

# Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness

[www.ScotchmanPeaks.org](http://www.ScotchmanPeaks.org)

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. **Where are the Scotchmans and how large are they?**

The proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness is an 88,000-acre inventoried roadless area (IRA) straddling the Idaho-Montana border, bounded by the Clark Fork River and Highway 200 on the south, Bull River and Highway 56 on the east, Rattle Pass Road on the north and Lightning Creek on the west. We believe the entire IRA should be designated as Wilderness.

### 2. **Why do the Scotchman Peaks need to be designated as Wilderness?**

Wilderness designation will preserve this area in its natural state for our future and our children's future. Current growth trends and future technological development could pose many threats that are hard to predict today. The majority of the Scotchman Peaks area has been managed as "Recommended Wilderness" by the Forest Service since the 1970s and the rest of the Scotchmans has some measure of protection as a roadless area, but both of these are set by administrative decisions, subject to shifting boundaries and reclassification. Only Congressional designation can include the Scotchmans as part of the Wilderness System

### 3. **What benefits would Wilderness designation bring?**

Wilderness designation protects and preserves native plant and animal habitat, maintains a healthy ecosystem, helps ensure watershed quality, provides outstanding recreational opportunities, offers a place of solitude, benefits local communities economically (see the next question) and keeps a special part of North Idaho and Montana in a state untouched by man to pass on to our children.

### 4. **Doesn't wilderness lead to loss of jobs?**

Actually, just the opposite is achieved. The proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness has not been used for resource-based economic activities such as timber and mining, and is not in the current "timber base." So, designation as a Wilderness cannot diminish these industries. In fact, designated Wilderness has been proven to preserve the "quality of life" upon which most economic growth in Western counties is currently based.

### 5. **What will money I donate to Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness be spent on?**

Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness is a volunteer-driven, nonprofit association with limited part-time staff. Funds we raise go to education and outreach to bring about community awareness of the value of wilderness in general and, particularly, the value of the Scotchmans. Through printed materials, presentations, public meetings, a website and informational updates sent to supporters, we work to bring about a public voice strong enough to compel Congress to designate this area as Wilderness.

### 6. **Are the donations tax deductible?**

Donations are tax deductible. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Receipts are provided for all donations.

### 7. **How is Wilderness created?**

The U.S. Forest Service may propose Wilderness, but it takes an act of Congress to designate Wilderness. The public must tell their elected and appointed officials that they want designated Wilderness for this to happen.

### 8. **Isn't there enough designated Wilderness in Idaho and Montana already?**

There is currently no designated Wilderness In the Idaho Panhandle and just one small Wilderness Area in Western Montana, although there are vast areas of unprotected wild lands suitable for such designation in this region. We are only asking that one small part to be set aside as Wilderness, the Scotchmans.

### 9. **Are there grizzly bears in the Scotchmans?**

Yes, the Scotchmans are home to grizzly bears as well as other threatened, endangered, and sensitive species such as mountain goat, bull trout, west slope cutthroat trout, canada lynx, bald eagle, wolf and wolverine. It is also an important habitat for many other animals including big horn sheep, white tail and mule deer, moose, elk, black

bear, coyotes, bobcat, cougar, martins, ermines, snowshoe hares and dozens of bird species, both large and small. Game animals often grow to trophy size.

**10. Doesn't Wilderness designation ban hunting?**

No. Wilderness designation doesn't affect traditional uses of this area, Hiking, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography and berry picking are all allowed — and preserved — by Wilderness designation.

**11. Does Wilderness designation restrict my access?**

No. Wilderness designation for the Scotchmans will still allow access on foot and on horseback. The use of mechanized vehicles, including mountain bikes, is not allowed in Wilderness, but there are no roads or trails suitable for ORVs or mountain bikes in the proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. This activity doesn't currently take place in the Scotchmans — rugged terrain makes off-road travel unfeasible — and so will be unaffected by Wilderness designation. A small portion of the Scotchmans can be legally accessed by snowmobiles in winter, but terrain limits this. When the Forest Service wrote the master plans in the 1980s, they didn't envision snowmobiles powerful enough to penetrate this backcountry, so there are no specific provisions against this activity. Upon designation as Wilderness, this activity will be prohibited within the Wilderness. However, snowmobiles will still have access to millions of other acres of Forest Service land in North Idaho and western Montana.

**12. Are there roads in the Scotchmans that Wilderness designation would close?**

Wilderness designation will not close any roads. Roads on the perimeter of the area or those that reach access points and trailheads will remain open. There are no roads in the Scotchmans in the current inventory of forest service roads — it is an inventoried roadless area. There are some very old mining and logging roads that decades ago began to revert back to nature and are now so eroded or overgrown with alder and conifers that they are not usable and, in many places, barely recognizable. The Wilderness Act allows for inclusion of such areas if they will continue to return to a natural state if left alone.

**13. Does Wilderness designation mean that the Forest Service can't fight fires?**

No. Section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act allows firefighting in designated Wilderness, stating that “such measures can be taken as may be necessary in the control of fire, insects and diseases, subject to such conditions as the Secretary deems desirable.” In 1978, in House Report 95-540 — accompanying the Endangered American Wilderness Act (P.L. 95-237) — Congress specified some of the permissible “measures:” “Fires, Insects, Disease – Section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act permits any measure necessary to control fire, insect outbreaks, and disease in wilderness areas. This includes the use of mechanized equipment, the building of fire roads, fire towers, fire breaks or fire pre-suppression facilities where necessary and other techniques for fire control. In short, anything necessary for the protection of public health or safety is permissible.”

**14. I'm not a “local.” What do the Scotchmans mean to me if I'm not from Idaho or Montana?**

Land officially designated as Wilderness is public land belonging to all Americans. Many visitors to the Scotchmans come from other states to fish, hunt, camp, hike and just appreciate and enjoy what nature offers in the Scotchman Peaks. Without Wilderness designation, these lands may not be available for any of our children and grandchildren to also enjoy, which would be a loss for all of us.

**15. How can I find more information on the Scotchmans?**

For our big bundle of information, visit us on the web at [www.ScotchmanPeaks.org](http://www.ScotchmanPeaks.org). You can point specific questions to [info@scotchmanpeaks.org](mailto:info@scotchmanpeaks.org). Find more information about the Scotchmans in our inserts, brochure, maps and newsletters, found at outlets around Bonner County, Idaho and Sanders and Lincoln Counties, Montana. Attend one of our presentations, or arrange with us to make a presentation to your civic, fraternal or community organization. Come along on one of our scheduled hikes (the hikes are listed online) or stop by our table at one of the many local and community events that we attend. To stay in the know, and become a Friend, sign up for our free electronic (or mail-delivered) newsletter at [www.ScotchmanPeaks.org/newsletter](http://www.ScotchmanPeaks.org/newsletter)

**16. How can I find out more information about Wilderness and the Wilderness Act?**

For more information on the Wilderness Act, you can view or download a comprehensive “handbook” from The Wilderness Society at this webpage:

<http://www.wilderness.org/Library/Documents/WildernessActHandbook2004.cfm>