

FOREST SERVICE  
RECEIVED  
JAN 25 1965

Hamilton, Montana  
January 20, 1965

Secretary Orville Freeman  
Dept. Of Agriculture  
Washington, 25, D.C.

RECREATION AND LAND USES

Dear Mr. Freeman,

The feeling of concern about Area E (part of former Selway-Bitterroot Primitive Area) which was deleted from protected status in the Wilderness Bill is growing stronger and stronger among conservationists and wilderness supporters. We know that our chance to have it reclassified lies in your hands. If a restraining order on further activities in this area would come from your dept., it would be possible to give more intensive consideration to this area as to its wilderness value.

We urge you to consult with conservation groups and with our Congressional Delegation on this matter. There is some haste in the situation as timber sales are being prepared in the Magruder area right now.

I can speak first handed about this area and its merits as wilderness. As a family we have spent our vacations there for part of each summer for 13 years. In that length of time you have a fair idea of the area and what it has to offer. I know that if that area is opened up to Multiple use it will not stand the gaff. Wilderness is a fragil thing. The headwaters of the beautiful Selway River lie in this area. This river is untampered with and is one of the last of the free-flowing rivers left in our country. The side canyons are steep and wild and have wonderful fishing. You could never have such an area in Multiple use. Grazing, logging mining etc. will ruin it for all people to come. Even in this small area over 2000 people every summer and fall use it for wilderness purposes. I know this because I have made it my business to look carefully over the log books at the top of the Nez Perce Pass. If this small relatively remote area gets this much use, can't you see how great the need is to maintain all we can in Wilderness Classification?

As for the logging, I refer you to careful consideration of the exchange of letters by the Forest Service and Mort Brigham, Lewiston, Idaho. This helps give an idea of the logging economically.

I am inclosing other communications which I hope you will have time to study as they pretty well saze up the feelings of Wilderness supporters everywhere.

Sincerely,  
*Doris Milner*  
Doris Milner, Chrm.  
SAVE THE UPPER-SELWAY COMM.

Archival research by  
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3519 13th St.  
Lewiston, Idaho  
Jan. 8, 1965

Doris Milner, Chairman  
Save the Selway Committee  
Rt. 1 box 355  
Hamilton, Montana

Dear Doris:

Last night we held a meeting in Lewiston and raised about \$40 which will be forwarded to you to help save the Selway.

I finally heard from the Forest Service relative to their plans and am enclosing a copy of their letter.

You will note that the annual allowable cut in the upper Selway is to be approximately 12 million feet. Now designing sawmills and parts thereof happens to be my business. A stud mill with only one headrig such as a scragg, gang, or bandmill will nearly always cut about 100,000 feet of lumber per shift and 200,000 feet in two shifts to be ~~possible~~ feasible economically. A modern board mill must do the same thing or go broke. In two shifts, such a mill, small by comparison with most larger mills, will cut a million feet in a week. The allowable cut in the upper Selway would operate such a mill for only twelve weeks out of the year. The big mill in Lewiston would gobble up this allowable cut in about two weeks.

Whatever else it might accomplish, the sacrifice of the Selway wilderness would produce ~~only~~ only a dribble of sawlogs.

The Forest Service claims logging would benefit big game. This is worth a second look also. In the 1957-57 winter a count was taken of elk and deer in the Selway drainage. Out of a total of 6,774 elk counted in the Selway drainage, only 579 were seen above White Cap Creek, and only 186 above Magruder Station. This figure of 579 represents only 8 1/2 per cent of the Selway Elk which could possibly be affected. Logging would destroy browse in the path of logging roads, and such browse as might be produced would be mostly on north slopes where snow depths and cold temperatures would prevent its use by any considerable number of animals. The Riverbreak Zone idea advanced by the Forest Service would further reduce the effectiveness of logging in producing browse. In summation, if logging would be of any benefit to big game in this particular area, it would certainly be of minor significance. A wilderness species such as mountain goat, however, could be easily knocked out by building roads into its range.

I can send you a copy of the Clearwater Game study report if you would care to look it over. The deeper one digs into this matter, the more interesting it becomes.

cc Stewart Brandberg

Very truly yours,  
Morton R. Brandberg

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE

BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST  
HAMILTON, MONTANA 59840

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
FOREST SUPERVISOR  
AND REFER TO

2300

January 5, 1965

Mr. Morton R. Brigham  
3519 13th Street  
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Dear Mr. Brigham:

This is in further reply to your letter of December 12.

The Darby, Montana - Elk City, Idaho, road is an all-purpose road which receives a great deal of use by recreationists, hunters, and the general public. It is also important for providing access for fire control and administrative purposes. A 6½-mile section of this road located in Montana and extending to the Nez Perce Pass on the Idaho-Montana line is being widened and improved. The reconstruction work includes some relocation to reduce grades. The objective is to provide a safe road with alignment to permit speeds of 25-35 miles per hour. The existing road was built in the 1930's by the CCC's. It has grades of 20 percent and is narrow and crooked. Each year there are a number of accidents and near misses. In its present condition it is not a safe road. This work is being done under a contract to Rhodes-McKay Construction Company, Boise, Idaho, at a cost of approximately \$350,000. Additional betterment is planned in the section from Nez Perce Pass to the Magruder Ranger Station. Over a period of time the entire road to Elk City should be brought to a safer standard. As this road is reconstructed, it will become increasingly important as a recreation route.

The Magruder District contains 460,000 acres of which 165,000 acres are in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Area and 120,000 acres in the Salmon River Breaks Primitive Area. The remaining 173,000 acres have an estimated volume of 924 million board feet of sawtimber. The Timber Management Plan has not yet received final approval but the annual allowable cut will be approximately 12 million board feet. Stumpage prices will vary depending on quality of timber, location, etc.; however the stumpage received on the Bitterroot National Forest in calendar year 1964 averaged \$11.53/M for Douglas-fir and \$27.67/M for ponderosa pine. The weighted



average stumpage price for both species was \$19.35/M. The value of timber to the local economy, of course, is a great deal more than the stumpage price. While the road in question is an all-purpose road which will provide benefits to all classes of users, the stumpage values will amortize the cost of this road in relatively few years.

We are keenly aware of the recreation values in the Selway. A multiple use plan has been prepared in which the area is zoned for recreation, esthetic, and watershed values. Management plans and policies give special priorities to these values. A Riverbreak Zone extending on either side of the Selway River, a strip which averages one mile in width will give special consideration to protection of this river face. Timber harvesting will be mainly confined to the General Forest Zone. Logging should provide some urgently needed browse and forage for the declining elk herd in the area. Big game forage has decreased in the old burns in this area due to natural plant succession.

Enclosed is a map of the Magruder District which shows the boundaries of wilderness and primitive areas as well as other features. If you have other questions, please feel free to write us.

Sincerely yours,

*Harold E. Andersen*

**HAROLD E. ANDERSEN**  
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

Route 1, Box 355  
Hamilton, Montana  
January 21, 1965

Senator Mike Mansfield  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Mansfield:

At Mrs. Milner's request, I am offering the following comments on the letter to you from Mr. Neal M. Rahm of December 18, 1964, more particularly with regard to the construction of roads into the National Forests. I wish all my facts were authoritative. It is difficult for a citizen to obtain exact information on this subject, but what I have to say accurately represents my present understanding of the situation. If it turns out that in some respect I have been misled, it will be my pleasure to apologize to any offended parties.

Mr. Rahm refers to "reconstruction" of 6.5 miles of road at a cost of \$350,000. This small segment of road from Fale's Flat to the top of Nez Perce Pass is to be almost entirely new construction, taking a different grade from the existing road. Many times this length of road over similarly rugged country will be required to improve the Darby-Elk City road and to get logging trucks into the valuable stands of timber in Area X. The total cost, if mentioned in one figure, would be a severe shock to taxpayers. The type of road which is being built is necessary only for the logging operations and is incompatible with the preservation of wilderness values. Above all, members and friends of the Save-the-Upper-Selway Committee wish to halt the construction of these roads. The type of tourist who demands a modern highway for all his travel already has most of the terrain of our country for his purposes. The traveler who seeks out the Selway country is repelled by such highways. One of the great present attractions of the area is the picturesque mountain road by which it is reached. These travelers do not want an improved road and have so expressed themselves in the log book which the Forest Service has kept at points of entry for the past several years.

How much is the timber of Area X worth? Much,

granted; but I doubt that anyone would seriously contend that the cost of necessary road construction could be realized from the sale of the timber and still leave a profitable operation. I am told there is a Forest Service recommendation on record to the effect that available timber justifies operation of not more than two sawmills in the Bitterroot Valley. At present we have four mills in the Darby area alone, all operating more efficiently than would have been foreseen a few years ago. These are having to reach out in an ever-increasing radius for saw-logs. Even if they are given all roads and other assistance they want at public expense, they will very soon have to face up to the reality that too many people are attempting to make their livelihoods from logging of National Forests in this general area. For the sake of sound conservation, for the benefit of posterity, that reality should be faced at once, since the wisdom could not be found to face it at the more appropriate time several years ago.

It is common knowledge in our valley that the cost of certain recently constructed access roads has exceeded the reasonable value of timber which may be harvested over them. Thus, they are total losses to the tax-payers. The dogged assertion that such roads serve multiple purposes is a myth which should be flouted. Their net effect is to destroy recreational and scenic values. As a specific example, I cite the Weasel Creek road in the South Fork of the Skalkaho. It is my definite understanding that its cost cannot be justified by the value of timber harvested. For the rest, it destroyed my old hunting camp site, took away the livelihood of one of the better-known outfitters and guides of our community, and permanently scarred a beautiful high mountain ridge that formerly abounded with game.

We should like to suggest to our Congressional delegation that some further scrutiny be given to the costs of road construction. Of course, it will be immediately pointed out that the cost of logging roads devolves upon the logging contractor. But in the customary renegotiation of contracts which takes place upon completion of a logging operation, it is the taxpayer, we have reason to believe, who picks up most of the tab. The tremendous upsurge of road construction, we feel, has become a kind of self-replicating monster, spending begetting spending more for its own sake than because of any real need

for the roads. It would, in our view, be tragic for the canyon of the Little Clearwater River (in Area E), the wildest part of the wilderness in the whole Selway country, to be destroyed by this kind of a monster.

The trees are there. We know that harvesting them would mean dollars and bread to families of our community. We regret that it is not possible to build roads and cut the trees and still have wilderness and a wild river. We feel strongly, however, that the latter are more enduring values, those that we have an obligation to preserve for our posterity, especially now that such totally unspoiled areas have dwindled to only one or two in our country. Because the proposed action - one that has already been decided upon and implemented - can never be undone, we could at least wait for long and earnest reconsideration of the matter rather than rush into this unique and irreplaceable area of natural beauty with earth-moving equipment and power lines. We entreat the Secretary of Agriculture to order a stay in the program and the Congress to consider a bill which would restore the bulk of Area E to protection as wilderness.

I should like to add that all of us on this committee have the highest regard and appreciation for the quality of your statesmanship. We know that you have many serious and far-reaching problems to deal with. We greatly regret having to burden you with this one, but the need is most urgent. We are sending you a considerable quantity of material in order that you and your staff may have a basis for judging whether we are lunatic-fringe agitators or whether our thinking may have merit. We hope that you will see enough of the letter to use your influence with Secretary Freeman and with the Congress to retard the "opening up" of the Selway and the development of Area E until the ideas of more financially disinterested and conservation-minded citizens can be explored; to restrain eager resource managers from committing an irrevocable act until the most mature consideration of all interested citizens has been brought to bear on the use of this rapidly vanishing resource which belongs to all of the people.

Sincerely yours,

Kelsey C. Milner

Route 1, Box 355  
Hamilton, Montana  
January 21, 1965

Senator Mike Mansfield  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Mansfield:

During your recent visit to Mexico I received a communication from your office via Mrs. DeMichele, which I appreciated very much. However, our problem still is not solved regarding the future of the Upper Selway. As more citizens become aware of the effects that the passage of the Wilderness Bill will have on this area, the feeling of protest over the removal of this area from protected status is increasing. As one lumberman put it to me, "They took the pearl out of the oyster when they took Area E out of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness area." Of course there is fine timber there, but not the best; and are trees just for cutting? What about the millions of other citizens who are in ignorance of what is happening to their birthright? Those trees are theirs and yours and mine. And that area as Wilderness is theirs and yours and mine. I protest the tyranny of one group and one interest (this involves a relatively small group of loggers and lumbermen) when the Selway has a potential for many people now and for all time to come. If this area is opened to harvesting, in 10 years or less it will be finished, and then what will the mills do? This is not an area of rapid growth. Maybe in 300 years there will be a regrowth of harvestable timber; and you still can never really replace or grow back a wilderness. There are areas in the United States where timber management can make sustained cutting a reality. Trees do not grow here at the rate that logs are going through our saw mills.

It is true that the immediate economy will be aided by logging the Upper-Selway, but this is for a limited time only. Here let me refer you to the enclosed letters, one from the local forest supervisor, Mr. H. Andersen, the other from Mr. Morton Brigham from Idaho, a long-time lumberman. It seems to me that these letters speak for themselves on the economic angle. If the allowable annual cut is 12 million board feet, this is negligible logging when one small mill can cut a million feet a week.



Our President, in his State-of-the-Union address to Congress and the nation, has strongly backed the conservation of what beauty we have left. I feel that we can demand unselfishly that you urge the Secretary of Agriculture and your colleagues to have the disposition of this area reconsidered. It is truly magnificent country that we will be proud to have saved for others in its unspoiled state.

The recreational need for Wilderness is so great that an area in the Sierras has already been over-used to the extent that travel in it must be restricted. We are never likely to have too much Wilderness; as the population grows so does the need for such areas.

I do not feel that the question of how to use the Upper Selway is a matter of misrepresentation by either side, but it is a question of what is the most important in the long run for our country. We believe that an honest but unfortunate mistake has been made in the removal of Area E of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. We hope that the Secretary of Agriculture will issue a restraining order until further study is made.

There is a Wild River bill in the making and we hope that this will include the Upper Selway drainage. This is the nearest thing to a really wild river that exists in our country today and we believe that the sponsors of the bill will concur in our wish to preserve it as such.

Our committee urges you to give ear to the wishes of conservationists, sportsmen, and wilderness supporters. We hope that this deep feeling of concern can be presented to Secretary Freeman who is in a position to place a restraining order on further multiple use in Area E, and, as a result of further study, to present an alternative plan for consideration by the Congress. We believe that the need for such restudy is urgent and that the Secretary will find compelling reasons for modifying his original decision.

In addition to the letters of Mr. Andersen and Mr. Brigham, I am inclosing a letter by Dr. Kelsey Milner addressed to you in answer to a letter written by Mr. Neal Rahm in December, 1964.

Very truly yours,

Doris Milner, Chairman  
Save-the-Upper-Selway Com.