



NORTHEAST WASHINGTON FOREST COALITION

May 7, 2020

Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers
U.S. Congress
Washington, D.C.

RE: Colville National Forest Wilderness Management

Dear Members of Congress;

The Northeast Washington Forest Coalition (NEWFC) believes that working together to find common ground is the best way forward for forest management solutions. This solution-based approach has worked well here on the Colville National Forest and resulted in unprecedented success compared to other forests in the West. The amount of forest restoration work being done on the ground in the Colville National Forest and its national reputation as a can-do and problem-solving forest is the product of 17 years of dedicated engagement by NEWFC members and community leaders. This journey is ongoing and consistently presents opportunities for continued improvement and engagement.

We have succeeded in our goals beyond our expectations, save one key element delineated in our founding goals – Wilderness, or other protective federal designations. We are reaching out to you for your help.

Beginning in 2002, with our very first discussions, NEWFC's intentions have always been to seek balance with active forest management, watershed restoration and wildlife habitat preservation. NEWFC, together with our CNF partners, has been incredibly effective. We have proven that wilderness designation and roadless areas are not a hindrance to community economic success or effective forest management and restoration at increased pace and scale. But rather, we've shown that conservation of those areas enhances the vibrancy, abundance and rural quality of life in and around the CNF. However, the Colville National Forest Plan does not reflect our shared goal of conservation & preservation of wildlands.

The Northeast Washington Forest Coalition Board of Directors is committed to partnering with you, facilitating public dialogue and working with Tribes and county governments. We believe there is, and has always been, a common path forward on this issue. It is our firm belief that a fully implemented conservation & preservation component on the CNF will improve the economic prosperity of this region, protect a way of life valued by all, and benefit our forest fish and wildlife that we are bound by trust to pass on to future generations.

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We look forward to your timely reply and would very much appreciate meeting with you in person collaboratively working together to achieve a brighter future for the Tri-County region.

Sincerely,

Matthew Scott
NEWFC President

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