



Comment on Recommended Wilderness!

A primer for writing your own comments to the Forest Service

OVERVIEW

The Salmon-Challis National Forest is the largest forest in the state, and contains some of its wildest remaining unroaded areas, such as the Lost River Range, Pioneer Mountains, and Lemhi Range. [Forest planning](#) is the process through which the Forest Service determines which areas have the highest and best wilderness value and thus should be considered by Congress for future conservation. The Forest Service would like to know if you think that any [specific areas on the Salmon-Challis](#) should be recommended for formal wilderness protection. Federally designated wilderness remains the gold standard for protecting wild places on our public lands!

HOW YOU CAN HELP: SPEAK UP TODAY!

If you have 5 minutes...

Use the [webmap commenting tool](#) to write a quick comment linked to a particular area, or write a general comment in support of recommended wilderness through the [ICL Take Action center](#).

If you have 15 minutes...

Write multiple comments through the [webmap tool](#) or a longer comment through the [Take Action page](#) where you share a meaningful experience you've had in the [wilderness evaluation areas](#).

If you have 30 minutes...

Write a more detailed comment that shares personal stories and touches upon several areas under consideration for recommended wilderness. Submit via email (scnf_plan_rev@fs.fed.us).

COMMENT WRITING TIPS

- [Make it personal](#). Personal stories are more powerful because they show that you have a tangible connection to these places. Draw upon your own experiences to express why certain places are important to you and why they should be recommended as wilderness.
- [Establish your credibility](#). Give context to why this area is important to you and how it could impact you or your community. *For example, "I have lived in Ketchum for X years and often recreate on the Salmon-Challis National Forest."*
- [Think big](#). Consider how special these places are to the average person. Emphasize that these truly irreplaceable places should be preserved not just for local communities, but for all Americans who may have opportunities to enjoy them in the future. We often forget just how amazing these places are because we're surrounded by them.
- [Recognize the opposition arguments and counter them](#). Wilderness has been a contentious issue in this forest plan revision process. Opposition typically centers around 1) lack of mechanized access, 2) fire/trails management, and 3) "we already have enough."

(see reverse page for talking points to include in your comments!)

GENERAL TALKING POINTS

- The Forest Service has recommended both Borah Peak and North Slope Pioneers for wilderness protection in the past — which we still support! Speak up in favor of keeping both of these areas as recommended for wilderness designation in the plan.
- Certain areas are suitable to be recommended as wilderness because of their unique characteristics (e.g. high peaks, rare wildlife, stunning scenery), overall character (e.g. remote, quiet, rugged, untrammelled), and opportunities for primitive recreation.

AREA-SPECIFIC TALKING POINTS*

Borah Peak (“Borah Plus”, #6)

- This area contains the highest peaks in Idaho, including Borah Peak. Borah is one of the few state highpoints in the West without wilderness protection. State-highest mountains protected within official wilderness areas include: Denali (AK), Humphrey’s Peak (AZ), Mount Whitney (CA), Granite Peak (MT), Boundary Peak (NV), Wheeler Peak (NM), Mount Hood (OR), Kings Peak (UT), Mount Rainier (WA), and Gannett Peak (WY).
- With multiple peaks over 12,000 feet, this area has one of the best preserved alpine ecosystems in not only the Salmon-Challis National Forest, but in the entire state.
- Borah Peak area has been managed as recommended wilderness since 1979 (40 years!).

Pioneers (“North Slope Pioneers”, #1)

- This range is known for its rugged peaks, deep glacial valleys and abundant wildlife. Tom Lopez, author of *Idaho: The Climbing Guide*: “By almost any measure, the Pioneer Mountains are Idaho’s premier mountain range.”
- The Pioneers are one of the most geologically unique mountain ranges in Idaho, with rock types and features found nowhere else in the state.
- The Pioneers region provide excellent habitat and connectivity for wildlife (e.g. elk, mule deer, pronghorn, wolves) passing through this geographically diverse landscape.
- Motorized use would significantly detract from wilderness values of Wildhorse Canyon.
- The Pioneers have been managed as recommended wilderness since 1979 (40 years!).

Lemhis (“North Lemhi Range”, #12 and “South Lemhi Range”, #7).

- The Lemhis contain 118 peaks above 10,000 feet, and the fragile alpine life zone in the Lemhis is home to more than 200 types of plants.
- "To call the Lemhi Range remote is a little like saying that the weather in Siberia can get a bit nippy. Hidden behind the already isolated Lost River Range, the Lemhis may be the least known significant mountain range in the Lower 48." - *Backpacking Idaho*
- The eastern half of the South Lemhis is recommended for wilderness on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, but the western half in the Salmon-Challis National Forest is inexplicably not recommended despite sharing very similar characteristics.

Don’t limit yourself to just these areas - if you have knowledge about the wilderness character on other areas of the Forest, please share it!

*names/numbers in parentheses refer to Focal Evaluation Areas on [USFS handout](#)

How You Can Help Right Now

During evaluation we will be trying to answer two questions for all evaluation areas, with a particular focus on the 16 evaluation areas listed below:

1. What about these evaluation areas detract from or contribute to wilderness character or manageability?
2. What other information about these areas should be considered when determining what areas will move forward for analysis?

Please share your knowledge of the Salmon-Challis National Forest to help us answer these questions.

You can submit your feedback in a number of ways:

- online at <http://bit.ly/SCNFFPRCommentTool> or <http://bit.ly/SCNFWildernessStoryMap>,
- via e-mail sent to scnf_plan_rev@fs.fed.us,
- via mail sent to Salmon-Challis National Forest
ATTN: FPR/Wilderness
1206 S. Challis Street
Salmon, ID 83467



EVALUATION FOCAL AREAS

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. North Slope Pioneers | 9. South Cabin Peak |
| 2. Burnt Creek Big Lost | 10. Horsethief |
| 3. JMJP Sagebrush | 11. West Fork Morgan Plus |
| 4. JMJP Pine | 12. North Lemhi Range |
| 5. Spud Creek | 13. Leacock Point |
| 6. Borah Plus | 14. Chipps Creek |
| 7. South Lemhi Range | 15. Blackbird Mountain |
| 8. Pahsimeroi Mountains | 16. Stein Mountain |

What is Wilderness Character?

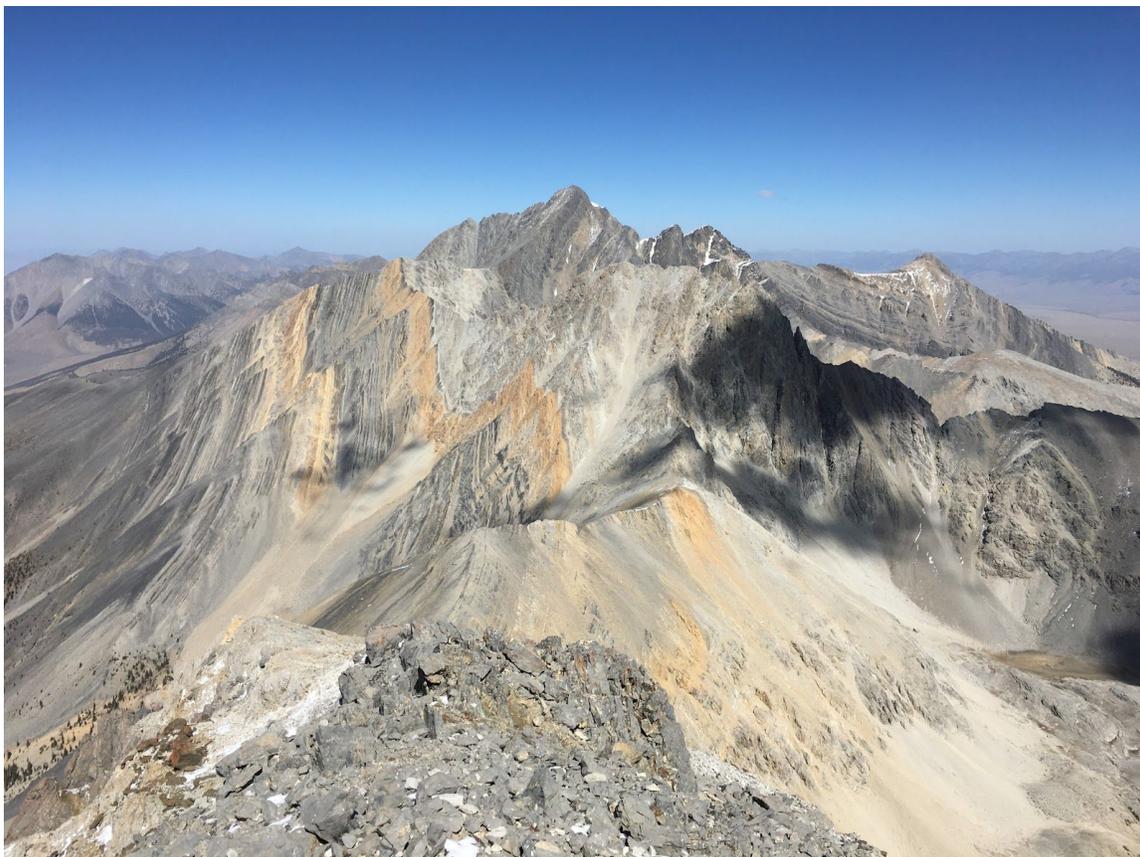
Apparent naturalness

Existence of opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation

Areas of at least 5,000 acres or of sufficient size to maintain characteristics in unimpaired condition.

Existence of ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic and historical value





**names/numbers in parentheses refer to Focal Evaluation Areas on [USFS handout](#)*