

## Draft Comment Letter to Personalize

**(Remember:** The Forest Service must receive your letter before the Comment Period ends on August 25. Use the information in this Draft Letter to write your letter in your own words. You can write about all the issues presented in this draft letter, or just the ones that matter most to you.)

Planning Team Leader  
Forest Plan Revision  
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**[Note you can also email you letter to [r5planrevision@fs.fed.us](mailto:r5planrevision@fs.fed.us)]**

Dear Planning Team Leader,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Forest Management Plan for the Inyo National Forest. I am an avid hiker and user of the Inyo National Forest. As the Forest Service plans the future of this important national forest, I am writing to urge you to strengthen the Draft Inyo Forest Plan to provide additional wilderness and stronger, science based protections for the Inyo's critical wildland ecosystems to safeguard our valuable water resources, fish and wildlife habitats and sustainable recreation in the following ways.

**Recreation.** The Plan should 1) include clearer plans to address deferred maintenance of recreational facilities, 2) provide better visitor education and interpretation so that all visitors better understand how to act responsibly, 3) manage all our remaining roadless areas to protect their wild, non-motorized character and 4) provide for both summer and winter recreation opportunities for forest visitors.

**Fish, Wildlife and Native Plants.** The Plan needs stronger conservation standards to more fully protect vulnerable and at-risk species on the Inyo Forest, including sage grouse, black-backed woodpeckers, Desert and Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep, willow flycatchers, Yosemite toads, California Golden Trout, pine marten, northern goshawks, and native plants.

**Wilderness and Special Places.** I urge the Forest Service to recommend these 13 wilderness-quality areas in the final Plan for the Inyo: (1) Deadman Canyon; (2) Deep Springs North; (3) Piper Mountain Addition 1; (4) Piper Mountain Addition 2; (5) Soldier Canyon; (6) Inyo Mountain Wilderness Addition; (7) South Sierra Addition East 1; (8) White Mountain Addition East; (9) White Mountain Addition West; (10) Dexter Canyon; (11) Excelsior; (12) Glass Mountain; and (13) Ansel Adams Addition. I support these areas for the following reasons: (1) The intact condition of their ecosystem types; (2) good opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation; and (3) the areas represent good opportunities to add minimally or underrepresented ecosystems to the National Wilderness Preservation System. In several cases, the area is contiguous with existing designated wilderness and contains a wild and scenic river.

**Wild and Scenic Rivers.** Please add the following streams to the list of waters worthy of protection: Dexter Canyon and Wet Canyons, S. Fork Birch Creek, O'Harrel Canyon Creek and the lower reaches of restored Mono Lake tributaries Rush, Parker and Walker. Protecting these rivers and streams helps protect fish and wildlife.

**Fire and Forest ecosystem health.** The new Inyo plan provides an opportunity for the Forest Service to update its approach to managing fire to better protect both our forests and our human communities. Science has shown that the way to lessen the risks associated with forest fires is actually to allow for carefully managed natural fires and purposeful controlled burns, and to proactively create defensible space around homes and human communities. The threat of fire is not reduced by the logging of large trees. Large, mature trees provide important habitat for key birds and mammals. The Forest Service should protect all large trees that are 24 inches in diameter or larger. Our communities will be safer and our forests healthier if the Forest Service emphasizes the removal of surface fuels and brush and small trees that help spread fires into the forest canopy

**Partnerships.** In these tight-budget times, the agency can work to better monitor, maintain and protect recreational opportunities and the health of the national forest by fostering strong partnerships and cooperation between Forest Service employees, local communities, non-profit organizations, businesses, and other partners. The Final Inyo Forest Plan should include additional details on how the agency will hold itself accountable to creating and fostering the partnerships that are so vital in these tight federal budget times. For example, the Service should commit to the hiring of a partnership coordinator within three years, who would be responsible for nurturing and developing partnerships and reporting on the success of those efforts on a regular basis.

The Inyo National Forest is very important to me. I'm glad the Draft Plan for the Inyo National Forest contains some important protections for wildlife and wild places, but it needs improvement in key ways. I support a stronger, more science-based plan that will more fully protect and provide: 1) high quality outdoor recreation; 2) protected habitats for fish, wildlife and plants, 3) additional wilderness and wild rivers, and 4) additional community and ecosystem protections through a more natural role for fire in our national forest.

Thank you,  
Your name,  
Your address