



IDAHO ROADLESS COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED 2008

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IDAHO ROADLESS COMMISSION MEETING

NOTES

December 11, 2017
Boise National Forest, Supervisors Office

Welcome and Introductions

Those present included:

Commission Members: Bob Cope, Jonathan Oppenheimer, Brad Gilbert, Alan Prouty, Bill Higgins, Michael Gibson, Rick Johnson, Dave McGraw, Dale Harris, Jim Caswell, Patty Perry, Dan Dinning, Alex Irby.

Forest Service: Dave Schmid, Nora Rasure, Julie Schaefer, Brian Riggers

Idaho State: Sam Eaton, Mitch Silvers, Mike Roach, Rob Mason, Andy Brunelle, Mike Hanna

SECTION I: Commission Business

Succession Proposal Update – Caswell

Jim Caswell presented a draft document of proposed Succession Planning to Commission Members. There was a motion and second to accept.

Deliberation:

- 1) *In the fifth item there is an obligation to recruit, what are the stipulations?*
 - a. Anyone can submit their name for a place on the Commission, however, these are appointed positions and must be approved by Governor.
 - b. It would be a good gesture, as an outgoing Commissioner, to find a replacement. All of us on this Commission need to consider the future. Not a lot of people have knowledge regarding the rule, perhaps consider recruiting younger members. In an effort to

bolster youth involvement, local governments could have a standing position for an intern. It could be a non-voting position.

2) *Are three Commissioners there because of the Counties?*

- a. Correct and the County Commissioners were involved in the selection. This keeps balanced representation around the State.

VOTE: Motion Passes

Dates for nominations: February 1

- *Notice in next week, requesting nominations*
- *Reminder – February 1 Nominations Due*
- *Vote: physically in April-May at Spring meeting*

Proposal to Codify Commission – Caswell

The Commission is currently under the 3rd Executive Order (2014) which expires every four years. This summer, the Executive Order expires May 18, 2018. Question whether we want to continue with renewals or propose to codify.

Deliberations:

- 1) *The Commission should consider providing information to the Legislature illustrating that the Forest Service and Roadless Commission have worked well together.*
- 2) *If we are writing code, it should remain simple and straightforward. Once it's formalized, you'll be bound to meeting those requirements.*

Legislative Update – Caswell

There is a lot of activity in Washington DC that potentially affects Public Lands management. There is a Bill (Westerman) that has some language. Those of you who might be interested, watch the language in the Bill as it relates to *National Forest Planning*. The Westerman Bill deals with Roadless and the context of Planning. If this got passed, it could take a long time to work through the legal side of things as it is uncertain what some of the language means and could put a lot of constraints on projects coming forward. It could be confusing. There are other things in the Bill that could help, but an equal share of that which may not.

The Wilderness Society Letter Regarding Forest Plan Revision – Oppenheimer

See Exhibit A – Briefing Paper

As national forests across Idaho move into Forest Plan Revision (FPR) they will be operating under the Revised 2012 Planning Rule and related implementing regulations, including Chapter 70 (potential wilderness evaluation). Within the regulations, there is language that may cause confusion. As a result,

The Wilderness Society (TWS) posed a question intended to clarify the issue: to what degree does the IRR conflict with the process to consider/identify/inventory and recommend specific Roadless Areas for Wilderness or other designations?

Discussion regarding interpretation of the FEIS ensued. There was discussion over whether the Idaho Roadless Rule is in conflict with the management of wilderness characteristics. While the IRC does not set policy, members agreed that the IRR should not preclude management of wilderness characteristics, that the IRR expressly did not make making any formal or informal "recommendation" on wilderness, and that it is appropriate for Forest Plans Revisions to consider changed circumstances and public needs, as the potential wilderness consideration process unfolds during the evaluation process. There could be additional areas that are not currently IRAs that may be considered in Forest Plan revision, and this would not contradict the rule. The Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest considered this issue and came to the place you are now – the theme of an IRR is important but does not determine whether it is part of the inventory step in revision. All lands are reviewed, based on their characteristics.

There was further discussion regarding allowed activities under the rule vs. recommended wilderness. Some expressed concern that analyzing projects for their potential to affect wilderness may eliminate some activities. Others expressed concern that the rule allowed activities that may not be allowed if an area was recommended wilderness. Discussion followed about the rule allowing, not compelling activities and therefore not being in conflict. Others expressed the view that activities allowed under the rule that weren't allowed under recommended wilderness would require a modification to the rule.

Overall, there was no consensus on this topic, and recognition that more time was needed to come to a thorough understand and potential group agreement. It was also suggested that forests entering into Plan revision should have training on the Idaho Rule.

The group agreed to draft and submit a letter to the Forest Planning Rule FACA Committee to seek further guidance on this issue. Cope and Oppenheimer volunteered to draft the letter.

Section II: Project Updates and New Projects

Non-Timber, Roads or Minerals Small Projects – Templates for efficiency efforts

There is a table in your binder that is a Summary of New Small Projects. This new template is intended to allow us to efficiently address projects that have no tree cutting, road construction/reconstruction, or mineral activities. All other projects will continue to use the full briefing paper format. Commissioners can request and project using this short format to be redone using the long format if there are additional questions or concerns that aren't addressed adequately. Following is the Summary of New Small Projects:

Non-Timber, Roads or Minerals Small Projects

Forest/IRA/Theme	Project	Activity	Notes
Boise/Red Mtn/WLR	Avalanche Mitigation	Install 3 Obellex systems (1 sq. m.) with Helicopter	Monitor and induce avalanche if necessary
Payette/Numerous	Heavens Gate O/G	Re-issue O/G permit	
Payette/Patrick Butte/PMTV	Schaetzel H2O System	Issue new permit to use existing ditch	Includes annual mtc.
Payette/Patrick Butte/BCR	Twin Lakes Drift Fence Rebuild	Reconstruct 0.3 miles of burned fence	All hand work
Payette/French Ck/BCR	Jenkins Crossing Bridge Replacement	Replace existing wood bridge with prefab	Helicopter used to get structure to site
Payette/Secesh, Needles/WLR	McCall Outdoor Science SUP Renewal	Renew outdoor education SUP -- hiking	
Payette/Needles/WLR	Krassel Knob Trail Re-construction	Reconstruct 2000 feet of hiking trail in same location; fix drainage and stream crossing	
Salmon-Challis/Numerous	Salmon River Electric Coop Powerline SUP	Re-issue SUP for operation/mtc. of existing powerline	
Salmon-Challis/Italian Peak/BCR	Kagel SUP	Re-issue SUP for headbox and 500 feet of pipeline	
Salmon-Challis/Boulder-White Clouds/BCR	Bartlett Creek Vegetation	Rx burn on 1562 acres within IRA	Thinning/lines will be outside IRA in WUI – none in IRA.
Sawtooth/Cache Peak/GFRG	Albion-Raft River Aspen Restoration	3567 acres of prescribed burning, lop and scatter, or hand cut and pile of competing conifers to restore aspen	This project includes cutting of trees and requires use of exception 294.24(d) (3566 acres) and 294.24(c)(vii) (1 acre).
Sawtooth/Numerous	Sun Valley Heli Ski O/G	Re-issue heli-skiing permit	

Deliberations:

- 1) *On the Albion Project, a commissioner asked if we were talking about using a rule exception on one acre, and if it fit with our objective of using the short form.*
 - a. Riggers -- application of the rule, yes. From the standpoint of whether these should go on the short form is a question for discussion.
 - b. Commissioner – my recommendation would be the Forest should drop the one acre and put it on the table for short form.
 - c. Commissioner – we have a process for anything delineated in Roadless, are we looking to not follow that process because it's on the short-form?
 - i. Riggers – on this particular project, yes – it seemed like it didn't have any issues.
 - d. There was agreement that if a project applies an exception to the Rule, it doesn't go on the short form.**
 - i. Follow up – Riggers will coordinate long form request via email.
- 2) *On the heli-skiing, it didn't have theme – is it outside the designated Wilderness?*
 - a. Follow up – Riggers will check with district
- 3) *Avalanche Mitigation – Wildland Recreation – Recommended Wilderness portion? Is that permanent construction and is a CE appropriate?*
 - a. Follow up – Riggers will check with district whether installation is permanent.

Individual Projects by Forest:

Following are the generally larger, individual projects. These projects may or may not require the use of an exception under the Idaho Roadless Rule.

Note: The “Link to Project Briefing Paper” section is not populated for this meeting but will be available for the Spring 2018 meeting notes.

Payette National Forest

Project: South Fork Restoration and Access Management Plan (RAMP)		
District: Krassel	Roadless Area: Secesh/Needles/Caton Lake/Cottontail Point/Pilot Peak	
Status: Scoping Completed 7/24/17; EA in prep – expected draft EA in spring 2018	Table Location: Table 2	Project Lead: Caleb Zurstadt Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Determine the Minimum Road System and what routes will be open for public motor vehicle use. Improve watershed condition through road decommissioning, storm risk reduction, and maintenance of roads, trails, and dispersed use. Provide motorized ATV and motorcycle loop trails – this will likely include adding motorized trails in IRA. Provide camping and parking facilities and reduce dispersed recreation impacts. Tree cutting will be necessary for construction of new trails and parking/camping areas.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: 294.24(c)(1)(vii)	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: Q: Are any trails proposed to be open to full size vehicles? A: No, and none were recommended in public comments.		
Action Requested: None		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No <u> </u>

Project: Stibnite Gold		
District: Krassel	Roadless Area: Burnt Log, Black Lake, Meadow Creek, Caton Lake, Horse Heaven	
Status: Refining Proposed Action; Developing Alternatives; Draft EIS in fall/winter 2018	Table Location: Table 2	Project Lead: Piper Goessel Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Approve a plan for occupancy and use of NFS lands for activities incident to mining. Activities would likely include expansion of Yellow Pine Pit, temporarily eliminating public access on NFSR 50-412, and development of mine access/by-pass route (referred to as the “Burntlog Route”). The Burntlog route would likely include re-alignment, new construction of connecting road, re-construction of the “old Thunder Mountain road”, and new construction down to the planned main mine gate near the head of the East Fork South Fork Salmon River. Approximately 14 miles of the planned route could be within IRAs. Approximately 500 acres of tree removal in mine waste and		

stockpile areas and 215 acres along utility and road corridors would occur. The company is also proposing a 2.6 mile motorized trail from Horse Heaven to Meadow Creek.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.23(b)(iii); 294.24(c)(vii) </u>	No _____
<p>Commission Discussion: Q: Were over half of the comments about maintaining access to the forest – is this accurate? A: About 2/3 were concerned about maintaining access and about 1/3 were concerned about affects to roadless from a temporary road.</p> <p>Q: Why isn't that shown in briefing paper? A: Unless it pertains directly to IRA it may not be appropriate for briefing paper but would be included in Transportation Analysis in EA/EIS. The database query referenced "Idaho Roadless Area".</p> <p>Q: Are the comments in yellow on second paragraph from the public or internal? The comments cause concern because they make it sound like the FS has broader discretion than they do with respect to roads and mining under 1872 mining law. The IRR is silent on the 1872 Mining Law. A: This is a paraphrase from comments – the concern was with designating the road as "temporary" when it will be in place for 20 years, and the likelihood of decommissioning after that time. The public piece comes in when co-locating public traffic on the haul route, as the public road will be consumed by the pit. The mining law has a separate set of criteria from the IRR. Commission comment: This is a claim from the 1872 Mining Law, but under the law it provides for "reasonable" access and does not allow you to build whatever you want. There is a level of discretion afforded to the FS. If they determine the route is not the minimum necessary access, they may refer to it as a discretionary road and then maybe provide a determination.</p> <p>Q: I am concerned about a trail open to full size vehicles looking like a road and the only reason it's not technically considered a road is because it isn't in the Transportation Database. Should there be some sort of litmus test for the definition of "road"? Is the FS still considering construction of a full size trail (road) through the project? A: This is still a detail we are trying to get MIDAS to clarify. It is currently referred to as a low standard road in their plan.</p>		
Action Requested: Need further clarification of proposal from MIDAS and forest		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No _____

Project: MIDAS Geophysical Investigation		
District: Krassel	Roadless Area: Horse Heaven, Meadow Creek	
Status: Analysis in progress; Decision expected 12/18	Table Location: Table 2 (NEW)	Project Lead: Clint Hughes
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Drill 62 pads (52 are sonic/auger SPT and 10 are core hole) to retrieve core samples and acquire geotechnical data. Most of the work will be conducted in the winter, over snow, unless conditions are prohibitive. No road construction or timber harvest is proposed.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No <u> X </u>
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No _____

Caribou-Targhee National Forest

Project: Dairy Syncline Mine, Reclamation Plan and Land Exchange		
District: Soda Springs	Roadless Area: Huckleberry Basin	
Status: DEIS April 2018; FEIS March 2019; ROD signed by BLM and FS in July 2019	Table Location: Table 2	Project Lead: David Alderman (BLM)
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
<p>Project Summary: JR Simplot Company has submitted plans for a proposed open pit phosphate mine at the Dairy Syncline Phosphate Lease Area under the 1920 Mineral Leasing Act. Lease #28115 was issued 12/27/2000 and Lease #0258 was issued 10/25/1949. A portion of the proposed mine would occur within the Huckleberry Basin IRA, both on and off existing Federal mineral leases. Approximately 0.5 miles of new road construction (0.1 on lease and 0.4 off lease) would occur for mine access. Surface use and occupancy would also occur (949 acres on lease and 350 acres off lease). A land exchange is proposed to accommodate a tailings pond necessary for mine development (tailings ponds cannot be authorized on NFS lands (36 CFR 251.54(e)(1)(ix)). The land exchange would include approximately 640 acres – a modification to the Idaho Roadless Rule would be required (alternatives that do not exchange land within the IRA and an option which exchanges 160 acres within the IRA are also being evaluated in the EIS).</p>		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.25(e)(1) </u>	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: Q: The exchange is to accommodate a tailings pile shown on both maps – is the vertical line area the part that would go to Simplot? A: Yes, the crosshatch would go to FS and be included in the Sage Creek IRA.		
Action Requested: None		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No <u> </u>

Project: Yale Creek		
District: Ashton/Island Park	Roadless Area: Mt. Jefferson	
Status: Decision signed October 2017; Admin Review complete; Implement 2018.	Table Location: Table 1	Project Lead: Jon White
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
<p>Project Summary: Fuel treatment (cut all trees less than 6-inches dbh, pruning remaining trees, hand pile slash and burn) on 635 acres within IRA (313 acres in BCR; 322 acres in GFRG). No road construction or reconstruction.</p>		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.24(c)(1)(i,iv,v) </u>	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> </u>	No <u> X </u>

Project: Buckboard Gulch Sage Grouse HIP		
District: Dubois	Roadless Area: Italian Peak	
Status: Preparing to Scope	Table Location: Table 2	Project Lead: Sabrina Derousseau Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Cut encroaching Douglas fir on 150 acres within IRA to improve sage grouse habitat. Allow firewood cutting of downed trees. No road construction or reconstruction.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.24(c)(1)(iii) </u>	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: Q: if juniper and conifer encroachment is the problem, why are you leaving the juniper? A: We will get back to you on that.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> </u>	No <u> X </u>

Project: East Palisades Hazardous Fuels Reduction		
District: Palisades	Roadless Area: Palisades	
Status: Initial planning phase	Table Location: Table 2	Project Lead: Deb Flowers Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Hazardous fuels reduction on 3435 acres within IRA. Approximately 3000 acres are prescribed burn. Firelines constructed in WLR theme under “incidental to” exception on an estimated 187 acres. Group selection (regen) on about 167 acres (no reserve trees) and thinning on 224 acres, both in BCR. Up to 3 miles of temporary road construction in BCR. Requires easement through private property for access.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.23(b)(2)(i-iii); 294.23(d)(2); 294.24(a)(2); 294.24(c)(i, ii, v) </u>	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: Q: Excellent briefing paper and appendix A for CPZ. Did you use the three criteria to identify CPZ? A: Yes, 45-60% slope sometimes you hit the ridge, others you don't. Q: The process blends IRR with Cohesive Strategy. Did Bonneville just draw the 1 mile boundary? A: The pink are is the Bonneville – they were working with topography when identifying the area. Q: Is fireline construction in WLR all handline? A: Yes; the only mechanized equipment is chainsaws. Q: In using at risk community and defining CPZ, doesn't the community generally need to be uphill for the threat to exist, rather than just being a steep slope, and was this considered here? A: Potential fire behavior along main ridges and to the reservoir, winds are highly variable due to lake effect and can come down-canyon due to eddies – this puts the communities at risk. Q: Did you document your CPZ process? A: Yes, it will be provided in the specialist report. Q: Does the project conflict with sage grouse and mule deer habitat? A: Sage grouse, no. For mule deer, IDFG reviewed the project and believe it will be beneficial. Q: Did the subdivisions come after the listing of communities? A: They don't really fall under any towns – they were built in 1960's-70's, before the Federal Register.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No <u> </u>

Project: Lower Valley Energy (LVE) Crow Creek Natural Gas Pipeline		
District: Montpelier	Roadless Area: Meade Peak, Gannett Spring Creek, Red Mountain, Telephone Draw, Sage Creek, Hell Hole	
Status: Scoping December 2017, DEIS spring 2018, ROD September 2018	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Dennis Duehren
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Construct 8-inch buried natural gas pipeline for approximately 48 miles (20 miles across NFS lands). Most of the construction will occur along existing road corridors; approximately 40 acres will be disturbed within IRAs (50 foot construction easement ROW; 20 foot SUP easement). Incidental tree cutting (vegetation is primarily sagebrush and mountain brush). No motorized access would be allowed following construction.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Exception: <u>294.24(c)(vii)</u>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Commission Discussion: There were several clarification questions regarding the map and color coding; the commission asked for better maps and to have the opportunity to comment on them prior to scoping in spring. Q: Was there litigation over a pipeline in roadless in Colorado? What happens to corridor? A: It became the right of way after road reclamation. Q: Does motorized access referred to include the public or just permittee? A: It would limit public access, but LVE would have access to maintain the pipeline. Q: Is that motorized access with a full size vehicle? A: Yes; the SUP provides for a 20-foot ROW. Q: Does the scoping document address roadless? A: It mentions that the PA will affect roadless areas.		
Action Requested: Clearer maps with higher resolution.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Project: Toponce Habitat Restoration Project		
District: Westside	Roadless Area: Toponce	
Status: Preparing to scope	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Arik Jorgensen
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Mechanical treatment and prescribed burning on 380 acres of aspen and aspen/conifer and 2111 acres of mountain brush habitat. Fuel breaks (hand cutting and mechanical) on 8 acres (4 miles x 12 feet wide). Activities are designed to improve wildlife habitat. No roads; no activities in CPZ.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Exception: <u>294.249(c)(iv,v,vii)</u>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Commission Discussion: Q: How will you treat aspen and mountain brush? A: Fell any conifers and prescribe burn in the spring.		

Q: Would mountain brush be felled by hand or masticated? A: 8 acres would be masticated; the rest is prescribed burn.		
Q: Is the 4 miles of fuel break included in the acres? A: Yes.		
Action Requested: None		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes _____	No <u>X</u> _____

Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest

Project: Forest Plan Revision		
District: All	Roadless Area: All	
Status: Developing alternatives and recommended Wilderness spring 2018	Table Location: @	Project Lead: Zach Peterson
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Ongoing process – developing collaborative process to frame up alternatives. Will be looking at Wilderness recommendation this winter.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No <u>X</u> _____
Commission Discussion: Q: What’s the status of Cool Mush and East Saddle? A: Revisiting Cool Mush at a smaller scale in 2019 – slide in Quartz Creek is an issue that needs to be addressed. East Saddle is moving forward relatively quickly – worked with CBC to bring ideas forward – commercial harvest is no longer proposed and burning has dropped from 8000 acres to 3000 acres.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u>X</u> _____	No _____

Project: Dixie Comstock		
District: Red River	Roadless Area: Gospel Hump, Gospel Hump adjacent to Wilderness	
Status: EIS – NOI and beginning of 45 day comment early 2018	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Jennie Fischer
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Previously briefed – public meetings and additional analysis has been completed and a suggested alternative has been received from CBC. There is internal discussion continuing on this project and it may change over the next few months.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u>X</u> _____ Exception: <u>294.23; 294.24</u>	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: How was the boundary drawn? A: The lines were drawn based on the community and where we thought we had the best chance of protection. The CPZ is from the EIS and we are working on refinements based on the criteria for extending the CPZ beyond ½ mile to 1.5 mile. Q: What are the IRA Themes? A: Backcountry Restoration for both.		

Q: It looks like there are a number of ridges the CPZ extends beyond – are you planning on bringing those treatments back to the ridge? A: We are looking into that.

Q: The scale of temporary road is significant. A: This is the most important community protection project on the forest. There are not a lot of communities out there to protect. There have been numerous field trip and the commission is encouraged to attend to understand the threat.

Q: Where is the temporary 1.7 miles of road construction outside CPZ and where is treatment planned? A: On the South end, the 222 Saddle, is where the extra temp road is. There is a cherry stem out to an old mining claim. This is the first line of defense. The red line is the CPZ line.

Comment: If you walk through the Process Paper, you'll discover whether or not the units fall into solution for the CPZ or not. It would be helpful, if you are speaking outside the CPZ that you reference the permission there as Significant Risk – that clarifies the permissions we are utilizing. Additionally, going through the steps of the process paper will display the rationale for the Decisions you are going to make in a very organized method and that would help with any potential litigation.

Comment: The Region supports the project and community protection. However, the project doesn't seem to adequately weight the values of roadless. The scope and scale are very large and we have asked the forest to go back and review the boundaries and the CPZ.

Q: Is there an alternative to change the IRA Theme? It doesn't seem like building 24 miles of temporary road within the CPZ makes sense when the community isn't going anywhere. If we need a road, build a road – this project is exactly why the Idaho Roadless Rule was created in the first place.

A: There is no proposal to change the Theme – this would require rulemaking.

Action Requested: Set up a field trip in spring of 2018.

Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No _____
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Idaho Panhandle National Forest

Project: Snow Peak Wildlife Management Area Prescribed Burn		
District: St. Joe	Roadless Area: Mallard Larkins	
Status: Scoping completed July 2017. Fires delayed decision – new target for decision is 2018.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Kris Hennings
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Prescribed burning on 17,260 acres in Snow Peak WMA (cooperative project between FS and IDFG) to improve browse, reduce fuels, and reduce likelihood of I&D outbreaks. No trees cut except as point-protection incidental to fire. No roads.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: 294.24(a)(2), 294.24(b)(v), 294.24(c)(vii)	No _____
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No _____

Project: Potter's Wheel		
District: Coeur d'Alene River	Roadless Area: Teepee	
Status: Alternative Development.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Dan Scaife
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Approximately 102 acres of vegetation treatment from existing roads. Approximately 56 acres proposed for shelterwood harvest to regenerate western larch and douglas fir and prep for planting of 200-300 rust-resistant white pine. The remaining 46 acres are prescribed burn, with no harvest.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.24(c)(iv) </u>	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> </u>	No <u> X </u>

Project: Boulder Creek Restoration Project		
District: Bonners Ferry	Roadless Area: Katka Peak, Mt. Willard-Lake Estelle	
Status: EA out for public comment.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Doug Nishek
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Prescribed burning on about 7000 acres. Whitebark pine would be protected through slashing and fireline – potentially up to approximately 120 acres.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.24(c)(vii) </u>	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: Q: Did this originally contain harvest units in IRA? A: Yes. Helicopter logging was proposed in the middle, but was not likely economically feasible. Q: Was any harvest near a road? A: About 300 acres of regeneration was proposed from existing roads, but this would have changed the Roadless Character, so we dropped these units. Q: How much experience do you have in terms of the effectiveness of this type of treatment in meeting your objectives – is this the right treatment, or are you just doing this because it's roadless? A: We have a few thousand acres that we recently did in Buckhorn, and we know the burn window is late fall. Prescribed fire was always a part of the proposal, we've just changed the tool we are using to accomplish the objective in order to protect roadless characteristics.		
Action Requested: Please keep us informed of the fire activity and success of the project.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u> X </u>	No <u> </u>

Sawtooth National Forest

Project: Free Gold Trailhead	
District: Fairfield	Roadless Area: Lime Creek

Status: Scoping	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Steve Frost Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Construct ATV and Nordic skiing trailhead to provide parking for existing trail. Trailhead would include parking, restrooms, signing and fencing. Also construct new trail bridge to access Phillips Creek Trail.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No <u>X</u> _____
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes _____	No <u>X</u> _____

Project: Elk Mountain East Vegetation Management		
District: Sawtooth NRA	Roadless Area: Hansen Lakes	
Status: Alternative development.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Michelle Erdie Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Prescribed fire on approximately 172 acres, mechanical treatment on 22 acres, and hand thinning, pile and burn on approximately 36 acres. Six acres of the total are thinning, pile, and burn in Primitive theme to prepare for prescribed burn. Twelve acres are hand thinning, pile, and cutting of standing dead trees adjacent to a trail in Backcountry Restoration theme to prepare for prescribed burn. Forty acres are in Forest Plan Special Area Theme (18 acres thinning and piling, and 22 acres patch cut). Access is on an existing two-track that would be decommissioned following use.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u>X</u> _____ Exception: <u>294.24(b)(1)(v),</u> <u>294.24(c)(1)(i,v)</u> _____	No _____
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u>X</u> _____	No _____

Project: Black Pine Exploration Project		
District: Minidoka	Roadless Area: Hanson Lakes	
Status: Scoping complete; analyzing alternatives.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Heidie Torrealday Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Construct approximately 4.25 miles of temporary road for minerals exploration. Drill pads and roads will result in approximately 16 acres of disturbance within IRA. All sites will be reclaimed after activity. Trees are proposed to be cut to the extent necessary to accommodate road and drill pad construction (most of the 16 acres). Timber will be scattered on site for reclamation.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u>X</u> _____ Exception: <u>294.24(c)(1)(vii)</u> _____	No _____

Commission Discussion: Q: Is any of the proposed activity on acquired lands? A: No. There is a segment of acquired lands but none of the activity is on acquired lands. Q: Is the old site within the current POO? A: No. Q: Under timber cutting, it says “it will be removed to accommodate drill pad construction, but will be left on site for reclamation” what does that mean. A: It is a minimal amount of timber – there was actually a burn and the quality of the timber doesn’t constitute sale materials.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes _____	No <u>X</u> _____

Salmon-Challis National Forest

Project: Ramey Creek Vegetation Improvement Project		
District: Lost River	Roadless Area: Copper Basin	
Status: Project is currently on hold.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Jeff Hunteman
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Approximately 196 acres of mechanical treatment (timber harvest) and 423 acres of non-mechanical (prescribed fire, with some tree cutting for site prep). Culverts and/or stream hardening would be required on a non-system road used to access harvest units E and F – the temporary road would be decommissioned following harvest. Modification of the IRA boundary is proposed to align “cherry stem” to where the existing road is located (add 48.8 acres and remove 55.4 acres from the IRA, within the same theme – BCR). Project is currently on hold – when it is picked up again it will be reevaluated for several things, including proposed activities in roadless.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u>X</u> _____ Exception: 294.24(c)(1)(v), 294.23(b)(3)(ii), 294.27(a)_	No _____
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes _____	No <u>X</u> _____

Project: Salmon Municipal Watershed		
District: Salmon-Cobalt	Roadless Area: Jessie Creek	
Status: Collaboration underway; developing P&N, PA. Scoping expected January 2018.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Ken Geghardt
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Thinning and piling of trees less than 10 inches in diameter is expected, along with prescribed burning and timber harvest. Use of existing roads and temporary construction is also expected. Specifics of the project have not been developed yet. Likely to be another Farm Bill project on the other side of the road following this one (“Stormy Creek Farm Bill”).		

Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u>X</u> _____ Exception: <u>TBD</u> _____	No _____
Commission Discussion: None.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u>X</u> _____	No _____

Project: South 21 Fuels Reduction Project		
District: Middle Fork	Roadless Area: Hanson Lake, Blue Bunch Mountain	
Status: NFMA underway, scoping completed March 2017.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Chris Waverek
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Mechanical harvest on up to 1,662 acres (primarily group shelterwood treatments leaving large trees and all trees over 18 inches). Thinning on up to 717 acres with chainsaws – cut material to be hand piled and burned. No temporary road construction or reconstruction.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u>X</u> _____ Exception: <u>294.24(c)(1)(v)</u> _____	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: Was a Proposed Action sent out? A: Yes, scoping is complete and specialist reports will be completed shortly. Q: Is this an EA? A: No, it's a CE under the Farm Bill.		
Action Requested: None		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u>X</u> _____	No _____

Project: Forest Plan Revision		
District: All	Roadless Area: All	
Status: Phase 1 – Assessment and collaborative relationships; Wilderness Inventory and Evaluation just beginning.	Table Location: 2	Project Lead: Josh Milligan
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Develop new Forest Plan for 4.3 million acre combined Salmon NF and Challis NF based on 2012 Planning Rule.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No <u>X</u> _____
Commission Discussion: Q: Is there a collaborative working with the Forest? A: Not sure to what extent they have formed, but we have received a lot of comments through the public process.		
Action Requested: None.		
Return to Next Meeting?	Yes <u>X</u> _____	No _____

Exhibit A – Briefing Paper

Idaho Roadless Rule & Forest Planning Wilderness Recommendation Process Briefing Paper for Idaho Roadless Rule Implementation Commission Meeting

Policy background:

In 2012 the Forest Service promulgated a new rule governing the land management planning process. 36 C.F.R. part 219. The rule requires forests to “[i]dentify and evaluate lands that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System and determine whether to recommend any such lands for wilderness designation.” 36 C.F.R. § 219.7(c)(2)(v). Revised in 2015, Chapter 70 of the Forest Service Handbook prescribes a four-step wilderness recommendation process: (1) **inventory** of all lands that may be suitable; (2) **evaluation** of the potential suitability (i.e., the wilderness characteristics) of the inventoried lands; (3) **analysis** of alternatives recommending areas for wilderness designation in the plan EIS; and (4) a **decision** by the forest supervisor to designate any areas as recommended wilderness. Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12, ch. 70. One of the five criteria for the wilderness evaluation step in the process is “the degree to which the area may be managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics.” *Id.* § 72.1(5). In the evaluation of manageability, one factor for planners to consider is “specific Federal or State laws that may be relevant to availability of the area for wilderness or the ability to manage the area to protect wilderness characteristics.” *Id.* § 72.1(5)(c).

The planning rule requires that any areas designated as recommended wilderness be managed to preserve their wilderness characteristics. 36 C.F.R. § 219.10(b)(1).¹

The Idaho Roadless Rule (IRR) is explicit that management direction in the rule “take[s] precedence over any inconsistent land management plan component.” 36 C.F.R. § 294.28(d).²

Issue:

Under the IRR, roadless areas allocated to most restrictive theme of Wild Land Recreation are generally consistent with existing recommended wilderness as of 2008. The process to develop the IRR also specifically recognized that it was not “recommending” or designating any Wilderness recommendation. Thus, new areas considered for wilderness recommendation through the mandatory Chapter 70 process will largely be drawn from roadless areas included in the Primitive or Backcountry Restoration themes, where limited road building, timber cutting, and mineral activities may take place. Those permitted

¹ See also Forest Service Manual 1923.03(3) (“Any area recommended for wilderness . . . designation is not available for any use or activity that may reduce the wilderness potential of an area.”); FSH 1909.12, ch. 70, § 74.1 (“All plan components applicable to a recommended wilderness area must protect and maintain the social and ecological characteristics that form the basis for the wilderness recommendation.”).

² See also *id.* § 294.28(e) (“The prohibitions and permissions set forth in the subpart are not subject to reconsideration, revision, or rescission in subsequent project decisions or land and resource management plan amendments or revisions undertaken pursuant to 36 CFR part 219.”).

activities, while discretionary in nature, would be inconsistent with management of recommended wilderness to preserve wilderness characteristics. Because they are discretionary, it is unlikely that they would be pursued, nonetheless it could be construed as a conflict.

The first two forests in Idaho to initiate planning under the 2012 planning rule and since the IRR was promulgated – the Nez Perce-Clearwater and the Salmon-Challis – are currently conducting their wilderness inventories and evaluations. In the context of those ongoing processes, questions have been raised regarding whether or how the IRR impacts the wilderness evaluation and recommendation process. In particular:

- How should the agency consider or address potential conflicts between IRR direction permitting limited road building, timber cutting, and mineral activities in Primitive and Backcountry Restoration areas and potential management of those areas as recommended wilderness?
- Is IRR direction relevant to, or in any ways in conflict with, the evaluation of “manageability” during step two in the Chapter 70 process?
- For new areas recommended for wilderness designation, what plan direction should the Forest Service include to ensure compliance with the IRR and with its obligation to manage recommended wilderness to preserve wilderness characteristics?

Previous Interpretations and History:

During development of the Idaho Roadless Rule, it was expressly understood by stakeholders, the Forest Service, the State of Idaho, and the Roadless Area National Advisory Commission (RACNAC) that the IRR would not preclude ongoing consideration of future Recommended Wilderness as part of forest plan revision processes based on new information and needs. The FEIS for the IRR (p. 356) explicitly contemplates that roadless areas – regardless of theme – will be fully evaluated and considered during the forest planning wilderness recommendation process:

“During future forest planning, roadless lands would be reexamined and evaluated for their wilderness potential. To the extent that these lands are not affected by development activities, they will be available for future consideration as wilderness. Because of the limited expected development activities across all alternatives in the next 15 years, more than 99.9 percent of Idaho’s roadless lands should continue to exhibit wilderness characteristics into the future.”

The Idaho Panhandle National Forests completed their wilderness recommendation process – under the previous planning rule and associated directives – after the IRR was promulgated. In that context, the Roadless Area Commission in 2012 issued specific recommendations for ensuring consistency between the final plan and the IRR, as well as general recommendations for future forest plan revisions including:

- “Include standards consistent with the [IRR] provisions.”

- “If the agency considers an alternative that deviates from the [IRR] the agency should acknowledge that roadless areas in Idaho are required to be managed in accordance with the Rule until it is formally amended through the change clause. As noted in the Rule, the provisions in the Rule shall take precedence over any inconsistent land management plan component. Land management plan components that are inconsistent with the Rule will continue to provide guidance for projects and activities within Idaho Roadless Areas, as shall those related to protection of threatened and endangered species (36 CFR 294.28(d)).”

Recommendation:

The 2012 letter from the IRR Implementation Commission did not address if, or how the agency should consider the IRR during the wilderness evaluation of manageability. Because the planning regulations were released in 2015, and the wilderness evaluation process is moving forward on the SCNF and NPCNF, some commissioner members feel that it would be appropriate for the IRR Implementation Commission to address what specific plan direction could help avoid or mitigate potential, or perceived, conflicts between IRR direction and management of newly recommended wilderness areas, pending (or perhaps in the absence of) a theme change.