

* Protects and **enhances some of the best wildlife and fisheries habitat** in North America including some of the best elk, sheep, bear, deer, moose and goat hunting in the state of Montana.

* Ensures that traditional activities such as **fishing and hunting continue for generations** of Montanans to come.

* **Protects the headwaters of some of the most famous rivers in the world** and also works to restore front country fisheries.

* **Guarantees access** for every outdoor pursuit.



More Details:

Protects Headwaters: S. 1470 protects the Missouri, Madison, Beaverhead, Ruby, Blackfoot, Clark Fork, Kootenai, Jefferson, and Big Hole Rivers, as well as such fabled streams as Rock Creek, Monture Creek, Grasshopper Creek, and Big Sheep Creek. This is accomplished by designating special areas within the Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Lolo and Kootenai national forests—669,060 acres of new wilderness and 336,205 acres of national recreation/special management areas—where hunting, fishing, family recreation and other traditional uses will continue in perpetuity as primary uses.

Secures ‘Security Habitat’: The lands identified in the Forest Jobs and Recreation Act include some of the best elk, sheep, bear, deer, moose and goat hunting in the state of Montana. Big game requires big country—called security habitat—to thrive; much is set aside by this Act. A prime example of the need for security habitat involves elk; such habitat is defined as a forested area larger than 250 acres that is at least one half mile from a road. Elk hunters know, and several scientific studies prove, that elk flee from motorized traffic until they find secure habitat. The Forest Jobs and Restoration Act ensures that the secure habitat in such famous big game hunting areas as the West Pioneers and Monture Creek stay that way for future generations of Montana hunters.

Keeps Areas Full of Elk: A recent edition of Field & Stream magazine (August 2009) named Montana’s Beaverhead Deerlodge National Forest as one of the top ten elk hunting public lands areas in the country: *“Fifty percent of the elk harvest comes from Region 3 in the southwest part of the state. The forest outside Dillon, which encompasses several mountain ranges, affords elk security cover while also providing numerous hunter-access points.”* S. 1470 keeps it that way.

The same article named national forest wilderness areas as the best place to hunt on public land for elk advising: *“Look for: Security cover. Ranges that contain hard-to-reach, unroaded tracts of black timber will reward you with a better chance at larger bulls than heavily logged, easily accessible terrain, where opening-day harvest is high and elk don’t have much chance to grow up. Hunting is also likely to stay good longer into the season where there’s security cover.”* S. 1470 secures the security cover for elk hunters in perpetuity—for elk hunter who haven’t even been born yet.

Enhances Front Country Hunting: From a big game perspective, the Act and its stewardship logging component will reduce road densities on some parts of the national forests. Currently, the Seeley Lake District of the Lolo National Forest has a whopping five miles of road per square mile; stewardship contracts will take out some roads and thus improve security habitat for big game, while leaving other roads open for motorized access. For elk security habitat to exist, science has shown that there needs to be generally no more than about 1.5 miles of open road per square mile. Without habitat security in the front country, elk will either stay in the back country or go to private land where few people are able to hunt.

Montana's generous five week deer and elk seasons are the longest in the country due in large part to big tracts of big country, security habitat and roadless lands.

Restores our fisheries: The Act actually enhances many areas on our national forests that are in need of restoration. On the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, for example, 85 percent of all culverts on streams pose some kind of barrier to fish passage. The numbers are even higher on the Lolo and Kootenai—88 percent and 95 percent. The Act calls for resolving this situation by using timber sales receipts to pay for habitat restoration work. Culverts often prevent fish from moving up and down stream for spawning, thus preventing young fish from recruiting into the population. Removing culverts will produce more fish for fishermen.

Montana Forest Jobs and Recreation Act
Forests impacted by legislation

