

Preliminary Administrative Wilderness
Recommendation
Information for Proposed Action
June 30, 2011

Colville, and Okanogan-Wenatchee
Forest Plan Revision



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Preliminary Administratively Recommended Wilderness

Introduction

In this document you will find a description of the preliminary wilderness recommendations included in the proposed action. Each area has a rationale for what is included and excluded from the recommendation, as well as brief information on the *capability*, *availability* and *need* of the area. These are the three criteria formulated to guide the Forest Service in identifying potential additions to the wilderness system (Forest Service Land Management Planning Handbook 1909.12, Chapter 70 Wilderness Evaluation). *Capability* looks to the presence of conditions that enhance the opportunity for wilderness dependent experiences; *availability* looks to potential values that may be foregone, such as timber, minerals, or non wilderness recreation, and the costs of managing the area for wilderness; and *need* considers need for wilderness based on location, type, trends in use, capacity, and value for habitat.

Not all of the potential wilderness areas were included in the preliminary recommendation. All the potential wilderness areas in the inventory are capable of being wilderness, so rationale for not including those centers on availability or need. Those areas not recommended would be included in the Backcountry or Backcountry Motorized Management Areas. These management areas allow for a variety of uses not found in designated wilderness, such as mountain biking (mechanized use) and large group use. Their existing conditions would be protected by not allowing timber harvest or road construction.

On the **Okanogan-Wenatchee**, all preliminary wilderness recommendations are additions to existing wilderness, many of which improve the boundary location. Areas not adjacent to existing wilderness were not considered for recommendation because the need for additions to the system centered on improving the management of existing wilderness areas.

On the **Colville**, additional wilderness was recommended due to a need to increase the availability of that recreational experience in this area. However, not all potential wilderness areas were recommended and information on why areas were not recommended is given below.

- **Cougar Mountain and Thirteenmile** – Have areas currently being treated to enhance and maintain the ponderosa pine stands; have recreational opportunities that would be displaced by wilderness designation. The ability to treat vegetation fuels in this location is important to managing fire risks for the private lands and the town of Republic to the north and the Colville Confederated Tribe Reservation lands to the south.
- **Twin Sisters** – Currently has a motorized trail system that offers a unique recreation setting and experience.

- **South Huckleberry and Jackknife** – These areas have motorized trails and some wildland urban interface associated with dry forest vegetation type that presents a risk of wildfire. They also have few features to contribute to the need for wilderness.
- **Deer Creek** – The area has a high proportion of wildland urban interface and dry forest vegetation type.
- **Owl Mountain** – The area has a high proportion of wildland urban interface and dry forest vegetation type. Also, this area has a motorized trail, water transmission lines, and a permitted TV translator station located within the area.
- **Jackson Creek, Bodie Mountain, and Clackamas** – These areas are shared with the Okanogan-Wenatchee N.F. and do not contribute to that Forest’s need for additional wilderness.
- **Hall Mountain** – Contains wildland urban interface and dry forest vegetation type. The Sullivan Lake Trail is a popular recreation trail used by large groups.
- **Grassy Top** – This area is shared with the Idaho Panhandle N.F., which has decided to not include their portion - the larger portion - in their recommendation. The Colville portion (2,200 acres) is not capable of supporting wilderness designation.
- **Harvey Creek** – This area has caribou and grizzly bear habitat that would benefit from vegetation management activities not easily available in wilderness.
- **Lost Creek** – This area contains a motorized trail system.
- **Quartzite** – This area would offer a unique setting for semi-primitive and non-motorized recreation outside of a wilderness area. It is adjacent to an existing ski area, has dry forest within wildland urban interface, and features interesting to the public including a western red cedar stand.

As part of the proposed action, the Forests are making a preliminary administrative recommendation to add to the national wilderness system. The tables below show the relative proportion of the recommendation to the existing wilderness and the whole forest.

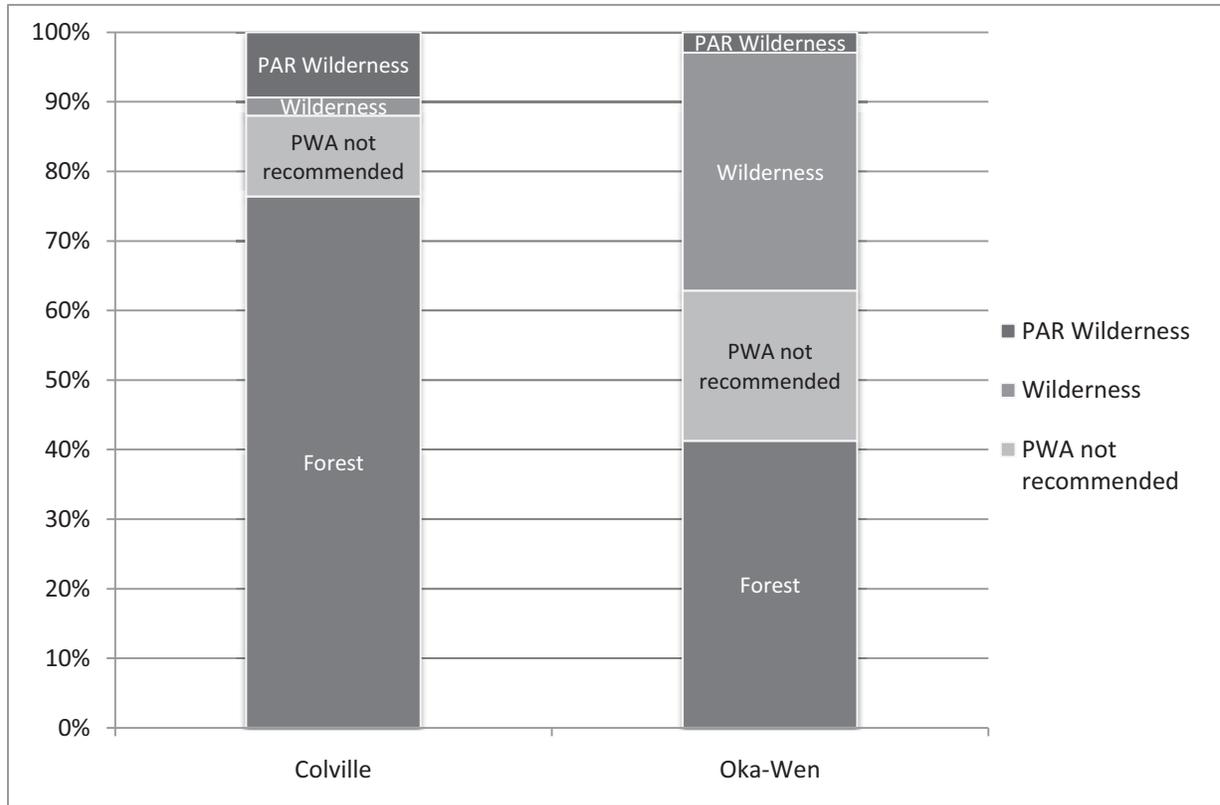


Figure 1. Percent of Forest in Preliminary Administrative Recommended (PAR) Wilderness, Wilderness, Potential Wilderness Area (PWA,) and the remaining Forest lands.

Table 1—Acres of Forest in Preliminary Administrative Recommended (PAR) Wilderness, Wilderness, Potential Wilderness Area (PWA) not recommended, and potential increase in wilderness acres

	PAR Wilderness	Current Designated Wilderness	PWA not recommended	Potential increase in wilderness acres
Colville	101,300	29,000	129,500	349% increase
Okanogan-Wenatchee	125,800	1,470,000	927,800	8% increase

Need and Availability

The following section gives brief information about the need for wilderness and the recreation availability tradeoffs. More detailed information for each potential wilderness area can be found in the wilderness evaluations for the area. These are posted on the plan revision website:

www.fs.fed.us/r6/wenatchee/forest-plan/

Wilderness Need Assessment - Summary

Recreation Need

Recreation need factors assess (1) demographic trends relative to the current availability of wilderness and the future need for wilderness, and (2) the ability of non-wilderness lands to provide for unconfined recreation. Using NVUM data, the analysis identified a recreational market zone for each forest, and a broader analysis area to examine the public land base accessible from major population centers within each market zone.

- Population growth will increase pressure on existing wilderness up to 6 times current use levels by 2050 (Cordell).
- Many wilderness regulations and management practices are currently in place to optimize use while preventing impacts, but long-term use will need to be limited in many areas in order to protect wilderness character.
- Many trails pass through a PWA prior to entering wilderness. Wilderness designation would offer continuity of the wilderness setting.
- Some PWAs offer new settings that could add to the diversity represented in wilderness.
- Population centers near the Okanogan-Wenatchee N.F. have ready access to existing wilderness.
- The greater Spokane area only has two designated wildernesses within a 3-hour drive. Wilderness recommendation on the Colville N.F. could fill a recreation need for this large population center.

Need for Refugia

The analysis evaluates which species have an inability to survive in less than primitive surroundings and how the PWA's contribute habitat. The wilderness evaluation used the sustainability (now viability) analysis developed for the plan revision. None of the species needed wilderness in order to survive, provided the PWA is managed for roadless character. In most cases wilderness is beneficial for the species.

- Wildlife analysis showed some PWAs as important for providing connectivity and / or habitat for ESA species. Species included caribou and wide-ranging carnivores (wolverine, grizzly bear, American marten, and Canada lynx) as well as a number of sensitive species. One sensitive species (the western gray squirrel) would benefit from vegetation management (in some locations) not appropriate in wilderness.

- Fish analysis was similar to wildlife. PWAs provide habitat or contribute to downstream habitat for listed fish species.
- Botanical analysis identified the contribution of PWAs for supporting populations of rare plants. Several PWAs have extraordinarily high rare plant values based on abundance of species, populations, endemism, and rarity at the state scale.

Need for Preserving Landform and Underrepresented Ecosystems

The analysis examines whether landforms and ecosystems found in the planning area are adequately represented in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

- Of the landforms found in the planning area; western Cascade and eastern Cascade landforms are adequately represented and the Columbia Basin and Okanogan Highlands landforms are not. All of the Colville and six of the Okanogan-Wenatchee PWAs have Columbia Basin and Okanogan Highlands landforms.
- Most PWAs include underrepresented ecosystems, including ponderosa pine, western red cedar, non-alpine meadows, forb land, cottonwood, quaking aspen, red alder, and white oak.

Recreation Availability Assessment - Summary

Background

Wilderness evaluation considers the trade-offs for recreation of wilderness designation. National Forests are the single biggest purveyor of outdoor recreation in Washington State. Other public lands in the state provide recreation opportunities. This analysis combined with the Wilderness Need Assessment answered the question, “*which PWAs offer recreational opportunities that have significance at a regional scale, and how wilderness designation would change those opportunities?*” Considerations included -

- Participation rates in recreational activities that utilize backcountry or wilderness settings.
- Projected future trends for these activities by forest.
- The regional spatial distribution and capacity of recreational venues for these activities.
- Which PWAs attract these uses at a regional scale, and how critical each location is compared to other opportunities available to the market zone.

Major Findings

Each Forest has a different recreation use pattern. Western Washington offers extensive opportunities for all activities except for snowmobiling, but many areas are at capacity. Combined with anticipated population changes and trends in recreational participation the following key themes emerge.

OHV Use – SE Washington is oversupplied with OHV opportunities. At the Forest scale, OHV use is low on all three forests. Each Forest has local “hot-spots” of OHV use. **Wenatchee:** Several PWAs are critical for accommodating high use into the future.

Mountain Bike Use – Several PWAs accommodate high levels of mountain bike use, while overall use is low. **Colville:** Key tradeoff on the Kettle Crest, although use is low. **Okanogan-Wenatchee:** the Methow has the only abundant riding opportunities, but is low use.

Equestrian Use – Stock users favor chainsaw use and group size limits can be an issue with this group. **Colville:** relative low use compared to Okanogan-Wenatchee and Idaho Forests. **Okanogan-Wenatchee:** Very high participation rate on the **Okanogan**, less on **Wenatchee**. Stock users choose wilderness over PWAs.

Hiking – **Colville:** use concentrated along Highway 20 corridor and Sullivan Lake areas, both non-wilderness areas. **Okanogan-Wenatchee:** High use with most hiking occurring in PWAs (highway 20 corridor). Wilderness hiking is high use in **Wenatchee**, where there are some heavy use areas with capacity concerns.

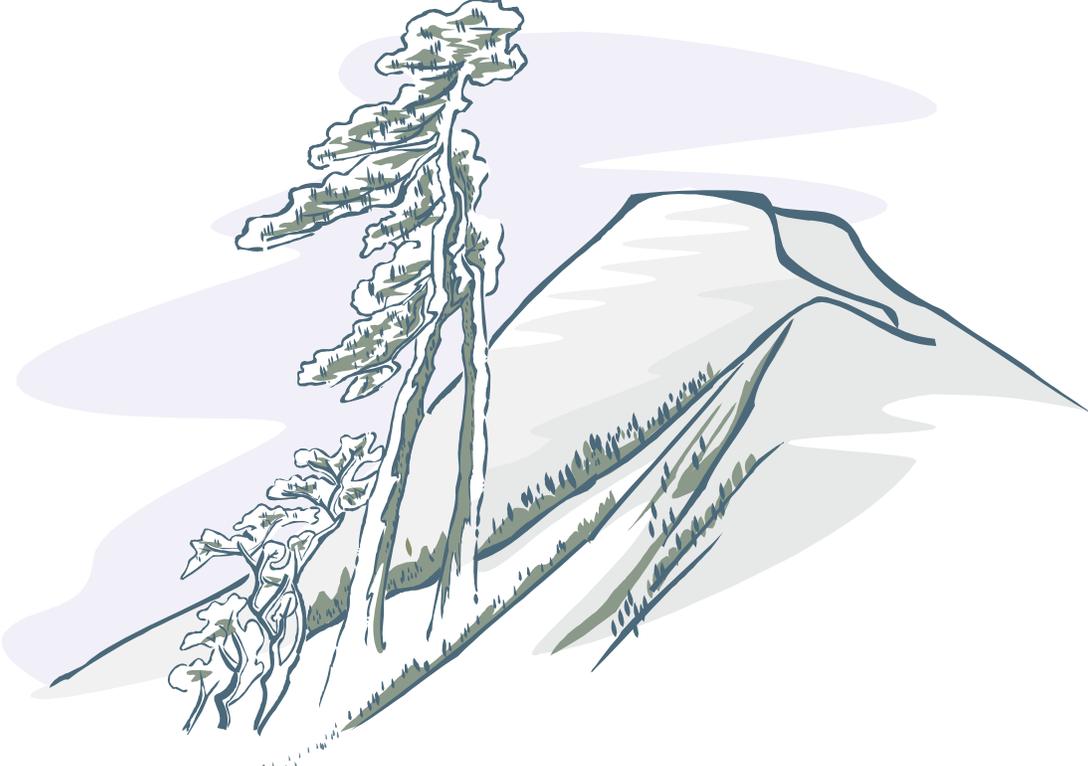
Backpacking – **Colville:** Limited opportunities due to layout of Forest and small amount of wilderness. **Okanogan-Wenatchee:** High use rate on the **Wenatchee**, primarily in wilderness, which is accessible and can accommodate future use.

Snowmobiling – Use expected to increase by 350 percent by 2050. Some PWAs have popular marked routes and play areas. For all three forests, all but two miles of groomed trail are outside PWAs. Climate change will alter winter use. High use on the **Wenatchee** and **Colville**, where projected increase could have impacts. A relative low use activity on **Okanogan**.

Backcountry Skiing – A low use for all three Forests. Many of the popular or important areas are in PWA's. Groomed Nordic trails are mostly outside PWAs and many are associated with ski areas.

Hunting – National trend is for major decrease, but will remain a local significant use. Some PWAs have low OHV use related to hunting season. **Colville** and **Wenatchee** have relative high use and **Okanogan** low use. Wilderness and PWAs provides wildlife habitat.

COLVILLE National Forest



Factors Driving Wilderness Recommendation

Public Involvement

The public is engaged in the wilderness evaluation process. Two series of public meetings over three years provided a rich dialogue and informed the Forest Service of public uses, perceptions, and the public's intimate knowledge of the landscape. We continue to receive public comments about wilderness.

This paper gives a summary of factors that influenced the preliminary recommendation. Each PWA responds to the factors differently due to location, shape, size, and biophysical setting.

Capability

All PWAs are capable of meeting the handbook definition of wilderness though on a sliding scale.

- **Developments:** Small portions excluded based on **developments** that lack wilderness character.
- **Boundaries:** Improve **boundaries** of existing wilderness, such as finding geologic or topographic features that are easily identified on the ground.
- **Geographic shape:** Shape of PWA would result in lower quality wilderness character.
- **Sights and Sounds:** Many areas are within **sights and sounds** of human activities. This affects the visitor's experience of isolation and solitude. Note this factor is a subject of debate among conservation groups and Congress has established areas similar sights and sounds as wilderness.

Availability

A number of issues influence wilderness availability.

- **Displace non-compatible recreational activities.** PWAs with existing summer motorized use, popular mountain biking areas or rides in high elevation areas, and popular snowmobiling areas are excluded. A popular rental cabin in Bald-Snow PWA is the reason for excluding the northern quarter of Bald Snow PWA.
- **Mineral interests.** Mining claims along PWA boundaries are excluded including one with a filed plan of operations.
- **Wildland Urban Interface.** Some areas where WUI and dry forest overlap near private land are excluded.
- **Need for ecosystem maintenance.** Some areas that would require ongoing active vegetation management are excluded.

Need

The Forest has one wilderness area. Analysis shows several PWAs offer high contributions to the wilderness system based on the need factors given in the handbook.

- **Demand for wilderness recreation.** Washington State has over 4 million acres of wilderness. However, the only wilderness on the Forest is the 29,000-acre Salmo-Priest Wilderness that represents 3 percent of the Colville National Forest. Analysis determined the greater Spokane metropolitan area is under-served for wilderness recreation due to not having any wilderness within a 1-2 hour drive. The population of the greater Spokane area is also undergoing

significant growth, which will increase demand for outdoor recreation opportunities. Some PWAs offer a high quality wilderness setting and proximity to Spokane.

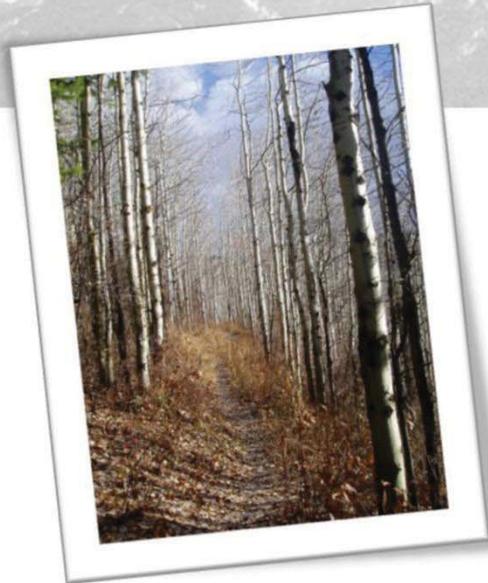
- **Refugia for species sensitive to human activities.** Important fish habitat was found in few PWAs. Larger PWAs contributed the most to wildlife habitat and connectivity. The most important ESA species, caribou, has a limited range in the far NE corner of the Forest and is found in few PWAs. A number of PWAs have rare plant populations and weight was given to those with endemic species or species very rare to Washington State. No species required wilderness habitat for survival, so long as PWAs are managed to provide habitat (usually meaning roadless character.) While refugia is not a driving factor, it is taken into consideration in the recommendation.
- **Underrepresented ecosystems and landforms.** Underrepresented means they are not commonly found or not found at all in the national wilderness system. All PWAs offer Okanogan Highlands landform and the Salmo-Priest Wilderness is currently the only wilderness in the system with this landform. The recommended PWAs would increase the amount of aspen, western red cedar, forb land, cottonwood, and alpine meadows ecosystems in the wilderness system.

On the following pages you will find information about each area recommended, including a rationale for the acres recommended and not recommended. Also provided in the table at the bottom of each page is summary information about the whole potential wilderness area.

ABERCROMBIE HOOKNOSE

37,700 TOTAL ACRES

35,200 RECOMMENDED ACRES (93%)



Rationale: This area provides a large wilderness-like setting, contributing a high quality primitive recreation experience with an existing trail system, which is a need on the Forest. It is relatively important for wildlife habitat and connectivity. Wilderness management is relatively helped by shape and size. It offers underrepresented vegetation types and landforms currently not widely found in the wilderness system. Trade-offs are few, but include mountain-biking which is not allowed in designated wilderness. Most of the wildland urban interface and mining claims are excluded. There is a cherry-stem with a private in-holding that may affect management of wilderness.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally natural appearing. • Offers primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities and opportunities for solitude and a sense of remoteness. • Contains cultural site with potential eligibility for National Register. • Two peaks listed in Tallest Peaks of Eastern Washington. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of mountain bike use now. • 40% in a cattle allotment. • 32% WUI in area; 23% of that is dry forest. The area has a low to moderate hazard for fires. • Many active mineral claims on periphery. • Most of area is low to unknown mineral potential. • State DNR has a 640 acre in-holding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could contribute a relatively large wilderness-like setting with limited camping opportunities. • Provides a relatively high amount of wildlife and fish refugia; and some rare plant habitat. • Can contribute a relatively high amount of vegetation groups and landform type under-represented in the wilderness system.



BALD SNOW

20,400 TOTAL ACRES

15,200 RECOMMENDED ACRES (76%)



Rationale: This area would provide a primitive setting with opportunities for solitude and a sense of remoteness. It is relatively important for plant and wildlife habitat, and wildlife connectivity. Wilderness management is helped by shape and size. It offers under-represented vegetation types and landforms. Trade-offs are few, but include mountain biking. The recreation rental cabin is excluded from the preliminary wilderness recommendation.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally natural appearing. • Currently offers primitive, non-motorized recreation opportunities and opportunities for solitude and a sense of remoteness. • Contains one proposed Research Natural Area. • Contains cultural sites with potential eligibility for National Register. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate levels of mountain bike use occurs and is increasing. • 62% of area is in a cattle allotment. • Adjoins Colville Reservation. Past concerns have included water quality, protection of cultural sites, and concern for wildfire spread. • Rental cabin could not be used for public occupancy if designated wilderness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could provide a quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides relatively high quality refugia habitat for wildlife and rare plants. • Can contribute a relatively high amount of vegetation groups and a landform type currently under-represented in the wilderness system.



Rationale: This area would provide a primitive setting and opportunities for solitude and a sense of remoteness. It offers under-represented vegetation types and landforms. Shape is relatively narrow, but size would allow for wilderness management. Trade-offs are few, but include mountain biking. The wildland urban interface adjacent to private land is excluded due to specific public input. This area is part of the larger Kettle Crest area.

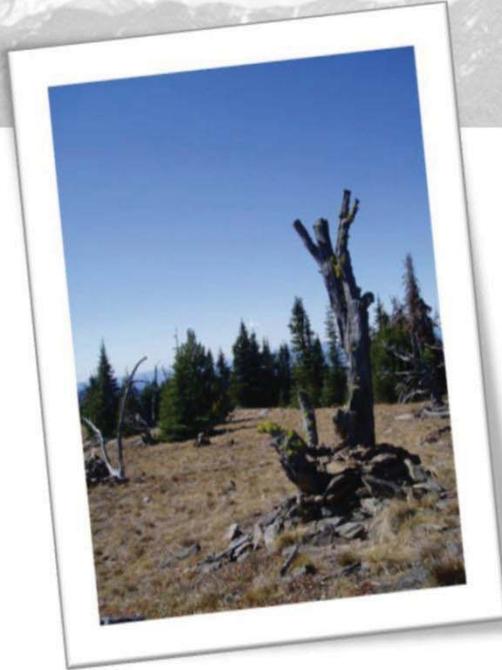
Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally natural appearing. • Currently offers primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities and opportunities for solitude and a sense of remoteness. • Has the only backcountry lakes on the Colville National Forest that are accessed by trail and not by road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of mountain bike use occur. • 58% of area is in a cattle allotment. • 18% WUI in area, and 75% of that is dry forest. Fuel loadings are a concern in the eastern quarter of the area. Portions of the area are a moderate to high priority for fuel reduction work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could contribute a moderate quality wilderness recreation setting. • Can contribute a relatively high amount of vegetation groups and a landform type currently under-represented in the wilderness system.

PROFANITY

37,700 TOTAL ACRES

28,300 RECOMMENDED ACRES (75%)



Rationale: This area provides a very high quality wilderness-like setting and opportunities for solitude and a sense of remoteness. It is relatively important for plant and wildlife habitat and wildlife connectivity. It offers under-represented vegetation and landform types. Shape is relatively narrow (easily crossed east to west in a few hours), but size would allow for wilderness management. Trade-offs are few, but include mountain biking. The area is currently designated non-motorized and the range permittee is not allowed to use off highway vehicles. Almost the whole area is in a range allotment. Most of the wildland urban interface adjacent to private land is excluded due to specific public input. The area immediately north of Highway 20 is excluded to allow a loop mountain biking trail. The northern-most lobe is excluded due to a road that creates a “cherry-stem” into the area. History has shown that cherry-stems into wilderness can affect manageability of the area.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally natural appearing. • Currently offers primitive, non-motorized recreation opportunities, opportunities for solitude, and a sense of remoteness. • Cultural site with potential eligibility for National Register. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current moderate levels of mountain bike use occur with use increasing. • 93% of area is in a cattle allotment. • 10% WUI in area, and 40% of that is dry forest. • High mineral potential for uranium. • One trail open to horse-drawn wagon use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could provide a quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides relatively high quality refugia habitat for wildlife and rare plants. • Can contribute some examples of vegetation types and a good example of a landform type currently under-represented in the wilderness system.

SALMO-PRIEST ADJACENT

16,700 TOTAL ACRES

13,600 RECOMMENDED ACRES (80%)

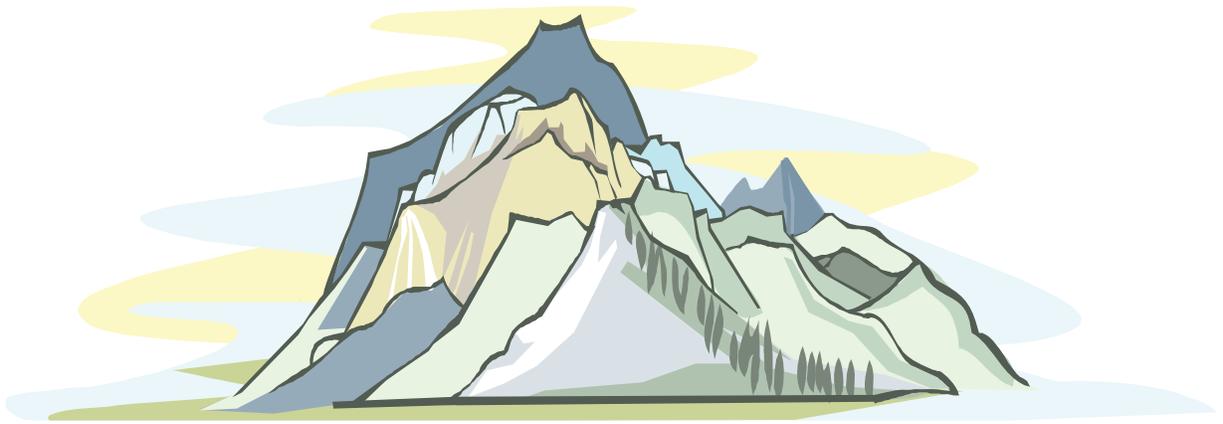


Rationale: This area would add acres to the existing Salmo-Priest Wilderness, improving the overall wilderness setting, consolidating trails within wilderness, and improving boundary management. Is relatively important for fish, plant, and wildlife habitat and connectivity. It offers under-represented vegetation types and landforms. Trade-offs are few, but include mountain-biking and the range of tools available for vegetation manipulation. Most of the wildland urban interface and mining claims are excluded.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally natural appearing. • Currently offers primitive, non-motorized recreation opportunities. • Halliday Fen, a proposed RNA, has a rich assemblage of rare plant species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently has low level of mountain bike use. • 43% WUI in the western portion of the PWA, and 58% of that is dry forest. The fire hazard is low. • Numerous mining claims have been filed in the PWA along periphery. One plan of operations is filed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could provide a high quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides relatively high quality refugia habitat for wildlife, fish, and rare plants. • Can contribute large examples of vegetation types and a good example of a landform type currently under-represented in the wilderness system.

OKANOGAN-WENATCHEE National Forest



Factors Driving Wilderness Recommendation

Public Involvement

The public is engaged in the wilderness evaluation process. Meetings held over a 3-year period with the Provincial Advisory Committee and other public input provided a rich dialogue and informed the Forest Service of public uses, perceptions, and the public's intimate knowledge of the landscape. We continue to receive public comments about wilderness.

This paper gives a summary of factors that influenced the preliminary recommendation. Each PWA responds to the factors differently due to location, shape, size, and biophysical setting.

Capability

All PWAs are capable of meeting the handbook definition of wilderness though on a sliding scale.

- **Developments:** Small portions excluded based on **developments** that lack wilderness character.
- **Boundaries:** Improve **boundaries** of existing wilderness, such as finding geologic or topographic features that are easily identified on the ground.
- **Geographic shape:** Shape of PWA would result in lower quality wilderness character.
- **Sights and Sounds:** Many areas are within **sights and sounds** of human activities. This affects the visitor's experience of isolation and solitude. Note this factor is a subject of debate among conservation groups and Congress has established areas similar sights and sounds as wilderness.

Availability

A number of issues influence wilderness availability.

- **Displace non-compatible recreational activities.** PWAs with existing summer motorized use are excluded. Some areas are excluded due to snowmobiling and heli-skiing. Other areas excluded from the recommendation offer high quality non-motorized settings that meet the needs of large groups.
- **Mineral interests:** Mining claims along PWA boundaries and some areas with high mineral potential are excluded.
- **Wildland Urban Interface:** Some portions where WUI and dry forest overlap near private land are excluded.
- **Need for ecosystem maintenance:** Some areas that would require on-going active vegetation management are excluded.
- **Water storage:** One reservoir is under consideration for expansion into a PWA.

Need

The Forest has eight wilderness areas. It would seem there is no need for additional wilderness. Analysis shows several PWAs can contribute significantly to the factors the handbook directs us to evaluate.

- **Demand for wilderness recreation.** Washington State has over 4 million acres of wilderness. Forty percent of the Forest is in wilderness. The wildernesses on the Forest are not overcrowded as a whole; however, individual wildernesses and specific areas are managed through party size and permit quotas to control use. The population of the greater Seattle area as well as local

counties is undergoing significant growth, which will increase demand for a range of outdoor recreation opportunities. Recommended PWAs can offer a high quality wilderness setting in conjunction with existing wilderness; and/or a wilderness setting (landform or ecosystem) currently not widely available in the system. The recommendation would increase somewhat the amount of wilderness available for a growing demand.

- **Refugia for species sensitive to human activities.** Most PWAs on the forest provide a high contribution to fish habitat for listed species. Larger PWAs contributed the most to wildlife habitat and connectivity. A number of PWAs have rare plant populations and weight was given to those with endemic species or species very rare to Washington State. No species required wilderness habitat for survival, so long as PWAs are managed to provide habitat (usually meaning roadless character.) While refugia is not a driving factor, it is taken into consideration in the recommendation.
- **Underrepresented ecosystems and landforms.** Underrepresented means they are not commonly found or not found at all in the national wilderness system. Landforms that occur on the Forest and are underrepresented in the system are Okanogan Highlands and Columbia Basin Basalt. None of the recommended PWAs includes these landforms and very few of the other PWAs include them. There are underrepresented ecosystems that occur in the PWAs. The recommended PWAs could increase the amount of forb land, ponderosa pine, alpine and non-alpine meadow, if the recommended portion includes those ecosystems, in the wilderness system.

On the following pages you will find information about each area recommended, including a rationale for the acres recommended and not recommended. Also provided in the table at the bottom of each page is summary information about the whole potential wilderness area.

ALPINE LAKES WILDERNESS STUDY AREA



Rationale: Recommendation would add acres to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness and improve boundary management and wilderness trail management. Additions are relatively important for plant and wildlife habitat and connectivity. Trade-offs are few, but include mountain-biking and snowmobiling. A popular snowmobiling area (Lake Ann) is excluded and the 4WD trail into Van Epps is also excluded from the recommendation. The area adjacent to Snoqualmie Pass is excluded allowing for large group use. Popular mountain bike trails are excluded.

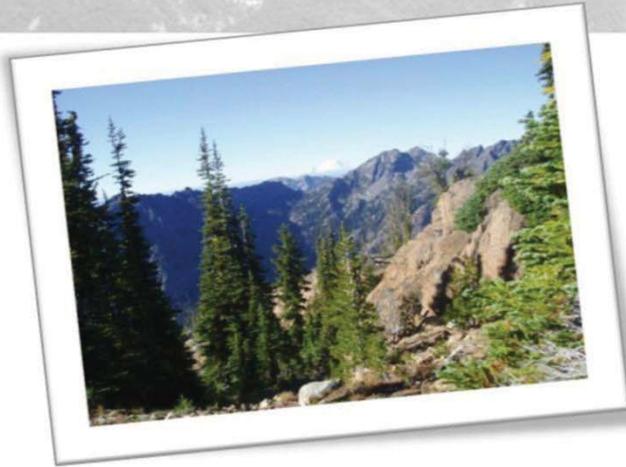
Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In natural condition. • Human sights and sounds present. • Scattered units, some without useful boundary features. • High quality recreation setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular snowmobile play areas. • Trails pass through to the existing wilderness. • Contains habitat for lynx, wolf, grizzly bear, marbled murrelet, and northern spotted owl. • Upper stream reaches provide fair fish habitat. • Timberlands are marginal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Puget Sound area. • Enhance existing wilderness setting. • Adds contiguous habitat for wildlife and plants. • Forb-land, non-alpine meadows, and ponderosa pine cover types added to wilderness system.

ALPINE LAKES ADJACENT

40,200 TOTAL ACRES

16,200 RECOMMENDED ACRES (40%)



Rationale: The recommended areas would improve boundary management and wilderness trail management for Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Also, some parcels included in the recommendation following land acquisition by the Forest Service. These areas are relatively important for plant and wildlife habitat and connectivity. It offers under-represented vegetation types. Trade-offs are few, but includes mountain-biking, mining claims, wildland urban interface, and tools to treat vegetation. Areas excluded include those with mining claims, with wildland urban interface, areas where management tools are needed for vegetation management, and some mountain biking areas, and those that don't contribute to an improved wilderness boundary.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stumps from helicopter logging, a marked ski trail. Much of the area offers opportunities for solitude. Portions of the area are more of a front country setting attracting high levels of use for activities such as bouldering. The Tumwater Botanical Area is partially within this PWA. The PWA has a very high incidence of endemic rare plant species. Boundary management may improve with the recommended acres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use is primarily hiking and climbing and, depending on the location, ranges from low to high use. Mountain biking, horseback riding, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling also occur in portions of the area. 0% of area is in a sheep or cattle allotment. 49% of area is WUI, and 36% of that is in dry or mesic forest. Due to steep rugged topography most of this area would be very difficult to treat. 5 active mineral claims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can provide a quality wilderness recreation setting. Provides relatively high quality refugia habitat for fish, wildlife and rare plants; and connectivity for wildlife. Can contribute a relatively high amount of vegetation groups currently under-represented in the wilderness system.

CANYON CREEK

8,900 TOTAL ACRES
6,500 RECOMMENDED ACRES (73%)



Rationale: Recommending this parcel would improve boundary management and wilderness trail management for Henry M Jackson and Glacier Peak Wilderness areas. The area has a very high quality wilderness-setting. It is relatively important for fish habitat. The area offers under-represented vegetation types. Trade-offs are very few and the wildland urban interface portion is excluded.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area is pristine. The opportunity for experiencing solitude is very high in this area. The area provides for the challenge of cross-country travel. Recommended acres would improve wilderness boundary management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use is primarily hiking with a small amount of stock use. Two trails pass in and out of the wilderness boundary repeatedly, where wilderness designation would improve the management situation on these trails. No grazing allotments. 46% of area is WUI, and 10% of that is in mesic forest. Due to steep rugged topography, most of this area would be very difficult to treat. There are no active mineral claims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can provide a high quality wilderness recreation setting. Provides high quality fish refugia. Can contribute a relatively high amount of vegetation groups currently under represented in the wilderness system.

ENTIAT-CHELAN

162,000 TOTAL ACRES
19,500 RECOMMENDED ACRES (12%)



Rationale: This is one of the largest potential wilderness areas in the planning area. It is divided into portions; Chelan, Entiat, Myrtle, and Rock Creek. Rock Creek contains the parcel preliminarily recommended for wilderness. Adding it to the existing wilderness would improve boundary management and wilderness trail management for Glacier Peak Wilderness. The remaining portion of Rock Creek has existing motorized use and is not recommended for that reason. The Chelan portion is excluded to allow for tools to treat vegetation and manage the Holden Village area. Myrtle is excluded to allow for motorized and mountain bike use. Entiat is excluded to allow for motorized use in one part and provide for non-motorized uses outside of wilderness.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rugged and pristine landscape. • Offers opportunities for solitude. • Can improve wilderness boundary management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the area features primitive recreation. • Use by large groups currently, but this group size would not be allowed in a wilderness. • No active mineral claims. • Several small areas in the Rock Creek portion may have high mineral potential, including the area adjacent to the Gold Ring claims in the Chikamin drainage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could contribute a quality wilderness-like setting. • A number of trails pass through the PWA prior to entering wilderness. • Provides relatively high quality wildlife and fish refugia, as well as wildlife connectivity. • Can contribute to the wilderness system a relatively high amount of currently underrepresented vegetation types.

GOAT ROCKS ADJACENT

5,300 TOTAL ACRES

1,200 RECOMMENDED ACRES (23%)



Rationale: The recommended area would improve wilderness trail and boundary management for Goat Rocks Wilderness. It offers high value habitat for fish. Areas excluded are those adjacent to White Pass Ski Area and the Pinegrass Ridge area. Pinegrass Ridge is a popular snowmobile play area. Other areas excluded are not needed for boundary improvements.

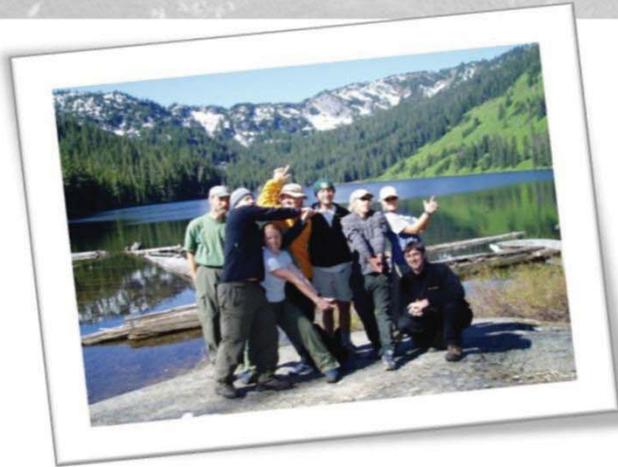
Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally natural appearing. Opportunity to experience solitude and a remote setting in conjunction with the adjacent Goat Rocks Wilderness. • Traffic noises are audible from major highways and forest roads. Human alterations to the environment are easily viewed adjacent to the area. • Can improve wilderness boundary management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 3 trails in area. Two miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, which receives high use from hikers and equestrians. Also a two-mile 4x4 trail that does not connect to a larger system, as well as a very short section of 4x4 trail that connects to the Divide Ridge system. • The Pinegrass Ridge area has a snowmobile play area that is low use but the most popular such area on the district. • 3% of area is in a cattle allotment. • 12 % of area is WUI, and 11% of that is in dry or mesic forest. • No active mineral claims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could contribute a quality wilderness-like setting. The PCT passes through the PWA prior to entering wilderness. • Has a relatively high quality of fish refugia.



HEATHER LAKE

10,000 TOTAL ACRES
9,400 RECOMMENDED ACRES (94%)



Rationale: Recommending this area would improve boundary management and wilderness trail management for Henry M Jackson Wilderness. It is relatively important for fish habitat. There are very few trade-offs that includes an area near Stevens Pass Ski Area and some snowmobile use. The area near the ski area is excluded from the recommendation.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A steel bridge on the Heather Lake Trail does not meet wilderness bridge standards. • Sights and sounds from outside the area. • Boundaries would improve wilderness management relative to fire management and use on trails, but could pose problems managing snowmobile incursions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of hiking use and low levels of horseback riding. Backcountry skiing, and snowshoeing area also popular in the area. • Portion near Stevens Pass Ski Area would preclude ski area expansion. • 25% of area is in a sheep allotment. • 32 % of area is WUI, and 0% of that is in dry or mesic forest. • No active mining claims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can offer a high quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides high quality fish habitat. • Can provide an individual underrepresented vegetation type, cottonwood, that is underrepresented in the wilderness system.



LIBERTY BELL

114,700 TOTAL ACRES

5,200 RECOMMENDED ACRES (4%)



Rationale: Recommending these two portions of the area would improve boundary management for the Pasayten Wilderness and contribute biological value. Recommended parcels would provide continuity of wilderness setting for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail and consolidate trails within wilderness. Areas excluded from the recommendation have significant trade-offs including mining claims, mineral potential, heli-skiing permit areas, mountain bike and snowmobile use. This is the only location in Washington state where helicopter skiing is offered. It is also a vast area with a very high quality wilderness-like setting that would be available outside of wilderness. A large portion of the potential wilderness area is currently included in the North Cascades Scenic Highway National Scenic Area (NSA), which affords protection of the high-quality scenic and recreation settings found in the potential wilderness area.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vast remote and pristine landscape over most of PWA. Current and past mining operations visible in areas. • Portions of the area overlook Highway 20 and have traffic noise. • Opportunities for solitude and challenge high within portions of area. Low solitude along highway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountain bike and some snowmobile use. A heli-skiing permit. • No grazing allotments. • 26% of area is WUI, of which 30% is dry forest near Mazama. • 43 active mineral claims, clustered in NW portion. One CERCLA site with clean-up started. • Has the greatest and most diverse mineral potential of any PWA in the planning area. 20% of area is high mineral potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can offer a high quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides a relatively high quality plant, wildlife, and fish refugia; and wildlife connectivity. • Can contribute a relatively high amount of underrepresented vegetation groups.



Information about the whole area.

Rationale: The recommendation offers some improved boundary locations for the Pasayten Wilderness, consolidates trails within wilderness, and would add high quality fish, plant, and wildlife habitat to the Pasayten Wilderness. The trade-offs are significant. The area excluded from recommendation also contains relatively high quality plant, fish, and wildlife habitat and connectivity; including a unique boreal forest ecosystem that continues into the Pasayten Wilderness and Canada. While wilderness is not necessary for the species, the habitat would benefit. The excluded area also has a popular snowmobile trail system that contributes to the economy of Conconully, a local community that promotes snowmobiling opportunities. The eastern edge, which is excluded, is about 1 mile from Loomis State Forest managed by Washington State.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of area is a Class 2 Typical Truly Dark Sky. • Boreal forest and meadows are a unique habitat type that connects to Pasayten Wilderness and Canada. • All of the PWA has a class 2 typical truly dark sky. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recommended area has trails accessing the Pasayten Wilderness. • Outside the recommended area is found popular snowmobile areas. • 67% of the PWA is in a grazing allotment • 22 % of PWA is WUI, and 35% of that is in dry forest. The eastern edge of the area lies 1/2 to 2 miles from the Loomis State Forest. • No active mineral claims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could contribute a high quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides a relatively high amount of plant, wildlife and fish refugia; and wildlife connectivity. • Can contribute a relatively high amount of currently underrepresented vegetation.

NORSE PEAK ADJACENT

7,600 TOTAL ACRES

2,100 RECOMMENDED ACRES (28%)



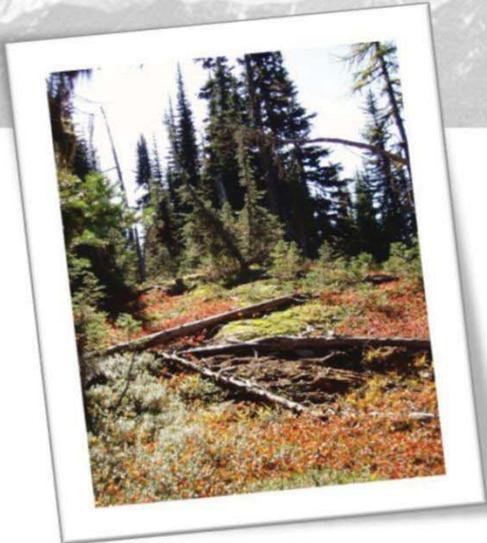
Rationale: Recommendation would improve wilderness trail and boundary management for Norse Peak Wilderness. Boundary is improved, for example, by eliminating an existing cherry stem. The Chinook Pass area is excluded due to mining claims and some private parcels that could become in-holdings with wilderness designation. The trade-off is the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail setting that could be improved by wilderness designation in the area, but is excluded due to mining claims. Other areas excluded are motorized or don't offer improvements to the existing wilderness boundary.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to experience solitude and a remote setting in conjunction with the adjacent Norse Peak Wilderness. • Sights and sounds present. • Endemic Mt. Rainier lousewort in area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chinook Pass area has high use along the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail from hikers, backpackers, and equestrians. • Connection trails to larger OHV network. • 8% of area is in a sheep allotment. • 65 % of area is WUI, and 27% of that is in dry or mesic forest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parcels could offer a high quality wilderness recreation setting, particularly where the PCT passes through the PWA. • It offers relatively high quality fish and rare plant habitat.

PASAYTEN RIM

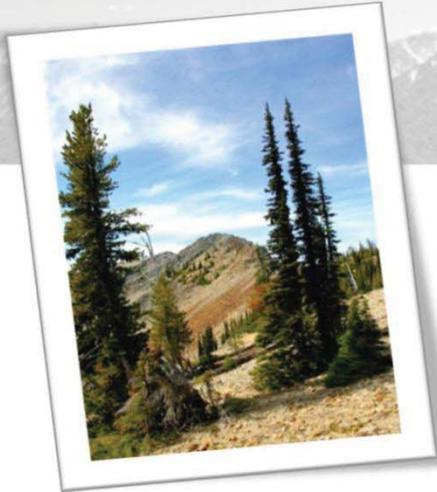
41,300 TOTAL ACRES
9,400 RECOMMENDED ACRES (23%)



Rationale: Recommending this portion would improve boundary management and wilderness trail management for Pasayten Wilderness. It is relatively important for plants, fish, and wildlife habitat and connectivity. It can add under-represented vegetation types to the system. Other areas are excluded because of the heli-ski permit landing spots, wildland urban interface, mining claims and snowmobile use near Harts Pass.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for solitude and challenge high within portions of area. • 100% of area is a Class 2 Typical Truly Dark Sky. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting used for primitive recreation on 19 miles of trail. Occasional heli-skiing in a small portion of the area. low to moderate amounts of snowmobile use near Harts Pass. • 55 % of area is in a cattle allotment. • 43 % of area is WUI, of which 36% of that is dry forest. Most of this is proximate to FS recreation facilities rather than private land. • 2 active lode claims as of 6/2008. • 3,200 acres have high mineral potential in the Eightmile drainage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could contribute a high quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides a relatively high quality plant, wildlife and fish refugia; and wildlife connectivity. • Can contribute a relatively high amount of currently underrepresented vegetation types.



TEANAWAY

74,200 TOTAL ACRES
15,800 RECOMMENDED ACRES (21%)

Rationale: Adding this portion to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness would improve boundary management and improve wilderness trail management for Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Also, it would improve the Forest Service’s ability to manage illegal snowmobile incursions by making the boundary less ambiguous, consolidating trails within wilderness, and managing use patterns. The area has a very high quality wilderness-setting. It is relatively important for fish plant, and wildlife habitat and connectivity. It offers under-represented vegetation types. Excluded areas are used by large groups, have summer motorized trails and snowmobiling, and are areas where tools not allowed in wilderness are needed for vegetation management treatments. The Three Brothers motorized trail is included in the recommended parcel, however it is isolated and little used.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally natural appearing and mostly pristine with very few human influences (altered stand condition due to fire suppression). • Sights and sounds present. • The area offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and challenge. • PWA provides a high concentration of endemic plant species, a number of which are rare. The serpentine soils in particular support unique plant populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail systems for mountain biking, off-highway vehicle use, and non-motorized use. • Large group size use. • Provides a niche for difficult, technical motorized trails. • Snowmobiling use is popular, especially Lake Ann. • Winter cross country skiing popular. • 6,700 acres of late-successional habitat is in dry forest which would be more difficult to treat if the area is designated as wilderness. • No grazing allotments. • 17 % of area is WUI, and 27% of that is in dry or mesic forest. Due to steep rugged topography most of this area would be very difficult to treat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can contribute a high quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides a relatively high quality plant, wildlife and fish refugia; and wildlife connectivity. • Can contribute to the wilderness system a relatively high amount of currently under-represented vegetation groups. • Most important watershed for recovery of steelhead and salmon in the upper Yakima River basin.



TWIN LAKES

21,400 TOTAL ACRES

15,400 RECOMMENDED ACRES (72%)



Rationale: Making this recommendation would improve boundary management and wilderness trail management for Glacier Peak Wilderness. Wilderness designation would provide continuity of the existing wilderness setting. The parcel makes a good addition, independent of the Entiat/Chelan recommendation, however with the Entiat-Chelan recommendation it would broaden a narrow wilderness "thumb." It is relatively important for fish habitat. The remaining acres are excluded wildland urban interface and wildlife habitat (northern spotted owl habitat) that would need a fuller range of tools for vegetation treatments.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no signs of human developments other than trails. • Has outstanding opportunities for cross-country travel that would provide solitude and a sense of remoteness. • The PWA supports populations of sockeye and Chinook salmon, bull trout, and steelhead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No motorized trails. All of the system trails pass through this PWA to reach wilderness destinations. • 2,000 acres of late-successional habitat is in dry forest. • 62 % of area is WUI, and 22% of that is in dry or mesic forest. Most of this would be difficult to treat due to steep cliffy terrain. • No grazing allotments or active mining claims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could contribute a quality wilderness recreation setting. • Provides a relatively high quality of fish refugia.

WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS

16,500 TOTAL ACRES

4,200 RECOMMENDED ACRES (25%)



Rationale: This recommendation would improve wilderness trail and boundary management for William O. Douglas Wilderness. The recommendation preserves continuity of the wilderness recreation setting and protects habitat for listed fish species. A popular snowmobile use area (Cash Prairie) is included in the recommendation to improve boundary management. Other motorized areas, summer and winter, are excluded. The area near Bumping Lake is excluded because the reservoir level may be raised. Areas adjacent to White Pass Ski area are excluded. Mining claims and wildland urban interface are also excluded.

Information about the whole area.

Capability	Availability	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sights and sounds are present. Recommended parcels would improve wilderness boundary management. Other portions would create a more problematic boundary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pacific Crest Trail within the PWA. Other trails start in PWA and enter the wilderness. 15% of area is in a cattle allotment and 4% of area is in a sheep allotment. 39% of area is WUI, and 32% of that is in dry or mesic forest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could provide a high quality wilderness recreation setting. Can provide a relatively high quality fish refugia.