



IDAHO CHAPTER
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

September 12, 1974
7717 Ustick Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83704

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
SUITE 5176
3900 WISCONSIN AVE. N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20016

Hearings Officer
USDA - Forest Service
Idaho Panhandle National Forests
P.O. Box 310
Couer d'Alene, Idaho 83814

Sir:

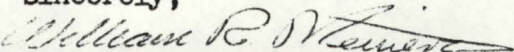
The St. Joe River has been studied and discussed at great length, both pro and con, relative to its characteristics, attributes and qualifications for inclusion within the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The studies, almost without exception, find this river system a well-qualified candidate for classification into the national system. Discussion has varied, dependent upon local or other participation and their respective appraisal of the inherent characteristics and values of the river system. A time for decision is at hand.

As much background data has already been established relative to the St. Joe it is not necessary to repeat such materials. It is necessary however to reaffirm certain of these data as they relate to the interest and concern of the Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society. We, a society of professional biologists working with and concerned of and about the fish, wildlife and related natural resources of Idaho, find it essential to chart a course of recognition, evaluation and implementation of comprehensive programs that assure continued viability of Idaho's natural resources. The St. Joe River is such a resource. It requires immediate action to sustain those programs, as initiated by the Idaho Fish and Game Department, to protect and enhance a unique native westslope cutthroat trout population as well as other fishery and wildlife values. It is absolutely necessary to maintain the integrity of both the terrestrial and aquatic habitats within the river system.

The Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society therefore recommends inclusion of the entire St. Joe River into the national system under federal administration recognizing that this would assure the highest degree of protection to the river and wildlife resources. However, in recognition of the 1974 St. Joe River Study and the options presented therein, we would concur in an endorse Alternative E as a workable compromise.

I respectfully submit this letter for your consideration and request its inclusion in the official hearings record.

Sincerely,


William R. Meiners, President