



Protecting Wildlife for our children's future



April 30, 2010

Leslie Weldon, Regional Forester  
US Forest Service  
Northern Region  
200 East Broadway  
PO Box 7669  
Missoula, MT 59807

Dear Regional Forester Weldon:

As you know, the Missoula office of the National Wildlife Federation shares your position in support of collaborative conservation and management efforts that are designed to bring a rational approach to conservation and management issues too often neglected in favor of special interests and philosophically marginal groups. We write you today to urge your support for one such initiative, the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) proposal. This will shortly be submitted to your office for consideration. This office is a part of this collaborative, and we have engaged in various aspects of the proposal. We believe this initiative is the kind for which you have long expressed your philosophical support and we hope that you will get behind this proposal specifically.

The National Wildlife Federation was founded in 1936 as the national voice of state and local conservation groups, and has since emerged as the nation's foremost grassroots conservation organization, leading an integrated network of members and supporters and 48 affiliated organizations throughout the United States and its territories. We have affiliate organizations in Montana and the other states in Region I. These affiliates are an amalgam of conservation and sportspersons' organizations in each state. In Montana, our affiliate is the Montana Wildlife Federation.

The focus of the SW Crown CFLRP proposal is the Blackfoot, Clearwater, and Swan Valleys, which in many ways is the heart of Region I. The initiative will reduce risk from wildfire which, as you well know, is one of the most challenging issues in Region I and elsewhere in the nation because of the warming climate, reduced precipitation and increased insect damage. The initiative assures that many federal and state agencies as well as private landowners and NGOs will cooperate to reduce these risks through appropriate fuel reduction and forest restoration efforts.

National Wildlife Federation • Northern Rockies & Prairies Regional Center  
240 North Higgins, Suite 2 • Missoula, MT 59802  
406-721-6705 [phone] • 406-721-6714 [fax] • [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)

These efforts will also enhance wildlife and fish habitat and help ensure these will remain ecologically and economically important components for residents and visitors to the northern Rockies. It has become all too clear that continuation of ecologically sound forest management practices is threatened by the loss of jobs and infrastructure in Region I. In part, this is why this office is a partner in and supporter of the Forest Jobs and Recreation Act and we believe that the CFLRP is consistent with that effort.

Thank you very much for giving the SW Crown CFLRP proposal the strongest possible support as it moves forward through the selection process.

Sincerely,

Sterling Miller Ph.D.  
Senior Wildlife Biologist

*Cc: The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture  
The Honorable Tom Tidwell, Chief of the Forest Service  
Mr. William Timko, Deputy Director of Forest Management Staff*