

## Supplemental Content Analysis Report

### Public Concern Statements about Lolo Peak, Carlton Ridge, and the Bitterroot Resort

During the development of the Proposed Land Management Plans there was a great deal of public interest in the appropriate intensity of recreation use in the vicinity of Lolo Peak and Carlton Ridge, on the boundary between the Bitterroot and Lolo National Forests. Many of those comments were outside the scope of forest plan revision; either because they addressed issues that are not decided until the project level, or because the issues were outside the scope of Forest Service decision making authority altogether. Because of the unusually high level of interest in a relatively small area of National Forest lands, we have chosen to prepare this separate, supplemental analysis of those comments that are within the scope of forest plan revision.

Of the roughly 6,000 total comments that we received, more than 1500 were identified and coded as related to recreation activity in the Lolo Peak-Carlton Ridge area. The Planning Team sorted and grouped similar comments and wrote a public concern statement that characterized what we were hearing from each group of comments. Nine public concern statements were prepared and are listed below. The accompanying “sample statements” are shown as examples of the kinds of concerns that led us to the conclusion expressed by each particular statement of public concern.

#### 1. The Forest Service should not identify lands around Lolo Peak and Carlton Ridge as suitable for high intensity recreation development, for the following reasons:

##### a. Resource management and protection

###### Sample Statement:

I am writing to express my support for the sections of the BNF and LNF Proposed Land Management Plans that address the potential for a ski resort in the Carlton Ridge area. I believe that this is an ecologically unique area that should be protected and expanded as an ecosystem- not a profit-driven ski resort. I agree with the Forests that a ski area is not needed, and its construction would compromise the ecological integrity of this area. (3900.1)

###### Sample Statement:

Since we live close to the proposed area, utilizing trails and roads for alpine and Nordic skiing would jeopardize the habitat of the moose, elk, deer, mountain lions, grouse and wolves living in this area. Thanks you for allowing public input. (3986.6)

###### Sample Statement:

Our livelihood depends upon growth in the economy and future development. It may therefore seem illogical that I write to you asking that the Bitterroot Ski Resort Not be approved. The intrinsic value of undeveloped land in Montana far outweighs the monetary benefits generated by a large ski development. I believe our generation will already be remembered as the generation who has squandered far too much land through unwise development. I would like the Forest Service and Federal, and Federal government to protect and preserve the last remaining wild lands we have, and Not allow development on any of it.

If that means our business may not have as many opportunities to profit, so be it. What really matters is the stewardship of remaining wild land, and how we can preserve and protect them as they are. (4495.1)

**Sample Statement:**

The proposed ski area will trammel precious wild land that serves as critical habitat for wildlife, who are increasingly squeezed and pressured by uncontrolled development in the valleys and creeping up the mountainsides. (4573.8)

**b. Economic and growth concerns**

**Sample Statement**

We write to support the provision in the Proposed Land Management Plan which would restrict the growth of downhill skiing opportunities on the Bitterroot Forest to those provided by the limited expansion of the Lost Trail Powder Mountain Ski Area. More specifically, we support the decision not to allow the development of a downhill ski area on Carlton Ridge and Lolo Peak, which we believe would, over time, damage the ability of the Forest to provide enhanced and sustainable recreation. At the same time, we question whether such a development would be economically beneficial to the local community. In short, we believe that the development of a ski area on Lolo Peak would lead to the quantitative expansion, but the qualitative deterioration, of the local economy and its ability to provide for the material satisfaction of a majority of residents. For the Forest specifically, we believe the quantitative growth will make it increasingly difficult to provide for and maintain opportunities for outdoor recreation, particularly those requiring solitude or that take place in fragile environments. For this reason, we support the Forest's intention to severely limit the expansion of downhill skiing on its lands. (3943.1)

**Sample Statement**

I wanted to put in my two cents worth on the development of the Lolo peak area for skiing. I feel it is wrong to allow public lands to be used for the financial gain of one individual. I also think the Carlton Ridge/Lolo peak area is too critical and sensitive of an area to destroy. The Natural area on Carlton ridge and the rare larches that live in the area should not be destroyed. I also seriously question the ability for the area to support another ski area when we have lots of other local areas to use and when some (Marshall) have not been able to succeed financially. Developing Lolo peak is no guarantee that it will succeed financially and to destroy such a delicate and unique area only to have the ski area fold would be a travesty. (3957.1)

**Sample Statement**

I do not believe for one minute, that a resort will bring good jobs to the Bitterroot and Missoula valleys. It hasn't happened in other resort areas; they have only had deleterious effects on the housing market, pricing regular people out of the area. Other parts of Montana certainly need jobs, but we are not desperate for a host of poor paying jobs that it is doubtful the local people would take anyway. (4507.3)

**Sample Statement**

The economy of Western Montana is poor at best. Montana is losing young families at a quickening rate, and real estate prices in the Missoula area are increasingly becoming out of touch for most locals. Missoula already has an economy based on the service industry, where locals work for the wealthy out of state residents who can actually afford to buy property here. The Bitterroot Resort will only further the divide between the working locals and the wealthy out of state residents who come to Montana for cheap property as much for the beautiful scenery. Very few people will profit from a destination resort in the valley. (4692.2)

**c. Recreation and access opportunities**

**Sample Statement**

Please do not allow private development for any kind of ski resort in the Bitterroot National Forest, and/or the Lolo National Forest, anywhere, particularly not near the Carlton Ridge Research Natural Area. My husband and I moved to Montana (we live on the side of Mitten Mountain above Missoula), like so many other people, because of the beautiful and easily accessible public land, much of which is National Forest. (3936.1)

**Sample Statement**

I'm writing to ask you to not allow the development of our Lolo Peak and Carlton Ridge areas. Our national forests are an important part of many Montanans' lives, these special areas should not be set aside for the elite golfers and skiers who would use such a resort as the proposed Bitterroot resort. (3958.1)

**Sample Statement**

Opposing the proposed Bitterroot Resort; I am a skier and do not require any more access to downhill slopes than are currently available to me. (4594.1)

**Sample Statement**

I think that the proposed development of Lolo Peak for use as a ski resort is a bad idea. There is insufficient need for such a use, as the existing local ski areas are not overly crowded. Further, it will change forever the nature of the mountain, the environment and the entire Missoula area. It is not in the best interest of this public land to be used for such a purpose, and the area should remain as it is. (4618.1)

**d. Other Reasons**

**Sample Statement**

As a fifth generation Montanan and life-long Missoula resident, I would like to ask that you protect the Lolo Peak area and keep our public land public. I see no benefit to the average Missoulian in the development of the Lolo Peak Recreation area into a destination ski area that most of us will not be able to afford and that will provide minimum wage, service-type jobs to our residents, at best. This is a money grubbing effort on the part of Mr. McClay and his cronies and in my opinion any positive result of the area would be outweighed many times over by the negative impact to OUR beautiful Lolo peak and the entire area. (4499.1)

**Sample Statement**

The situation with development is that once begun, it cannot be undone. Ancient trees won't grow back and newly paved roads can't return to foot trails covered in silent, black forest humus. Instead, development tends to expand and spread as the wild lands shrink and disappear - all for profit to the developers and investors. Even though we are downhill skiers, we earnestly hope that the forest service does not allow the Bitterroot Resort to continue through public lands. (4519.5)

**2. The Forest Service should identify lands around Lolo Peak and Carlton Ridge as suitable for high intensity recreation development, for the following reasons:**

**a. Resource management & protection**

**Sample Statement**

I strongly favor the proposed ski resort development and believe such development can further and enhance the use of our natural resources by the people. (4044.2)

**Sample Statement**

Removals of any timber in the proposed ski slope areas would dramatically assist in reducing fire in the proximity of the proposed Bitterroot Resort and more importantly, the communities of Lolo and Florence. These ski slopes would serve as fire breaks. Under a "Partnership," agreement, the golf course on the Bitterroot Resort will have several water traps. These water traps, if properly designed, serve as a reserve source of water for fires which are in the near proximity of the Lolo and Florence communities. In addition, there will be a holding basin for the gray water that will be processed from the Bitterroot Resort affluent system. This water is suitable for irrigation and could also serve the needs of a fire emergency. (4504.8)

**b. Economic opportunities**

**Sample Statement**

I am writing to you as a Missoulian in support of the proposed Bitterroot Resort. I believe that the promise of possibilities presented by the Resort will be a welcomed addition to the Missoula and Bitterroot communities. It is very comforting to know that this proposal is being piloted by a 5th generation Montanan and I truly feel that he has our community's best interests in mind. I am asking that you to please review this proposal with open minds and dedicate ample time and consideration to your decision, as it will greatly impact our local economy and recreational opportunities. (3982.1)

**Sample Statement**

A new ski resort so close to Missoula would provide unlimited opportunities to help our economy grow, to bring more job opportunities, and make Missoula a destination vacation spot. Please do not allow our public land to be off limits to developed recreation. (4536.1)

**Sample Statement**

I support the idea of a world class ski resort in Lolo. I do not ski, but I know many people who enjoy winter solely because of skiing. Montana's largest business is tourism. If we want to increase the number of tourist coming into the state, we need to give them a reason to come. The Big Sky area near Bozeman has given that area's economy a tremendous boost. Surely a well designed, challenging ski resort would do the same for the Missoula area. One of the chief complaints we hear about this area is that there are not enough jobs, or enough good jobs. Let's give people a reason to come here, and maybe some will want to bring their businesses with them to stay. (4662.1)

**Sample Statement**

The Bitterroot Resort will undoubtedly be an economic benefit to this area. We are a service community and actually produce very little "product" in this area. Our cleanest industry has been recreation and health care. A big time ski area will greatly diversify the winter economy and provide jobs for loggers, fishing guides, and fire fighters. A big resort would also provide some job security for local Forest Service employees since it would certainly need to be followed closely. (4148.2)

**c. Recreation and access opportunities**

**Sample Statement**

While we applaud the expansion of Lost Trail, it is not enough. Lost Trail provides a great service to Hamilton, MT and Salmon, ID population but it is an hour and half drive (on a good day) from Missoula. This is a dangerous drive under winter conditions as well as costly with the price of fuel the way it is. We need additional downhill skiing opportunities closer to Missoula. We believe that the opportunity that Bitterroot Resort is trying to provide would accommodate this need. The Bitterroot Resort is the private sector that is developing the offering of highly developed recreation. If a special use permit were granted to the resort to

utilize adjacent National Forest Service property, we'd have a great recreational opportunity. As a result, we would like "Part N" under the "Forest Wide Desired Conditions" portion of the "Developed and Dispersed Recreation" section on page 34 to be re-written as follows: n. Additional downhill ski opportunities would be provided through limited expansion of Lost Trail Powder Mountain Ski Area and a special use permit granted to Bitterroot Resort for the areas outlined in the Resorts application within Management Area 6.1. In closing, we believe that this development will benefit the Bitterroot and Missoula Valleys greatly. The economic benefits, additional recreational opportunities, and cultural improvements the resort will bring will greatly improve the way of life in the Missoula and Bitterroot Valleys. We hope you will consider these changes in the Final Forest Service Plan. (3975.2)

**Sample Statement**

The Bitterroot Resort proposes a high tech lift system that will be available summer and winter. I live in Hamilton, and choose to purchase a season pass for my 30+ days of skiing at Snowbowl. I skied at the Bitterroot Resort this winter, and was very impressed. I would purchase a season pass there for my entire family. Allow them to use the proposed land! Please do not let this turn into a private "Yellowstone club" type of ski area! I believe that would be a much worse scenario for Missoula County than a new public ski area. (3987.2)

**Sample Statement**

I'm a skier, grew up in Red lodge, and love western Montana and have lived in Missoula over 20 years. This resort offers a fantastic recreational ski area for the general public. It would be an excellent location for anyone who loves to ski but doesn't want to drive 2 hours to Lost Trail or Discovery. (4496.1)

**Sample Statement**

The lift capacity at Snow Bowl is seriously inadequate. On a good week end it is normal to have to stand in a lift line in excess of 45 minutes. One must conclude after considering all of these inadequacies that, yes, the needs of skiers in Missoula and adjacent areas are not being met. And this is a tragic situation especially since this region is located in the middle of the Rocky Mountains. (4521.4)

**d. Other reasons**

**Sample Statement**

There are many issues that need a resolution in this Montana community. Among the most critical are the water aquifer, the long term treatment of sewage and the wide spread unemployment and lack of opportunities for employment. I became interested in the Bitterroot Resort as, in my opinion; it addresses all of these issues. (4504.3)

**Sample Statement**

I want to register my support for the development of the Bitterroot Resort by the Maclay family. Having recently toured the land and part of the mountain I am confident that they have the right ingredients to maintain the natural beauty of the area, be very sensitive to environmental concerns, and yet develop a project that would attract tourists to our area and provide additional recreational opportunities for Montanans. (4592.1)

**Sample Statement**

We would like all of the public to be heard. We would like to see the Bitterroot Resort go forward. We would like to ski on Lolo Peak. (4611.1)

**3. The Forest Service should not expand the Carlton Ridge RNA.**

**Sample Statement**

The USFS has placed a great deal of emphasis on the RNA value of a stand of larch trees in the proximity of the 12,000 acres requested by the Bitterroot Resort. Ski trails appropriately located and postured around the RNA would allow these trails to serve as fire breaks assisting in the longstanding integrity of the larch study in as much as this is a rare configuration of soil and hybrid trees. It has been implied by the USFS that this RNA study cannot be replicated anywhere else in the Bitterroot Range. These firebreaks (ski slopes) could assist in protecting the nearby communities of Lolo and Florence. (4504.7)

**Sample Statement**

Expanding the RNA is not appropriate for the following reasons. First, nothing in the proposed plan explains the rationale for expanding the RNA. What "best available science" did the Forest Service rely upon to conclude that the RNA should be expanded? Is there no alpine larch habitat presently in the RNA? How is the alpine larch habitat outside the RNA different than the alpine larch habitat inside the RNA? (4871.54)

**4. The Forest Service should maintain or expand the Carlton Ridge RNA, for the following reasons:**

**a. Protect the rare and unique habitat for alpine larch**

**Sample Statement**

If there is more unique habitat outside the Carlton Ridge RNA, it should be added to the Carlton Ridge RNA. (3938.3)

**Sample Statement**

I also believe the Research Natural Area should be expanded to include all of the larch habitat, as was originally proposed so very many years ago. (3966.2)

**Sample Statement**

I support an expansion of the Carlton Ridge RNA if it will enhance the research opportunities there, otherwise I strongly support including all of the upper Carlton Creek basin and the NE side of North Peak as recommended Wilderness. (4513.4)

**b. Soils**

**Sample Statement**

The Carlton Ridge Research Management Area needs to remain intact and expanded. Commercial skiing recreation is totally incompatible with the delicate nature of the soils in that area and with the uniqueness of the environment. Please expand the buffer area between the wilderness area and the urban interface to the north. (4953.2)

**5. The Forest Service should increase the amount of recommended wilderness in the Lolo Peak-Carlton Ridge Area.**

**Sample Statement**

To retain the Lolo Peak area for everyone's use and maintain this special resource for future generations of Americans and Indians, (Ref. Chapter 1. page 30 & p 39-40, American Indian Rights and Interests), we definitely support the Lolo National Forest designating this area a 1.2 Designated Wilderness. The proposed addition of 11,000 acres in the South Fork of the Lolo Creek Geographic area to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness will facilitate the future protection of this special area. (3989.1)

**Sample Statement**

I am appalled by the threat to such a fine natural area that we are encountering recently. I would like it to never happen again. I am advocating that the areas be put into a wilderness designation so that encroachments aren't constantly debated, resources wasted, and community relations strained by conflict. This fellow, Tom Maclay, who has decided that it would make him a nice ski area, appears to be blinded by his own desires and ambitions. I am sure that a ski area would be nice for him. I think it would be a disaster for the rest of us. Maclay's map in the Missoulian recently was impressive. Its message was, "Look how much wilderness there is SW of Lolo Peak! I only want a tiny parcel." If I had the big bucks and connections to get away with it, I might entertain myself by publishing a map of New York City with the Empire State Building highlighted. I would write, "I want to make a little piece of wilderness in that vast urban area. Look at how much city there is around it! I only want a tiny parcel." I live near the Rattlesnake Wilderness and I love the security of knowing it will be managed as wild and be there for my children as they grow up and their children after. We need to protect some of these last areas that are near to metropolitan areas as a legacy. (4507.2)

**Sample Statement**

I'm writing about the proposed Bitterroot Resort, and consideration by Lolo NF to change the area from a protected area to a ski area. I am opposed to any development of the area, whatsoever. I can attest that this special area needs to be maintained in its current status, or even stronger, it needs to be designated Wilderness, to protect it from special developer interests, who will change its wild character, for future generations. (4672.1)

**Sample Statement**

In the area of Lolo Peak, I notice the preferred option has a small portion of 2.2 from the Forest boundary on Carlton Ridge south to the present wilderness. In keeping with my comments on the Lolo NF Plan, above, I urge that all of that small area be reclassified as 1.2, with the exception of a buffer zone around Carlton Lake and a cherry-stem along the access route to the dam. This change would make sense whether or not the 2.2/1.2 change I advocated above were to occur or not, as the portion on the BNF has the geographic boundary of the Ridge. Again, under NO circumstances should any 6.1 area be carved out of the lands in the vicinity of Lolo Peak. (4783.4)

**6. The Forest Service should decrease the amount of recommended wilderness in the Lolo Peak-Carlton Ridge Area.**

**Sample Statement**

I wish to voice strong opposition for placing Lolo Peak into proposed wilderness and for expansion of the Carlton Ridge Research Natural Area. We have way more designated wilderness areas than we need and such further expansion merely serves to cater to the narrow interests of a vocal minority to the deprivation of majority of Americans who realize that all uses of our natural resources can be groomed an development can coexist. (4044.1)

**Sample Statement**

It makes no sense to me to expand the Research Natural Area and expand the Selway/Bitterroot wilderness just to keep this resort from happening! I believe Bitterroot [Resort] will benefit the Bitterroot and Missoula Valleys greatly and meet an unmet demand for quality, accessible skiing. The economic benefits, additional recreation opportunities, and cultural improvements the resort will bring will greatly improve the quality of life in the Missoula and Bitterroot Valleys. (4069.3)

**7. The Forest Service should manage the area north of Carlton Ridge for non-motorized use to provide a primitive buffer from the urban interface**

**Sample Statement**

I also feel motorized use should not be allowed in the area north of the aforementioned area. There should be a back country buffer between the urban interface and the protected area for the good of wildlife, water quality, and quiet trail users. (3965.2)

**Sample Statement**

To protect the two main access trails to Lolo Peak, I request that Lolo National Forest classify as backcountry non-motorized (2.2a), the lands north of the Carlton Ridge area that are designated as 3.3 in the draft plan. The area encompassing Trail 309 on lower Lantern Ridge and the entire length of trail 1310 between Mill Creek trailhead and Mormon Peak Road trailhead needs to be kept primitive and with no new or improved roads. (4046.4)

**Sample Statement**

Backcountry non-motorized (2.2a) is the appropriate classification for the land north of Carlton Ridge (designated 3.3 in the draft). Please keep as primitive and unroaded lower Lantern Ridge (Trail 309) and the entire length of Trail 1310 between Mill Creek trailhead and Mormon Peak Road trailhead. Backcountry designation will provide a buffer for the Wilderness. (4573.7)

**Sample Statement**

Lolo Peak and the area around it should be deemed back-country non-motorized(2.2A) Wilderness, therefore creating a protected buffer zone between the urban interface and the Wilderness. This buffer zone should include the two main trails that access Lolo Peak. (4633.2)

**8. The Bitterroot National Forest should change the management area designation around McClain Creek from 4.1 to 3.3 to provide a buffer and because soils in that area are unstable.**

**Sample Statement**

We would also recommend Bitterroot National Forest change the management area designation on and around McClain Creek area at the northern end of Bitterroot Geographical Area from 4.1 to 3.3. It would then be managed the same as land surrounding it and provide an adequate buffer zone for the Research Natural Area. A lower management impact is more suitable for this geographically unstable area (3986.2)

**Sample Statement**

Friends of Lolo Peak's specific comments on the proposed plans: We strongly encourage the Bitterroot National Forest to change the management area designation on and around McClain Creek at the northern end of the Bitterroot geographical Area from 4.1 (general forest moderate intensity management) to 3.3 (general forest low intensity management). It would then be managed the same as land surrounding it and provide an adequate buffer zone for the Carlton Ridge Research Natural Area. A lower Management impact is more suitable for this geographically unstable area. (4087.2)

**Sample Statement**

The Carlton Ridge Research Area has been deemed this title since the 1960's. It is obviously an extremely important area and should be expanded preserving this important Research Area. The management area on and around McClain Creek area at the north end of the Bitterroot Geographical area should be changed from 4.1 to 3.3, therefore it would be managed in the

same manner as the land surrounding it, while creating an adequate buffer zone for the research area. (4633.3)

**9. Comments submitted by the proponent of high-intensity recreation development on Forest Service and private lands in the vicinity of Lolo Peak and Carlton Ridge.**

**Sample Statement**

I support our public lands, I want more four-season recreation opportunities in our community, and I support the concept of snow sports and other environmentally-sustainable developed recreational opportunities on the Carlton Ridge and Lolo Peak areas of the Bitterroot and Lolo National Forests. I support the Bitterroot Resort proposal for new recreation and tourism in the Bitterroot Valley. (4871.1)

**Sample Statement**

Recreation on public lands is in the public interest and is part of the Forest Service's multiple use mission. Developed recreation is underserved in the proposed Forest Plans. Bitterroot Resort can help the Forest Service meet the demand for developed recreation. The lands identified on Exhibit A could be opened up to interpretive, Nordic, alpine, hiking and mountain biking trails. That recreational use would allow for ready access for this generation and future generations in the Bitterroot Valley to a healthy lifestyle. (4871.3)

**Sample Statement**

We invite the Forest Service to join us in a spirit of cooperation and partnership to make Bitterroot Resort a model of ecologically and economically sustainable uses of public and private lands. We want to work collaboratively with the Forest Service and the public to implement new Forest Plans that truly benefit and respect the diverse outdoor and recreational interests of the present and future communities of Montana families. (4871.11)

**Sample Statement**

We propose that the Forest Service designate the lands in the Carlton Creek drainage east of Lolo Peak on the Bitterroot National Forest as Management Area 5.1, General Forest High Intensity Management. This is consistent with the present designation that allows for the motorized use that has occurred in this basin for decades. On the Lolo National Forest, Bitterroot Resort proposes that the Forest Service designate the lands identified on the attached map as Management Area 5.1 -General Forest High Intensity Management. See Exhibit A. Bitterroot Resort proposes Management Area 5.1 for the lands identified on Exhibit A because that designation is consistent with the present and historic use of those lands, would provide for recreational use, including Nordic skiing, and would not preclude opening those areas to developed skiing and snowboarding in the future in a site-specific NEPA process. In total, this is approximately 2,146 acres. (4871.14)

**Sample Statement**

Bitterroot Resort supports the Friends of Lolo Peak's recommendation that the Forest Service designate lands west and south of Lantern Ridge, adjacent to Lolo Peak, as wilderness. This designation is depicted on Exhibit A. Many ski areas on National Forest System lands are adjacent to wilderness areas, and have proven that they are good neighbors. Ski areas can provide views of and backcountry access to bordering wilderness areas. (4871.22)

**Sample Statement**

The desired conditions section of the Lolo Forest Plan for the Lolo Creek Geographic Area, and the desired conditions section of the Bitterroot Forest Plan for the Bitterroot Geographic Area, should each specifically state that consideration will be given to the development of a ski area on National Forest System lands within both National Forests on Carlton Ridge and Lolo Peak for Bitterroot Resort. As proposed, neither Forest Plan provides for considering

Bitterroot Resort. Lolo Forest Plan at 1-49; Bitterroot Forest Plan at 1-47. Consistent with the forest-wide desired condition that we propose, the desired conditions for the Lolo Creek and the Bitterroot Geographic Areas should state: "the Forest Service will consider a site-specific proposal for the development of downhill skiing opportunities on Carlton Ridge and Lolo Peak at Bitterroot Resort." This language is intended to allow for the consideration of a site-specific NEPA process for developed skiing on public lands at Bitterroot Resort. (4871.24)

**Sample Statement**

The Lolo National Forest states in the proposed plan that "the Lolo National Forest considers people to be an integral part of the forest environment. Forest managers are committed to balancing the need to conserve and sustain natural resources with providing for people's desire for products and services now and in the future." Lolo Forest Plan at Intro-12. That statement rings hollow because only 1.4% of the Lolo National Forest is designated as suitable for developed recreation. The designation we seek would help meet the growing demand for developed recreation in the region. By allocating a relatively small amount of public lands to Management Area 6.1 for Bitterroot Resort, the Forest Service could plan for the existing and future need for developed winter and summer recreation on National Forest System. (4871.32)

**Sample Statement**

The Forest Plan land designation that we propose would help the agency meet its commitment in the Forest Plan regulations at 36 C.F.R. 219.10 to establish Forest Plans that encourage uses of public lands that are economically sustainable, as follows: The local economy is witnessing a decrease in dependence on the timber industry and an increase in dependence on the tourism industry. Bitterroot Resort would be an economically sustainable use of public lands because it would support local tourism and would generate significant job growth and entrepreneurial activities for local communities. -This economically sustainable use is consistent with the growth of policies of Missoula and Ravalli Counties. (4871.35)

**Sample Statement**

The Ryberg Report is flawed, relies on incorrect data and assumptions, and does not consider many factors. The Forest Service should expressly identify whether and to what extent it relies on the Ryberg Report in its final Forest Plan decisions. (4871.48)

**Sample Statement**

Bitterroot Resort respectfully suggests that the Forest Service should identify promoting tourism and developed recreation as desired conditions of the Lolo and Bitterroot Forest Plans. The Forest Plan proposal in these comments would achieve those goals. Tourism is vital to Montana's economy, and here in the New West, is supplanting extractive industries like mining and timber cutting. Developed recreation can strengthen the state's tourism industry and provide employment opportunities for the local community. Such desired conditions would be consistent with the strategic vision of the surrounding local communities. (4871.50)