

Elected officials who support the release of magnificent wilderness study areas in exchange for short-term jobs and certain environmental destruction would do well to consider first implementing the “no-cut-and-run rule.”

Implementing the no-cut-and-run rule is crucial, especially in light of the Ravalli County Commission’s support of Sen. Daines and his misguided efforts to convert valuable public lands into private profit: Secure the logging jobs *first* before agreeing to give away public lands with incalculable intrinsic value.

The United States Forest Service has nothing to do with the lack of lumber production jobs in Ravalli County; those jobs were stolen from our county by greed and short-sighted economic gain, with no chance of ever returning.

At least one Bitterroot Valley mill owner notoriously walked out of the Bitterroot Valley taking every viable commercial lumber production job in Ravalli County with him. And with every one of those logging and mill jobs, which Sen. Daines seems to believe is the key to this area’s economic vitality, went every penny of accumulated pension benefits owed those employees. In many instances, those same employees were forced to take out second mortgages to continue supporting their families.

If our Ravalli County Commissioners truly care for the long-term welfare of this county, instead of the corporate profits of those who would despoil public lands for their own short-term profit, they must first ask for something in return.

Sen. Daines’s S 2206 is nothing but a pipe dream aimed at reviving a dead-and-gone industry. Please oppose it.

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