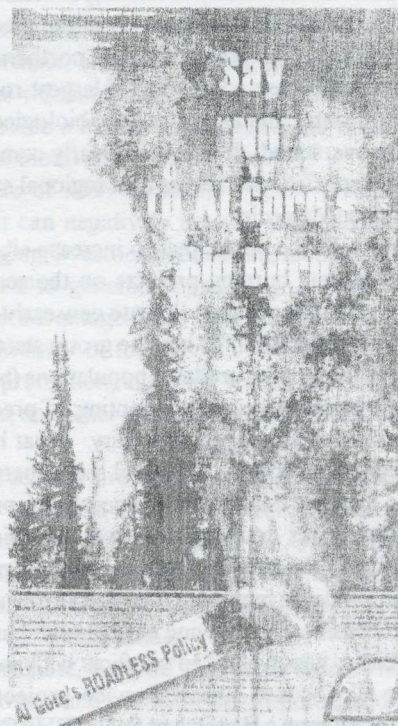
In fact, the Forest Service's own documents state that it fights fires not to protect forest ecosystems, but rather to pre-

vent burns from reducing the commodity value of trees that the agency intends to sell to logging companies. It's all about economics, not ecology.

Former Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas candidly acknowledged this in 1994: "Relatively high levels of mortality in an area from which you do not expect to extract timber, for example, might be perfectly acceptable. ... For example, to isolate Yellowstone [as an example] ... it burns up; it burns hot, and the system that's associated with it comes back. We didn't want anything from it. It's perfectly OK. It's a national park. It's interesting, and we can observe the wildflowers, and it's beautiful."

Our national forests will never be safe from the logging industry's deceptions until we end the federal timber sales program, and redirect current timber subsidies into ecological restoration jobs, as HR 1396, the National Forest Protection and Restoration Act, would do. Future generations will thank us.

*Chad Hanson is executive director of the John Muir Project, and is also a national director of the Sierra Club. The John Muir Project can be reached at 30 N. Raymond Ave. No. 514, Pasadena, CA, 91103, (626) 792-0109, chadhanson@juno.com, or www.johnmuirproject.org*



*This full page color advertisement ran in many newspapers, often without any identification of the source: the Intermountain Forest Association, an industry group based in Coeur d'Alene. When asked why they didn't identify themselves their answer was: "Why let your affiliation get in the way of the message?"*

# The Clearwater Elk Initiative: Collaboration gone awry

By Kristin Ruether

Just when you thought the Clearwater National Forest was up to enough mischief, a new threat has appeared.

The new threat to the wildlands of the Clearwater country is in the form of a collaboration project called the Clearwater Elk Initiative. The participating "partners" include the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Lands, University of Idaho, Potlatch Corporation, several other timber companies, and several hunting groups. Notably absent are the Nez Perce Tribe and all conservation groups. The group meets regularly to develop projects to ostensibly raise elk populations in the Clearwater River basin.

The Clearwater Elk Initiative is raising conservationists' eyebrows around the region due to its penchant towards single-species management at the expense of other species, its intention to log the wild roadless country remaining on the Clearwater NF, and the biased nature of the collaboration process.

Much of the Clearwater's remaining roadless country has been proposed for wilderness but never designated due to Congressional stalling. The area forms the northern flank of the central Idaho wilderness complex, the largest roadless region in the lower 48 states and an area whose biological importance can hardly be overstated. It harbors a nearly complete array of native wildlife species, and serves as a regional stronghold for rare and threatened species.

The group tells the public that to increase elk populations, massive logging and burning projects on the scale of tens of thousands of acres are needed to create new early-seral vegetation in the Clearwater basin. Also, the group states that elk are suffering from burgeoning predator populations (black bear and cougar) and that increasing sport hunting of predator species will help prevent additional elk mortality. What has the group accomplished so far? It has persuaded the Department of Fish and Game to increase the number of licenses for predator hunting in the Clearwater drainage, to lower the prices of the licenses, to extend the predator season, and to provide other incentives on predator hunting. The Department of Fish and Game is also considering allowing more hound hunters into the Clearwater basin, which leads to conflicts with wolves.

The first elk-focused Forest Service project, Big Game Habitat Restoration on a Watershed Scale (BHROWS) is in the scoping phase on the Clearwater NF. No figures have officially been released, but conservation groups were leaked information from agency personnel that the proposed alternative in the BHROWS: Middle-Black project would log a jaw-dropping amount of timber. This includes extensive logging in the Pot Mountain roadless area and other sensitive areas near the North Fork of the Clearwater River, an area that was devastated by

landslides in the mid-1990s. This project may become the largest National Forest logging project in Region 1.

The proposed recovery actions are controversial and have little justification through hard data. The theory that large-scale logging will help elk is especially controversial and has not been tested at such a scale before. Dr. Jim Peek, eminent retired wildlife biologist from the University of Idaho, has noted the two biggest effects on Clearwater elk in the past 50 years were (1) the opening up of Highway 12 which gave human hunters more access and (2) the prohibition of cow elk hunting. The elk group's assumption that killing predators helps elk is also very controversial. Scientists note that predators and elk have a complex relationship and that hastily killing off predators is not necessarily beneficial for elk or the forest ecosystem.

The nature of the collaboration process is corrupt, biased, and makes a sham of the NEPA process for public involvement. The elk group proposes projects with predetermined out-

**It is quite clear that a primary goal of the  
Elk Initiative is to log roadless country**

comes to the Forest Service, which then goes through the motions of soliciting public input, as mandated by NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act). This avoids the honest implementation of the NEPA process, which requires objectivity and science-based decision-making.

It is quite clear that a primary goal of the Elk Initiative is to log roadless country, as the first major project proposed was a roadless logging project on the Clearwater NF, instead of focusing on the lower-elevation, higher quality elk winter range on state and private land.

The group does not focus on excessive road density and access, which are known to adversely impact elk. It is no coincidence that the group chose to recover a species that, arguably, benefits from profit-generating human disturbance, instead of recovering one of the truly imperiled species in the region. Elk are far from becoming endangered.

Looking at the bigger picture, logging in the name of elk is a far cry from true restoration, and would in fact harm the truly imperiled species in the region: large carnivores such as wolverine, old-growth dependent species, and sensitive fish species such as bull trout. The likelihood of the BHROWS project and other large-scale log-for-elk proposals meeting Forest Plan water quality standards and environmental laws is extremely slim. Many of the streams in the area are already not meeting all the Forest Plan water and fisheries standards.

Single-species management is not appropriate for the complex, diverse Clearwater basin. Concerned citizens and conservation groups will continue to speak for true restoration that considers all species, not just the commercially valuable ones whose "recovery" happens to involve large-scale land-disturbing activities, which generate profits for the timber industry.

# Seeking the Bare Necessities for Grizzlies

## Ponderings on predators, humans, and the USFWS proposal to reintroduce grizzlies to the Big Wild

By Bob Hoffman

I must confess, I have a soft spot for predators. Whether it's a spider winding its thread around a stultified fly, or a wolf dragging a flailing deer to the ground, the predator/prey relationship symbolizes to me all that is sacred – all that is natural – in nature. Maybe it's because predators are my peers: as a hunter of large game animals and a consumer of their flesh, I feel a kinship with the hawk, the wolf, and the bear. Or perhaps it's just because my eyeteeth, those vestigial daggers from our primate ancestors, are rooted so deeply that they anchor in my brain. Anyway, I think predators are cool. They signify a completeness, a wholeness, without which nature and our experience of it is tattered and torn.

I can't help but think that modern-day hostility towards predators is a kind of inter-species jealousy: we hate competition in the food chain. In grade school, I learned that the sun provides energy to plants, plants nourish animals, and we humans, as the pinnacle of creation and top of the food chain, eat animals. It makes people uncomfortable to think that we might share the flesh of game (and farm) animals with an ursine rival. Adding injury to insult, North American bear species (black, polar, and grizzly) very occasionally and incidentally play King-of-the-Food-Chain with us by snacking on a *Homo sapiens*.

Treason is dealt with severely. Virtually every predator that walked the grounds and flew the skies of our continent was branded "vermin" and marked for destruction during the colonial era. Wolves, bears, and cougars were obvious first targets.

A main flavor of ecological restoration in the past quarter century has been the recovery of token animal species. While the return of the deer and elk has been greeted with wholesale celebration across the nation, unease accompanies the comparatively modest recovery made by predators. My large predator comrades are still on the fringes of recovery.

I have a sneaking suspicion that there is some foul play involved here. Species restoration efforts should generally be proportional to the adversity faced. Within the borders of the Lower 48, the grizzly bear has lost 99% of its historical range, due to direct and indirect hostilities from humans. The Big Wild of Idaho and Montana includes sufficient habitat to nearly guarantee grizzly recovery. Yet, in its recent preferred alternative for grizzly bear recovery, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service ignores the imperatives of species restoration by restricting proposed recovery to a mere pie slice of the total available habitat.

Grizzly needs are simple, but not universal: they need large tracts of roadless lands with sufficient food and cover. Our ecosystem's largest predator wanders far and wide, searching for food, breeding companions, and whatever motivates a bear. Bear motivation and human motivation frequently collide, and these collisions occur most often on, or near, roads. Not only does FWS locate the Grizzly Recovery Zone at the fringes (instead of the center) of Idaho's vast wilderness; it also allows additional road construction in places where road obliteration would be more grizzly friendly.

Perhaps the most egregious part of FWS's preferred plan for grizzly recovery involves the double-edged sword of Experimental/ Nonessential Status. Though numerous reports suggest a remnant grizzly population in the proposed recovery area, FWS has bent over backwards to show that no giant bears remain. This shaky supposition in turn allows FWS to call reintroduced bears "experimental." To what end? "Experimental" animals (and grizzlies are certainly a very successful experiment of nature) can be removed – relocated or killed – should they attack, menace, or merely inconvenience humans (or cattle). This experimental status has been used to scuttle wolf recovery efforts throughout the West.

As in the past, the behavior of predators – whether that behavior is actually predatory or not – is still sufficiently objectionable that we must remove them from the landscape. In former days, we called them "vermin" and declared a free-fire zone. Now, we call them "experimental," release them from pens to appease the demands of "environmental extremists", stand with stopwatch in hand, and summon the executioner at the first pretense. My predator friends are still far from recovery, and thus, so are we.



## Grassroots: A Hunter's Voice

A Hunter's Voice is a new organization established by George Wuerthner, a former hunting guide, wildlife biologist and long time wildlands advocate. The goal of the organization is to provide a hunter's perspective on issues relating to wildlands and biodiversity protection.

Supporters of AHV generally oppose policies that favor activities that can negatively impact wildlands and wild animals like logging, livestock production, industrial tourism, and the like. We also generally oppose use of ORVs, and other technological advantages that have pushed the odds against wildlife and in favor of techno nuts. We are staunch supporters of wildlands protection, including wilderness designation, new national parks, and other management criteria that protects habitat.

We also feel that protection of biodiversity should be the first priority on public lands. Therefore, we are strong supporters of restoring prairie dogs on the Great Plains, protecting endangered carnivores like lynx, wolf and grizzly and restoring animals like bighorn sheep and bison on all suitable habitat found on our public lands.

It is unfortunate, but true, that many hunters have allowed themselves to become pawns of development and industry interests that ultimately will compromise wildlife habitat, and in the end, hunting opportunity. We believe that hunting is not about "getting your elk" as much as experiencing the wild world of the outdoors. AHV advocates the protection of wild animals in wild lands. The hunting experience should be about the journey, not a final destination.

For more information, email [wuerthne@teleport.com](mailto:wuerthne@teleport.com) or write AHV, POB 3156, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

# Fish and Wildlife Service Proposes to Weaken Wolf Protection

By Gary Macfarlane

In a move challenged by conservationists, the US Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed to downlist wolves from endangered to threatened in the northern Rockies. The Predator Conservation Alliance and Friends of the Clearwater joined together in pointing out problems with the Service's premature proposal. Wolves in central Idaho and Yellowstone would not be affected by this proposal since they are already listed as experimental populations with few protections. However, wolves in northern Idaho and northwest Montana would be affected

Dave Gaillard of Bozeman's Predator Conservation Alliance said, "With this proposal, the Fish and Wildlife Service is claiming success too early in the northern Rockies, and limiting wolf recovery in many other parts of the West."

In none of the three areas identified by Fish and Wildlife Service as wolf recovery zones in the northern Rockies have wolves managed to achieve the recovery targets for reclassification to threatened status established by Fish and Wildlife Service. Those targets require that at least 2 of the 3 subpopulations sustain a population of at least 10 packs for three consecutive years before gray wolves in northern Rockies are reclassified from their current endangered status to threatened status. In fact, over the past three years, only the Idaho population has yet to achieve the FWS target of 10 packs, and the population reached that target for only one year, 1998. The objective of having wolves traveling successfully between these three populations has not been achieved.

Furthermore, in the northwest Montana/northern Idaho region (north of I-90), only five breeding pairs have existed for the past three years. Prior to that time, there were 7 packs of wolves.

This reduction in wolf protection will eventually lead to state management of wolves. The state of Idaho is already writing predator management rules with populations targets that look more like a floor than a ceiling. These rules also ignore the Nez Perce Tribe which has been managing the wolves (see related story). If the states are made responsible for wolf management, Idaho wolf numbers will be kept barely above extinction levels.

One of the great ironies is that the Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to reduce protection for wolves in the northeast where none currently exist. The US Fish and Wildlife Service in their own press release resorted to bureaucratic doublespeak by noting, "Despite the absence of documented wolf populations in the Northeast currently, the Service believes there is high potential for wolf recovery in these states, which fall within the gray wolf's historical range."

Doug Honnold of the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund has done an excellent job of representing conservation groups on wolf issues. If the Fish and Wildlife Service doesn't listen to public comment and their own science, Earthjustice may, yet again, be forced to consider litigation.

Comments on the draft proposal can be sent to:

Content Analysis Enterprise Team,  
Wolf Comments, 200 East Broadway,  
PO Box 7669, Room 301,  
Missoula, Montana 59807.  
graywolfcomments@fws.gov

**Deadline is November 10th!**

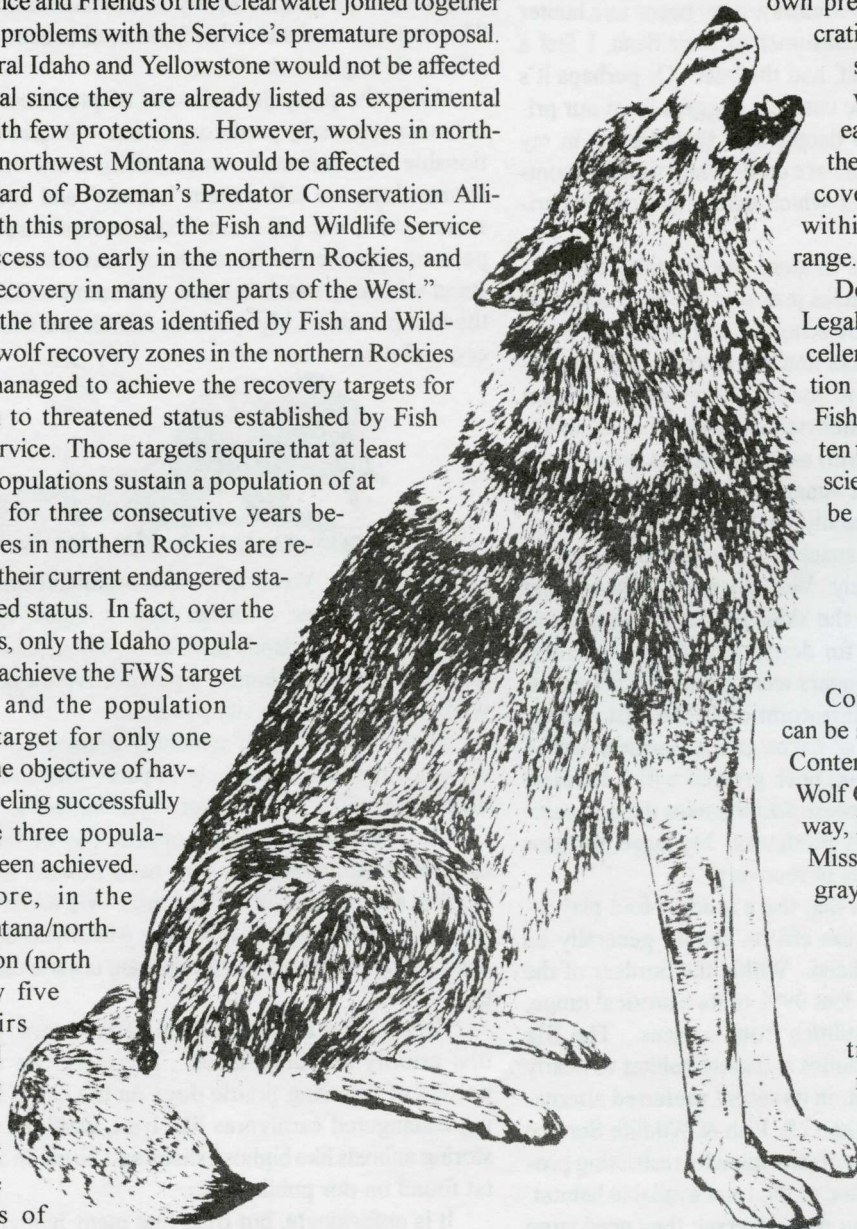
The subject line of all electronic mail submissions must read: "Wolf Comments."

FAX comments should have the same subject and be sent to 406-329-3021.

Points to Consider:

1- The Fish and Wildlife Service should live up to its promise and follow the Northern Rockies recovery plan for the three populations. Since the goals have not been met, downlisting cannot occur at this time.

2- The objective of having wolves traveling successfully between these three populations should be documented and achieved before downlisting is considered.



# Protections Sought For Wild Predators

## Idaho Wildlands Critical For Wolverine Survival

Compiled from several contributors

In early July, six conservation groups petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the wolverine under the Endangered Species Act. The groups charge that wolverines have been reduced to perhaps 750 animals, scattered among six or more population fragments due to escalating human activity and developments in their wilderness habitat. The Fish and Wildlife Service has 90 days to decide whether the listing proposal warrants initiating a 12-month listing decision process. Biodiversity Legal Foundation of Boulder, Colorado and Predator Conservation Alliance of Bozeman, Montana led the petitioning effort. Friends of the Clearwater is a co-petitioner.

The wolverine needs remote, wild country free from disturbances created by people. Some describe it as a small bear, to others it resembles a large skunk, but the wolverine is truly unique in North America and worldwide. The largest member of the weasel family, it is a rare species typically found in the most remote and rugged country. The wolverine's strength and toughness is legendary, but it is no match for the steady invasion of people and their machines into its remaining wildland habitat. Specific threats include new roads, off-road vehicles, snowmobiles, and helicopter skiing operations.

Idaho is considered one of two strongholds for the lower 48 states. One of the very few studies on wolverine done in recent years was a study by Jeff Copeland conducted in the Sawtooth Mountains of central Idaho. However, Gary Macfarlane noted, "Estimates indicate only 200 wolverines are believed to inhabit the wild heart of Idaho. Habitat protection is essential for their survival."

"There is a remarkable correlation between areas without roads and areas where the wolverine still survives," said David Gaillard of Predator Conservation Alliance. "Our analysis indicates that virtually every area of national forest lands in the northern Rockies with current wolverine observations lies in or immediately adjacent to a roadless or Wilderness area," he added.

The exact conservation status of the wolverine is unknown, but we do know that it historically ranged throughout Canada and Alaska, and south into California's Sierra Nevada, the Rocky Mountains to New Mexico, and in the Lake States and Northeast U.S. Today, the wolverine's last remaining stronghold in the lower-48 states has been reduced to western Montana and

parts of Idaho, though scattered sightings are still reported in other areas of the Northwest, Sierra, Rocky Mountains, and Lake States.

Besides the decline and increasing isolation of undeveloped, roadless habitat, the groups highlight the following factors to support the need for federal wolverine protections: disturbance due to snowmobiles and other motorized recreation, and trapping that remains legal in Montana.

"The wolverine is pre-eminently a species of large areas of undisturbed forest wildlands, but its roadless/wilderness habitat in the lower 48 is rapidly shrinking under the assault of development, roadbuilding, extractive industries, and escalating motorized backcountry recreation," said Jasper Carlton, executive director of Biodiversity Legal Foundation.



Drawing by: Karen Coulter

## Notice of Intent Filed for Lynx



Friends of the Clearwater joined on a notice of intent to sue with the Ecology Center and Friends of the Wild Swan, challenging the Forest Service's failure to amend its forest plans in the Northern Region to comply with the recent listing of the lynx as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Clearwater, Nez Perce and Idaho Panhandle National Forests are the affected forests in Idaho.

FOC worked with other groups to help convince the Fish and Wildlife Service to list the lynx. Biodiversity Legal Foundation, Predator Conservation Alliance and Defenders of Wildlife spearheaded the legal effort to protect the lynx during the past decade.

The Forest Service has 60 days to reply to our filing. If no action is taken by the agency to make changes in forest plans, we have the option of going to court.

## Blockade Kicks Off Bridge Dance

By the Cove/Mallard Coalition

*The sun is up, but it won't shine onto the South fork of the Clearwater for hours. On the 1875 logging road bridge, spanning this river, two people sit, huddled by a fire for warmth against the wind and frosty morning air. Sleeping people lie haphazardly across the bridge with their gear. It looks like a quiet morning, maybe the morning after a party. Those EF!ers are at it again. They are blocking vehicular access to the Otter-Wing and Mackey Day timber sales with one measly piece of rope...*

No logging trucks came through the Cove/Mallard campaign's Venus Fly Trap on June 15th, the first day of "logging season" in the Nez Perce National Forest. The blockade was set up on the Forest Service Road 1875 bridge, the only hauling road for the Otter-Wing and Mackey Day timber sales. Otter-Wing and Mackey Day, in the 52,000 acre Wing-Twenty mile roadless area, are both part of the Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem (GSSE). Spanning across Idaho and Montana, this area is the largest intact ecosystem in the lower 48 states. Otter-Wing and Mackey Day are home to lynx, black bear, moose, bull trout, trilliums, morels, and many other amazing beings. And unlike in most national forests, the water in this area is still safe to drink straight out of the streams. However, if the Forest Service and Shearer Lumber had their way, many areas in the GSSE would already be clearcut and destroyed.

Individuals have been placing their bodies on the line in the GSSE for 9 years to keep this from happening. Nine years, and still coming up with ideas that'll stump the freddies! Used in China Left in 1997, the Venus Fly Trap is a bridge blockade technique that can be effective with a small number of people. A piece of webbing is tied into one giant loop around the entire

bridge and tensioned as tightly as possible. A platform or hammock is attached underneath the bridge, suspended from the webbing. Remember, webbing stretches! It may need to be pre-stretched. Venus Fly Traps work better on taller bridges or over large rapids areas.

The Forest Service law enforcement arrived mid-day and were immediately confused by the structure. Activists were removed from the bridge for "safety reasons", and prohibited from crossing the bridge back to the highway. The freddies then reinforced the blockade with their vehicles, road closed signs, and yellow "do not enter" tape. Three individuals were cited with "maintaining a structure" for sitting and placing their water bottles on a picnic table fashioned with culverts.

After much arguing and deliberation, the freddies thought they had figured out a bargaining chip to get Venus out of her fly trap. If she came down, she would only get a \$100 dollar fine. If she did not come down, the Cove/Mallard Coalition would not be allowed to have their bridge dance, scheduled for the next evening. Venus would not be tricked. In response to this deal, she stood up on her platform and started dancing. "I'm having my own bridge boogie down here. I can dance under this bridge for weeks!"

Although the freddies cut Venus out of the fly trap on the third day of the blockade, the point was made to the Forest Service and the logging companies. We let them know that we will not let them destroy the big wild! Creativity and sheer willpower will prevail over the corporate and governmental machine that is desecrating our planet.

With our recent court loss (see story at right), direct action has once again become a necessity in this beautiful area. We will not let this area be destroyed!

*For more information or to get involved, contact the Cove/Mallard Coalition at PO Box 8968, Moscow ID 83843; [cove@moscow.com](mailto:cove@moscow.com); (208) 882-9755.*



## Double Banner Hanging

The bridge dance action was preceded and followed by banner hangings. In the morning hours of May 22, the freddies arrived to work only to be greeted by a 20 ft banner unfurled down the front face of the Region 1 Headquarters in Missoula, Montana. The banner read, "Stop the Destruction the Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem; Save Otter-Wing and Mackey-Day." As two masked individuals scaled back down to the street, volunteers from the Cove/Mallard Coalition gathered at the front doors of the building with signs and literature. Making a surprise appearance was Smoky the Bear with a sign affixed to his belly reading "Timber Slut."

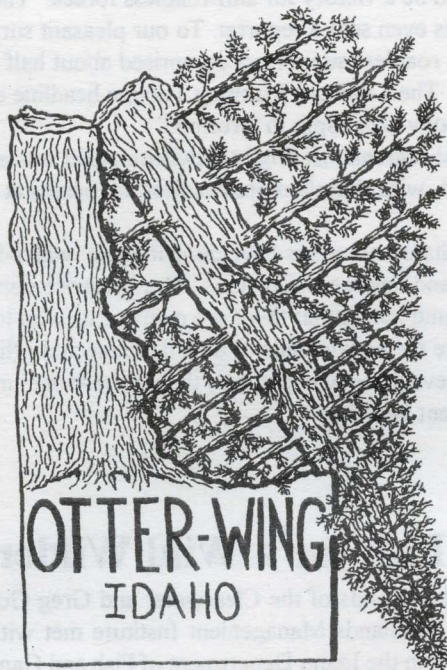
A month later, at the Roadless Hearing in the infamous timber town of Orofino, Idaho, two women strung the banner between two trees across the road leading to the hearing. It had been altered to read "Protect All Roadless Areas." We attracted the attention of the Idaho state mental institution on one side of the road, the school superintendent on the other side, countless freddies (who at times outnumbered the number of people testifying at the hearing), and passers by, some who yelled "No Compromise!" in support, and others who told us to "Get a real job!" After six hours, the two women removed the banner, climbed down, and testified at the hearing.

## Otter-Wing Lawsuit Fails to Halt Logging

We received bad news just as this newsletter was going to print. On August 16, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals filed a decision on the lawsuit to stop the Otter-Wing timber sale. No injunction on the sale was handed down.

In a somewhat contradictory opinion, the lead judge wrote that although the Court agreed with our allegation that the documentation for the project was inadequate, he would not stop the sale since the Forest Service had done sufficient documentation after the onset of the litigation.

We are very grateful to our attorney Marc Fink for his dedication and persistence.



Drawing by Greg Mack

## Puppeteering with Larry Craig

Intrepid Moscow activists became a thorn in Idaho Senator Larry Craig's side when he came to the University of Idaho to speak on natural resource issues in April.

Several minutes after he took to the stage in the food court of the new Idaho Commons, strange things started happening. First, a large banner tumbled off the side of one of the many balconies overlooking the court. The banner stated, "LARRY CRAIG = TIMBER PUPPET".

Then, a life-size marionette, made of a stuffed shirt, fists clenching money, and a shocking triangular head made of three cardboard-mounted photos of Larry's likeness, came tumbling off the balcony! The marionette hung from long strings attached to a stick, and the operators made the arms and head move at will by jerking the stick.

Each Larry Craig face on the puppet had been photo-engineered such that Larry's classic grin had been flipped into a nasty snarl, and each forehead was complete with a different timber corporation logo which donates to Larry's campaigns: Boise Cascade, Potlatch, and Bennett Lumber.

Another huge banner tumbled off yet another balcony: this one a classy vinyl job stating "Idaho's Roadless Backcountry: An American Legacy, a Gift for the Future".

Larry's eyes were seen to pop as he caught glimpse of his likeness on the puppet, but he tried his best to keep his cool throughout his speech in which he blasted the environmental extremists which were ruining the west and the undemocratic nature of the roadless protection initiative.

Shortly after the banner and marionette unfurling, the same doctored Larry photos—this time mounted on sticks—started popping up in the audience. Approximately a dozen of the likenesses — some foreheads containing corporate logos, some containing slogans like "Extract" and "I hate trees"—bobbed up and down during his speech including one in the front row.

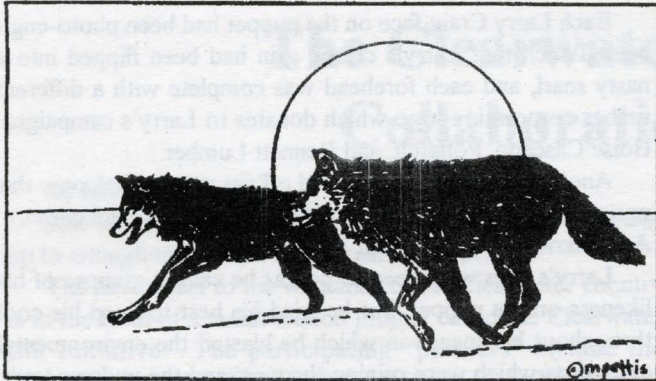
He did get an unexpected round of applause when he announced, in a voice filled with scorn, that Clinton had designated more national monuments than any other president, for a combined size of the state of Delaware.

A question and answer period followed the speech. The same crowd of troublemakers dominated the question period, asking Larry such questions as: "Please explain the democratic process of the Salvage Rider"; "Why don't you support roadless protection when the majority of your constituents support it"; "Do you support the effort to protect our remaining wild Lewis and Clark trail region through the Lewis and Clark National Monument"; and a pointed accusation that HE was the real extremist by consistently favoring extractive industries.

Craig has received thousands of dollars in PAC contributions from the timber industry. He consistently receives 0% ratings from the League of Conservation Voters. His environmental record since taking office demonstrates his support for continued logging subsidies, increased road construction, decreased environmental regulation, and less protection for endangered species.



Photo by Natalia Bonilla



Drawing by Margaret Pettis

## State Wolf Plan

By Gary Macfarlane

In anticipation of the eventual removal of wolves in the northern Rockies from the endangered species list (see related article) the Idaho State Legislature has come up with a draft Idaho Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. It is short on conservation, provides plenty of loopholes to kill wolves, and only gives lip service to the fact the Nez Perce Tribe has had the lead in wolf recovery in Idaho. Comments are due on September 1, 2000 but letters should be sent, even after the deadline.

Some of the numerous problems with the draft plan are summarized below:

- The plan has as its goal only 10 breeding pairs for the entire state. This is less than the number required before wolves can be removed from the endangered species list in the northern Rockies. Furthermore, keeping wolves at such low numbers, on the threshold of extinction, is poor policy.
- The plan provides no clear role for the Nez Perce Tribe who have been managing wolves in Idaho since 1995.
- The plan calls for a welfare program for outfitters who may have lost revenues because wolves eat ungulates like deer and elk. Such a program is ludicrous and unneeded.
- The plan fails to identify crucial habitat as core areas for wolves. All relatively intact public land should be considered potential wild wolf habitat.
- The plan calls for radio-collaring every breeding pair (alpha pair) of wolves. Such harassment is unnecessary. The wolves should be allowed to be wild.
- The plan would allow for wolves to be killed for sport.

Send Comments to: Idaho Legislative Wolf Oversight Committee PO Box 70029 Boise, ID 83707

Comments are due September 1, but should be sent even after the deadline.

## Rockin' the Roadless Hearings

By Joshua Burnim and K. Ruether

Friends of the Clearwater spearheaded the grassroots organizing for the regional hearings on Clinton's roadless protection initiative this summer. We did better than our wildest dreams at getting people out.

We dominated the Moscow informational session in May where over 70 attended, including the Wild Thang, a 70 foot long Chinese Dragon that demanded full protection of all wild forests. Similarly at the Lewiston informational meeting, forest advocates wondered how the Forest Service could on one hand say they are protecting roadless areas and on the other allow logging, mining, and off-road vehicles in roadless areas.

The hearing in Orofino, a local wise-use hotbed, was expected to be a victory for anti-roadless forces. The New York Times even sent a reporter. To our pleasant surprise, it turned out roadless supporters comprised about half of those testifying. The Lewiston Morning Tribune headline declared that testimony was "Split in Orofino."

Our last regional hearing in Lewiston again was about evenly split, with slightly more roadless advocates at our last count.

Our valiant volunteers have done it again: walked into the lion's den and emerged victorious. Our presence conveyed to the public and media that there are many of us who love the wild despite the squawkings of our Idaho elected officials. Thanks to everyone who came to the informational meetings and comment hearings.

## Wild Fish for a Wild Wilderness

Recently, Friends of the Clearwater and Greg Gollberg of Ecocentric Wildlands Management Institute met with fishery biologists from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to discuss fish stocking in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Research from scientists like Peter Bahls, who did extensive research in the Selway Bitterroot, proves that fish stocking has a negative impact on native amphibians and native fish. Artificial fish stocking is also contrary to the spirit of the Wilderness Act.

Ecocentric Wildlands Management Institute prepared a detailed scientific report in 1996 calling for a re-wilding of the Selway Bitterroot by ending fish stocking and trying to find ways to remove non-native fish in a manner compatible with Wilderness. While the Idaho Department of Fish and Game won't commit to ending stocking, it has been reducing its stocking program for budgetary and practical reasons in the Wilderness.

Friends of the Clearwater plans on pursuing this project over the next several months. The newsletter will keep you updated as this issue progresses.

## Lochsa Appeal Victory

Continued from page 1

touted that the project involved 95 miles of road obliteration. However, the fine print noted that about 24 miles of the obliteration had actually been completed some years ago, under separate NEPA documentation. Our appeal pointed out that this concept was totally bogus. The FS can't conveniently incorporate past "good" projects into new "bad" projects because it needs the sediment savings so badly.

The appeal decision by the Regional Office agreed with us on that point, noting in a short paragraph that the road obliteration actions were not properly disclosed, and that there was some ambiguity as to the nature of the effects on water quality. The appeal deciding officer ordered the decision reversed and recommended that Forest Supervisor James Caswell prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. This SEIS will likely take at least a year to prepare.

Oddly, the appeal decision did not mention our many other appeal points, including logging in old growth and replacement old growth, lack of monitoring and protection of threatened and sensitive species of wildlife and plants, and misinformation regarding fire ecology.

The North Lochsa Face project had a second part to it involving access management. We also appealed this decision because it allowed continued off-road vehicle (ORV), motorbike, and snowmobile use in sensitive areas including the historic Fish Creek roadless area, also known as the Lewis and Clark Proposed Wilderness. This area contains the only remaining roadless portion of the historic Lewis and Clark Trail (which was originally the Nez Perce Nee Me Poo Trail). Not only does motorized use of the area destroy its solitude and erode the trails, it disturbs sensitive wildlife. Fish Creek is home to the rare harlequin duck and possibly lynx. Unfortunately, our appeal of this decision was denied.

Despite its temporary nature, our victory is powerful. We have delayed the continuation of this devastating timber project and we have thrown a wrench in their obliterate-to-log fallacy. For a while, at least, the wild salmon of the Lochsa River, the elusive lynx, and human friends of the wild Clearwater can breathe a little easier.

## Lawsuit A Big Win for Big Wild

Continued from page 1

niques such as aerial photos and satellite imagery analysis. "Field" verification is actual on-the ground assessment of the tentative stands.

The Judge agreed that the Clearwater NF failed to demonstrate that 10% of the Clearwater NF is old growth, as the Forest Plan requires.

The project called for logging in steep, unstable areas above watersheds degraded by past logging. The area was hit hard by landslides five years ago, and has a high risk for future landslides. The Land and Water Fund brought in an independent geomorphologist who determined that the watershed protection measures proposed by the Forest Service, such as no-cut streamside buffers, were ineffective against landslides. The Judge agreed with this.

The Fish Bate project was one of several claims in a larger lawsuit contending that the Clearwater NF was violating a settlement agreement on an earlier lawsuit. We failed to win the claims against the White Pine timber sale, on the Palouse District of the Clearwater NF. The two claims on White Pine were failure to maintain 5% old growth per 10,000 acre Old Growth Analysis Unit (OGAU), and failure to adequately monitor old growth-dependent species. The Judge ruled that the Forest Service only needs to select 5% old growth to manage, which he says they were doing. And, he stated that we failed to exhaust our administrative remedies in our appeals by failing to clearly state that the Clearwater NF was not following its monitoring requirements. The law requires plaintiffs to exhaust all administrative remedies prior to filing a lawsuit.

Other groups in the lawsuit were the Wilderness Society, Idaho Conservation League, The Lands Council, Ecology Center, Idaho Rivers United and Clearwater Biodiversity Project. Friends of the Clearwater thanks these groups, Laird Lucas and Bill Eddie of the Land and Water Fund, Amy Haak of Conservation Geography, and many others for their countless hours of hard work and dedication.

Drawing by  
Sue Ring



**In this issue of the Clearwater Defender:**  
(formerly the Salmon-Selway Defender)

- ▶ Getting Burned
- ▶ Two Hot Victories
- ▶ Wolf Protection Endangered
- ▶ The Clearwater Elk Initiative
- ▶ Predator Protection

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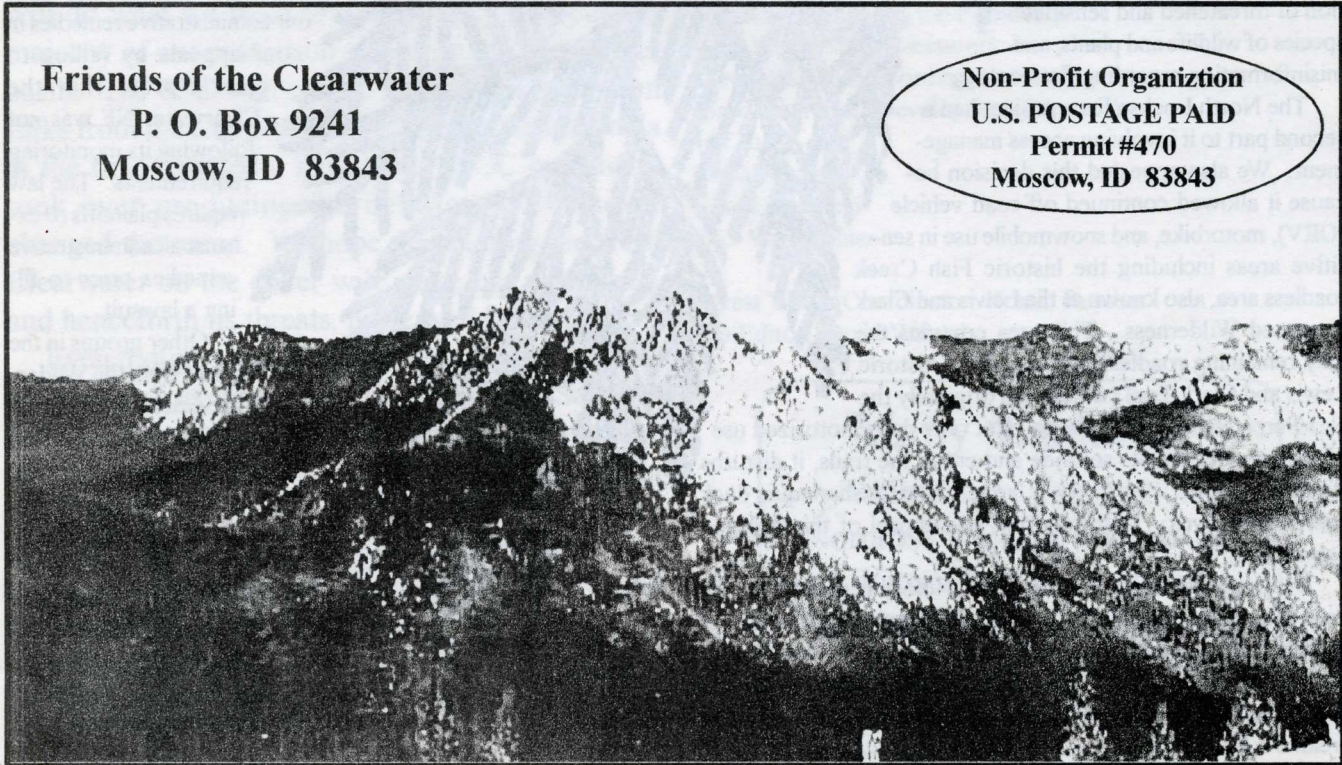


Photo of Williams Peak (North of Lolo Pass) by Chuck Pezeshki