

Swan View's News

Summer 2014



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"Nature and human nature on the same path."

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Keeping Connected: Wilderness, Fish, Wildlife and People!

"To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering," noted Aldo Leopold, a wildlife biologist, conservationist and author of "A Sand County Almanac." Though speaking of the importance of every species to the greater ecosystem, Leopold could just as well been referring to the interconnected nature of public land management laws and regulations.

As we continue celebrating this 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, this newsletter will take a look at how it dovetails meaningfully with evolving Forest Planning and Travel Planning regulations.

The news is good on the one hand, as we are presented new opportunities to advocate for the recovery of wildlands and for Wilderness designations. But it is also disappointing how few people and organizations are doing so, instead allowing the debate to remain framed in anthropocentric and utilitarian terms.

As Leopold also said in the 1940s, "The direction is clear, and the first step is to

throw your weight around on matters of right and wrong in land-use. Cease being intimidated by the argument that a right action is impossible because it does not yield maximum profits, or that a wrong action is to be condoned because it pays."

Great strides have been made in scientific research and the overall message is that what is good for fish and wildlife is also good for human health. We will summarize Dr. John Weaver's latest Wildlife Conservation Society report on the Flathead National Forest and his recommendation that the vast majority of the Swan Crest be designated Wilderness!

We are happy to announce Cinnabar Foundation has once again issued us a \$4,000 challenge grant! So let your donation be among the first \$4,000 we receive and it will be doubled by Cinnabar!



Dead tree; new life! K. Hammer Photo

Happy Summer and Happy Trails,

Keith

Wilderness Needed Now More Than Ever!

The Wilderness Act was passed in 1964 to insure "an enduring resource of wilderness" in the face of "an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization." Now, 50 years later, it is all the more important to designate as Wilderness America's few remaining wild and roadless public lands.

Many, however, would stand the Wilderness Act on its head and instead hand many of these areas over to mountain bikes, ATVs, snowmobiles, and whatever mechanized contraption our burgeoning population dreams up next! And we're talking here of groups that say they are wilderness advocates, not just those that are anti-wilderness.

The reason given is that we need to give a bunch of land over to mechanized uses in order to secure a bit as Wilderness - as though we've come to have more wildlands over time and can now better afford to give more of it away!

In 1928, when Bob Marshall worked for the Forest Service and first hiked over the Swan Range into the vast South Fork Flathead River country that would eventually bear his name as Wilderness, he found a new logging road all the way into Spotted Bear. It was experiences like these that would spur him to exclaim "The universe of the wilderness, all over the United States, is vanishing with appalling rapidity . . . It

is melting away like the last snow bank on some south facing mountain side during a hot afternoon in June!"

He and his fellow co-founders of The Wilderness Society in 1935 would write "We want no straddlers, for in the past they have surrendered too much good wilderness and primeval which should never have been lost. . . Above all we do not want in our ranks people whose first instinct is to look for compromise."

"In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify, all areas within the United States . . . it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

The Wilderness Act, 1964

What would he and his fellows say today about compromising the even fewer areas that remain roadless and wild in America today? We think they'd tell us to fight onward for every last scrap of it - and so we shall!

Mechanized gadgets have sped up rather than slowed the pace of life and they become more plentiful and disruptive every day. What has become more rare are places for people, fish and wildlife to get away from these constant interruptions.

Scientific research has come to play all the more important role in recognizing the great value of designated Wilderness and still-unprotected wildlands in conserving imperiled species of fish and wildlife. What is good for fish and wildlife is also good for people - and we'll continue working to conserve plenty of land where all can thrive in good health. The article on the next page describes a few new tools that can help.

New Planning Rules Can Help Restore Wildlands!

The 1964 Wilderness Act initially designated 9 million acres as Wilderness and laid the groundwork for additional designations by requiring a formal review of all roadless public lands. These areas became known formally as Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) and were the basis for wilderness suitability reviews during the writing of Forest Plans in the 1980s.

New Forest Planning Rules in 2012, however, require that wilderness suitability inventories must extend beyond IRAs to include areas recovering from past development. This also dovetails with the 2005 Travel Management Rule and subsequent findings that the Forest Service must reduce the size of its massive road system to levels that are both ecologically and financially sustainable.

In other words, the Forest Service must now consider whether areas with old closed roads and abandoned logging units once again qualify for wilderness designation because these developments are no longer "substantially noticeable." This opens the door for the recovery of wildlands from past mistakes, though it should not be used by the agency to carelessly road and log wildlands while arguing they can later be reclaimed.

Road building and logging is an expensive proposition, as is the decommissioning of roads built in the wrong places and in need of removal to protect fish and wild-

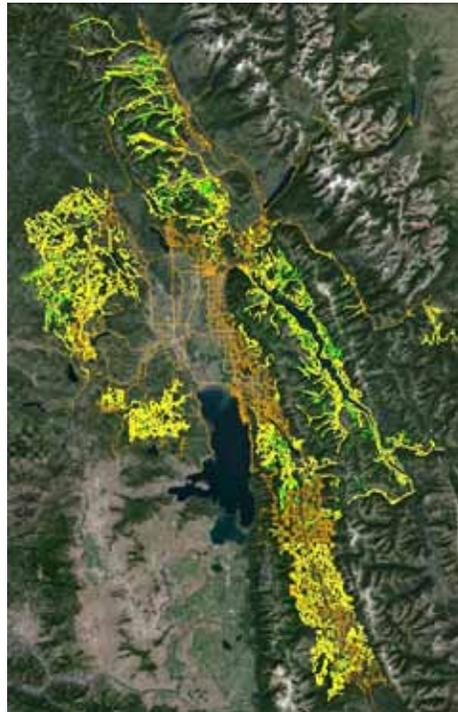
life. This is not intended to become a circular bureaucracy of "break it, then fix it" and we are urging Forests to plan for the long haul of wildland recovery.

On the Flathead National Forest, for example, its [draft Wilderness Suitability Inventory](#) prepared for Forest Plan revision adds over 141,000 acres to the 479,000 acres of IRAs. These additional acres are largely areas where old logging roads have been permanently closed or removed to protect grizzly bear, bull trout and other species of fish and wildlife (see map on the page 4).

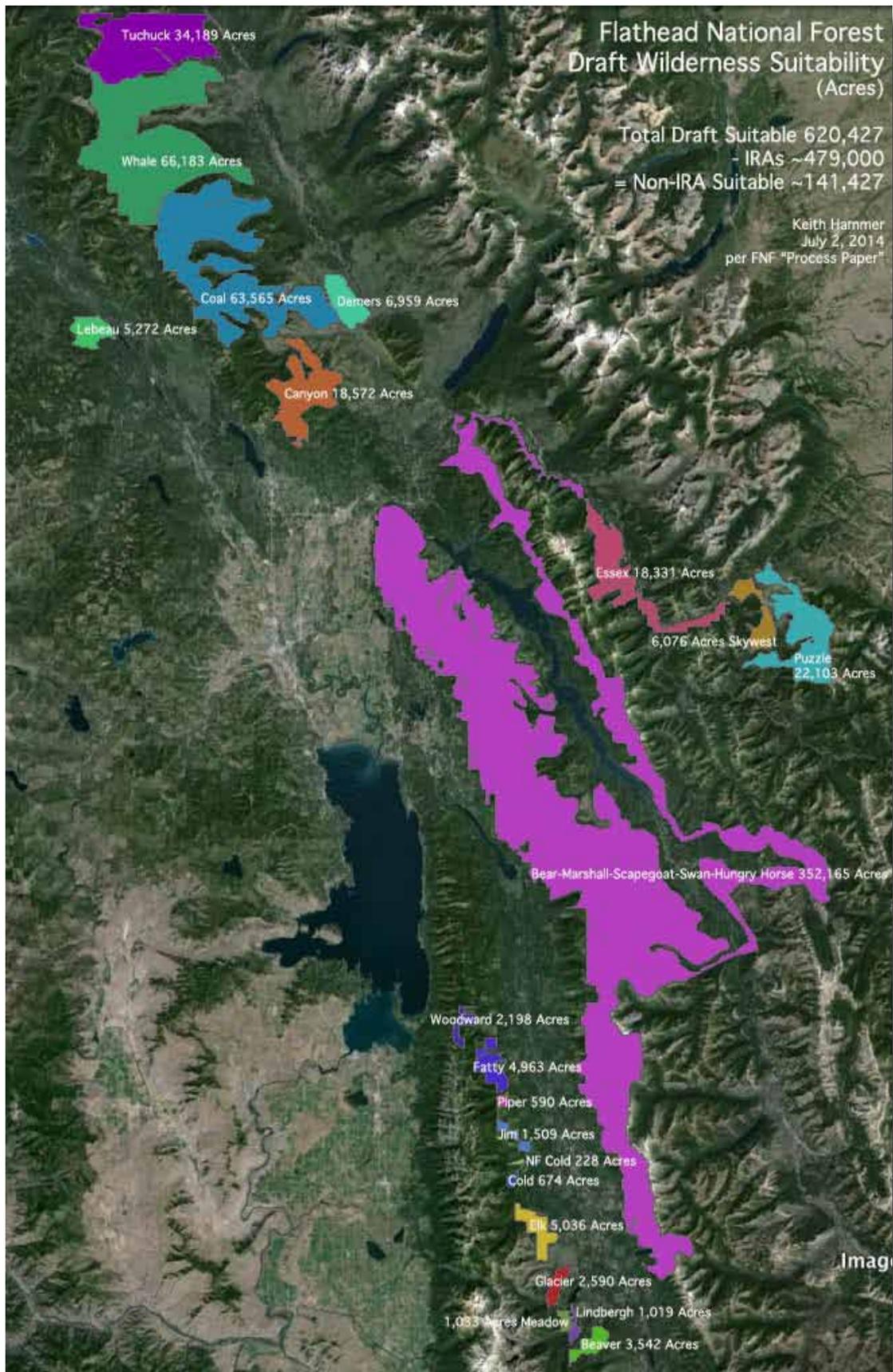
Our [Citizen reVision of the Flathead Forest Plan](#) utilizes these new planning rules and the best available science to set a course for substantial wildland recovery in addition to designating all IRAs Wilderness (see map on the page 5). Sadly, not all conservation groups are taking advantage of these new conservation rules and tools.

The [Whitefish Range Partnership Agreement](#), for example, asks that only the northernmost

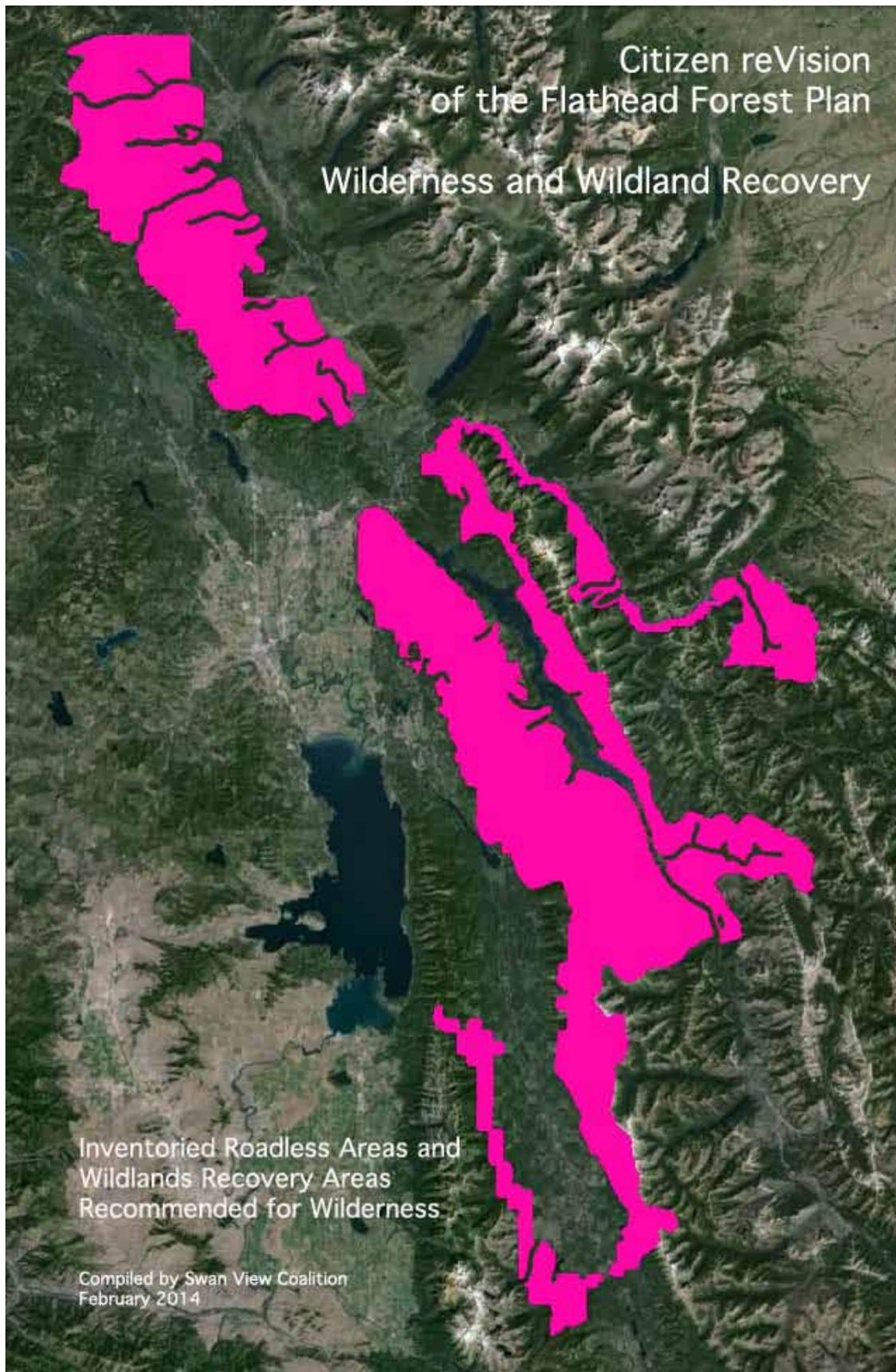
IRAs there be designated Wilderness and proposes to nearly double logging areas by de-listing the grizzly bear, relaxing its habitat security standards, and by challenging management strategies put in place to protect threatened lynx habitat. To make matters worse, the Flathead is applying this logging expansion Forest-wide, not just in the Whitefish Range!



No shortage of roads on Flathead NF!



The northern Swan Range is the largest contiguous tract of unprotected wildlands on the Flathead NF. To view this map in color, visit http://www.swanview.org/newsletters/Summer_2014e.pdf



Our [Citizen reVision](#) would go far to recover, reconnect and protect unprotected wildlands. To view this map in color, visit http://www.swanview.org/newsletters/Summer_2014e.pdf

Dr. John Weaver's New Flathead Report!



Wolverine den in Swan Range recommended for wilderness by Dr. John Weaver. *Keith Hammer Photo*

Wildlife Conservation Society's Dr. John Weaver has released a new report recommending Wilderness, wildland restoration and backcountry conservation on the Flathead National Forest. His "Conservation Legacy on a Flagship Forest" is a Forest-specific refinement of his earlier "Crown of the Continent" report.

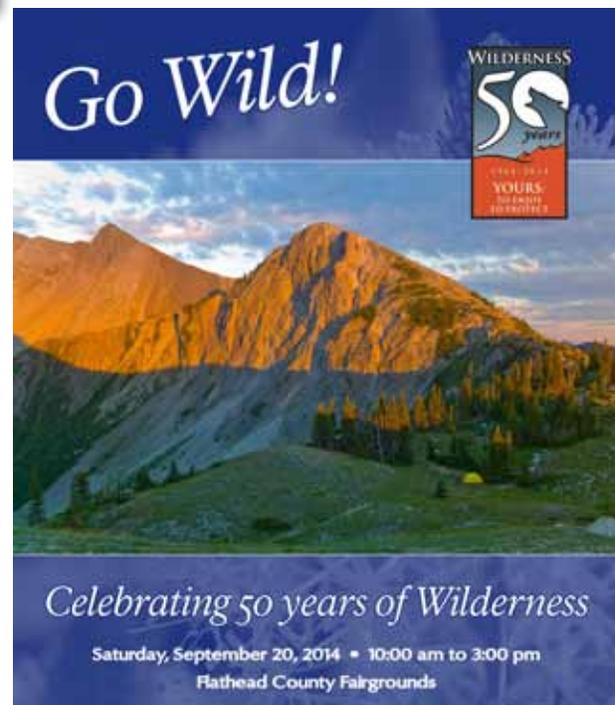
Weaver recommends Wilderness for the majority of the unprotected roadless Swan Range, and includes the Bunker and Sullivan Creek watersheds. He calls for wildland restoration by permanently closing or decommissioning the upper reaches of the Quintonkin, Wheeler, Graves, Lost Johnny, and Doris Creek roads. He recommends non-motorized backcountry conservation status for the northernmost tip of the Swan Range and some low eastern slopes.

Forest-wide, Weaver recommends 404,000 acres be designated Wilderness, 131,000 acres be legislated as non-motorized backcountry conservation areas, and that 19 miles of habitat-fragmenting roads

Help Us Celebrate! September 20

We hope you'll join us September 20th at the Flathead County Fairgrounds to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act! Stewart Brandborg, who worked at The Wilderness Society alongside Howard Zahniser to secure passage of the Act, has agreed to be the keynote speaker!

We'll have a booth there and may do a bit of celebrating our 30th anniversary as well! The event is being cosponsored by Swan View Coalition, a number of other conservation and news organizations, Glacier National Park, and the Flathead National Forest.



be closed for wildland restoration and habitat connectivity. His report is based on the needs and habitats of five species: bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, grizzly bears, wolverines, and mountain goats - in the face of increasing human population and climate warming.

Your Donations Again Doubled by Cinnabar Foundation!

We've again been issued a \$4,000 Challenge Grant by Cinnabar Foundation - **so be among the first to donate and your money will be doubled by Cinnabar!**

We rely in large part on member donations to fund our work protecting habitat for fish, wildlife and people. You can help us broaden our membership base by giving Gift Memberships at \$25 each, either on-line or using the donation form below! **It's easy to join others in supporting our work:**



1. Send a check to Swan View Coalition at 3165 Foothill Road, Kalispell, MT 59901 - or -
2. Use your credit card securely on-line at www.swanview.org or www.swanrange.org, by clicking on the **Donate Now button** found there (or above)!

Network for Good handles your transaction securely for us and informs us immediately via email of your donation by credit card. You can also choose to give monthly, quarterly or yearly there to make it easier or more affordable (or change your mind anytime)! If you have other info you want to get to us, such as Gift Membership info, simply email it to keith@swanview.org or mail them to the address in #1, above.



If there is pink on your mailing label, it means you haven't donated in nearly a year or more. Please make a donation so we can keep sending you our newsletter and continue our work!

- Here's \$25 to cover my minimum dues, newsletters, alerts, and Swan Ranger Reports.
- Here's \$50 to help restore a bit of peace and quiet to America's public lands.
- Here's \$100 to help keep forest roads from ending up in America's bull trout streams.
- Here's \$500 to help secure grizzly, lynx and wolverine habitat for future generations.
- Here's \$_____ to help save the world, one mountain range and one river at a time!
- Here's \$_____ for _____ Gift Memberships at a minimum of \$25 each. I've included each recipient's name, mailing address, email address, and my greeting on separate paper.
- As a gift of appreciation for my donation, please send me the Swan/Flathead history booklet "The Lineage of Chief Aeneas: A History of People and Place" and/or a Swan Ranger patch (circle "hang-loop" or "sew-on").
- Save paper! Email my newsletters to _____

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