



May 7, 2010

Regional Forester Leslie Weldon  
U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region  
P.O. Box 7669  
Missoula, MT 59807-7669

Dear Leslie:

I am writing to express The Wilderness Society's strong support for the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) proposal recently submitted to your office for consideration.

Since its inception 75 years ago, The Wilderness Society has had a strong interest in ecological restoration and the management of the National Forest System (NFS) and for the past year I have co-chaired the SW Crown Collaborative with Lolo National Forest Supervisor Debbie Austin. The promise and potential of our proposal is due, in large part, to the enormous contribution of the many Forest Service personnel who have participated in its development over the past year. Our proposal's strong scientific foundation, coupled with the long, productive history of collaboration throughout Montana's Blackfoot, Clearwater, and Swan Valleys have provided a strong foundation to build upon.

If selected for funding, the SW Crown CFLRP proposal will ensure that collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration will continue to be a high priority in the Blackfoot, Clearwater, and Swan Valleys. The proposal's emphasis on treating 80% of all high risk acres identified in the area's three Community Wildfire Protection Plans ensures that lives, homes and communities will face a significantly reduced risk from uncharacteristic wildfire. In addition to its emphasis on wildfire risk reduction, this proposal would protect and restore clean water, improve fish and wildlife habitat and treat tens of thousands of acres for terrestrial and aquatic invasive species.

Finally, this proposal would provide much needed jobs in the woods where fuel reduction and forest restoration would put people back to work. This proposal would also provide much needed saw logs and biomass to existing and proposed future facilities in the region.

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

Sincerely,

Scott R. Brennan  
Forest Program Director

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*