

Helena must protect wildland gems



At Helena's backdoor are two wildland gems: the Lazyman and the Jericho Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs).

The city of Helena has been asked by the Helena National Forest:

- to oppose Helena Hunters and Anglers and Montana Wildlife Federation efforts to retain the roadless character of these areas, and
- to support logging in the IRAs as part of the Tenmile-South Helena (TSH) Project.

Roads that have naturally reclaimed themselves would be reconstructed then administratively closed, but new road beds would remain.

HHAA and MWF have filed suit to protect these roadless areas in the face of the enormous TSH logging project, and in the wake of many other projects that have already occurred in this area.

Within the IRAs we support creating private land buffers and burning that does not require heavy equipment. Of the more than 17,000 acres of

treatments in the 60,000-acre project area, we oppose the planned use of heavy equipment on 3,200 acres within the IRAs.

In 1988, the Lazyman IRA was awarded wilderness status by Congress, but the bill was pocket-vetoed by President Reagan. However, its wild character still remains.

Please Helena, keep these wild diamonds in the rough, for all of us.

Gayle Joslin

Helena