



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## **Idaho Roadless Rule Implementation Commission**

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Chair: James Caswell

OSC Staff Support: Jace Hogg - Federal Lands Coordinator

Vice Chair: Michael Gibson

Michael Edmondson - Administrator

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## Idaho Roadless Rule Implementation Commission Members

Name	Affiliation	Appointment Length*
Alex Irby	Motorized Recreation	2 years
Dan Dinning	Boundary County Commissioner	2 years
Bob Cope	RACNAC*	2 years
Brad Gilbert	Dispersed Recreation	3 years
Bill Higgins	Timber Industry	3 years
Jonathan Oppenheimer	Idaho Conservation League	3 years
Jim Caswell	Public at Large	4 years
Michael Gibson	Trout Unlimited	4 years
Billy Barquin	Kootenai Tribe of Idaho	4 years
Alan Prouty	Mining Interests	5 years
Pete Stegner	Timber Interests	5 years
Elt Hasbrouck	Valley County Commissioner	5 years

\* All appointments were renewed in 2020 after amendments to Idaho Code 67-826 became effective

\*RACNAC stands for Roadless Area Conservation National Advisory Committee

Photo: Hoodoo Roadless Area, Nez Perce Clearwater National Forest

Photo Credit: Eric Barker

## Overview

The Idaho Roadless Rule Implementation Commission (Roadless Commission or IRC) was created by Executive Order # 2006-43 and codified in Idaho Code Section 67- 826 as amended in 2020. The members of the commission are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. Commissioners are appointed in staggered terms of two to five-years. Per the amended Idaho Code, the commission is composed of nine to twelve members. There are currently twelve members serving on the commission.

The Roadless Commission reviews, analyzes, and provides recommendations on proposed projects slated to occur within Idaho's National Forest Roadless Areas. The Commission also provides general policy guidance on proper implementation of the Idaho Roadless Rule across Idaho's 9.3 million acres of roadless areas. Major duties and responsibilities of the commission are to coordinate with the US Forest Service (USFS) and advise on projects, plans, and policies occurring within or affecting Idaho Roadless Areas (IRA), as defined in 36 CFR 294.21. As a part of its role, the commission advises on activities related to shared stewardship, Good Neighbor Authority, forest health, and the protection of communities at risk from wildfire within and adjacent to Idaho Roadless Areas. Pursuant to Idaho Code 67-826(6), the Roadless Commission is supported by The Governor's Office of Species Conservation.

## Actions Update

The Idaho Roadless Rule Implementation Commission generally holds two meetings a year to review projects and policies that affect roadless areas. In 2021, the Roadless Commission's spring meeting and fall meeting were held virtually due to ongoing concerns from Coronavirus variants. The Roadless Commission's spring meeting was held virtually on May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> and the fall meeting was held virtually November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>. Below is a summary of actions taken by the Roadless Commission over the past year.

***“ To ensure that the spirit and intent of the Idaho Roadless Rule is implemented in the state of Idaho.” – IRC Mission Statement***

The Commission reviewed 60 projects across 7 National Forests with presentations and Q & A sessions with USFS project leads. The Commission continues to use a spreadsheet to track the projects reviewed, their status, activities proposed, and other metrics.

During the Spring 2021 meeting, the Commission created a subcommittee (consisting of five commission members who volunteered) to work with the Forest Service to develop processes to update the inventory of roadless areas and potentially adjust some IRA themes. These discussions recognize that the Rule anticipates and allows for an adaptive management approach based on landscape condition. It is in best interest of all concerned that the rule remains viable as a tool for managing roadless lands into the future.

In order to better understand the background and meaning of the “substantially altered” language in the Rule and how it applies to Idaho’s roadless areas, the Commission had multiple meetings with officials from Region 1 and Region 4 and held a group discussion during the Spring 2021 meeting about further guidance from the Forest Service on that language. Ultimately, the Forest Service determined that further written guidance on the application of the ‘substantially altered’ language is not needed to administer the Idaho Roadless Rule.



Photo: Diamond Peak, Salmon Challis  
National Forest  
Credit: Larry Prescott

Lawsuit Update 1: Rowley Canyon is a 3,955-acre restoration project and treats 1,666 acres in an IRA. The Wildland Defense raised the issue in their complaint of project affects to wilderness attributes and future wilderness recommendations. The Judge granted the FS Motion for Summary Judgement which included a request for dismissal. The Judge did not specify whether or not the case was dismissed with prejudice, however.

Lawsuit Update 2: Lower Valley Energy—Crow Creek Natural Gas Pipeline, is a 48 mile, 50-foot-wide pipeline project that crosses parts of 6 IRAs. Approximately 18.5 miles are on national Forest lands. DOJ has filed a motion to dismiss due to complaint being filed in an improper venue. At the end of 2021, Yellowstone to Uintas Connection filed a Proposed Summary Judgment Briefing schedule and the Judge adopted it the next day, 12/14/21. The next deadlines are for Yellowstone to Uintas Connection to file their Motion for Summary Judgment and supporting memorandum by 3/7/22 and FS will file theirs by 4/8/22, with intervenors Lower Valley Energy and the State of Wyoming filing theirs by 4/18/22.



## 2021 Project Map

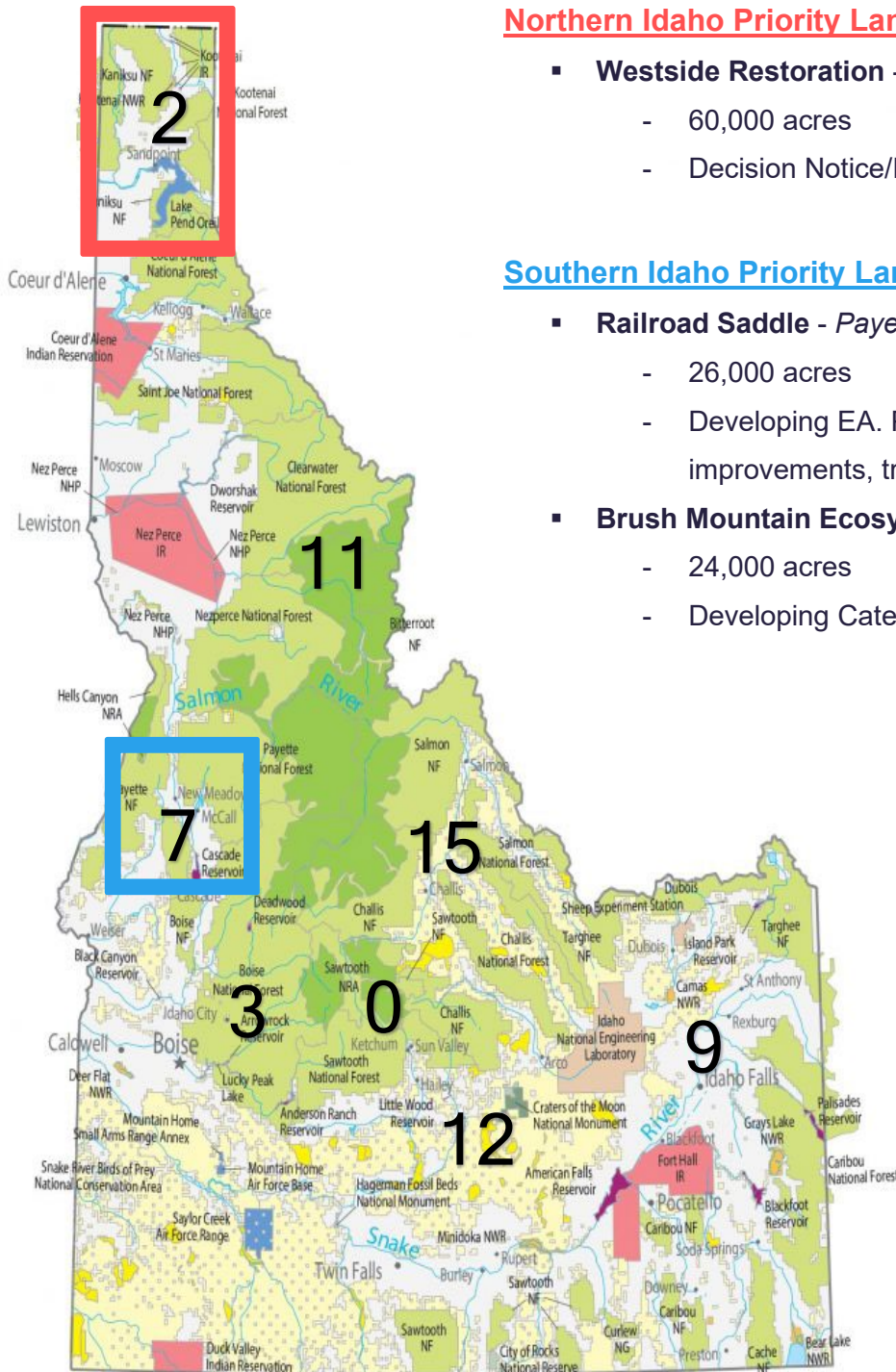
The Commission looked at 60 projects in 2021 spanning across Idaho's 9.3 million acres of Roadless. Over the past 4 years, or 6 meetings, the Commission reviewed 33 projects per meeting on average. Section 67 – 826 (3) states that the commission shall "... coordinate and advise on activities related to shared stewardship, GNA, forest health..." The Commission reviewed 3 projects within the two Idaho Shared Stewardship Priority Areas.

### Northern Idaho Priority Landscape: 621,400 USFS acres

- **Westside Restoration - Idaho Panhandle NF**
  - 60,000 acres
  - Decision Notice/FONSI published 10/28/21

### Southern Idaho Priority Landscape: 1,123,500 USFS acres

- **Railroad Saddle - Payette NF**
  - 26,000 acres
  - Developing EA. Proposed commercial harvest, watershed improvements, travel management, etc.
- **Brush Mountain Ecosystem Maintenance Burn Project - Payette NF**
  - 24,000 acres
  - Developing Categorical Exclusion. Prescribed fire.



National Forest	# of Projects
Idaho Panhandle	2
Nez Perce Clearwater	11
Payette	7
Salmon Challis	15
Boise	3
Sawtooth	0
Caribou Targhee	9
Other (Non-Timber, Roads or Minerals Small Projects)	12

## 2021 Project List

60 projects were presented by Forest Service District Rangers, with supporting resource staff brought on the call as needed to answer questions from the Commission members.

### **Non-Timber, Roads, or Minerals Small Projects**

A. Woodhead Fire Rehabilitation Project.....	Payette NF
B. McCall RD (D4) Trail Reroutes .....	Payette NF
C. Rugged Ridge Outfitters Permit Modification.....	Payette NF
D. Rapid River Wildlife .....	Payette NF
E. North Zone Upper Priest Restroom Replacement .....	Idaho Panhandle NF
F. Sawtooth NRA Outfitter and Guide Program Management Plan.....	Sawtooth NF
G. Badger Post-Fire Management Programmatic EA .....	Sawtooth NF
H. Whitebark Pine Planting .....	Nez Perce-Clearwater NF
I. Sawmill Sustainable Trail Maintenance Project.....	Salmon-Challis NF
J. Payette Lake Trail – East Side .....	Payette NF
K. West Fork Mink Trail and Watershed Improvement.....	Caribou Targhee NF
L. Leadbelt Rider's Camp Corral .....	Salmon Challis NF

### **Payette National Forest**

Stibnite .....	Update/Status
Big Creek Fuels Reduction .....	Update/Status
South Fork RAMP .....	Update/Status
East Fork South Fork RAMP .....	Update/Status
Rapid River Travel Management.....	Initial Briefing
Brush Mountain Ecosystem Maintenance Burning.....	Initial Briefing
Railroad Saddle .....	Initial Briefing

### **Caribou-Targhee National Forest**

East Palisades Hazardous Fuels Reduction .....	Update/Status
Graham Hollow Juniper Treatment .....	Update/Status
South Valley Hazardous Fuels Reduction .....	Update/Status
Caribou Prescribed Fire Restoration .....	Initial Briefing
Bear Lake West Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Restoration .....	Initial Briefing
Caribou Basin Small-Scale Gold Placer Mining .....	Initial Briefing
Mink Creek Beaver Restoration .....	Initial Briefing
Stone King Vegetation Restoration .....	Initial Briefing
Lower Wells Canyon Road Realignment .....	Initial Briefing

### **Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest**

Forest Plan Revision .....	Update/Status
South Fork Clearwater Mineral POOs .....	Update/Status
Race Cow .....	Update/Status
Green Horse .....	Update/Status
Dixie Comstock .....	Update/Status
Dead Laundry .....	Update/Status
Lost Toboggan Landscape Prescribed Burn .....	Initial Briefing
North Fork Aspen 3 .....	Initial Briefing
North Fork Ponderosa Pine Restoration .....	Initial Briefing

Ohara Wildlife and Fuels Rx .....	Initial Briefing
Red Siegel .....	Initial Briefing

### **Idaho Panhandle National Forest**

Buckskin .....	Update/Status
Westside .....	Update/Status

### **Salmon-Challis National Forest**

Forest Plan Revision .....	Update/Status
Morgan Summit TSI .....	Update/Status
Sheep Creek Vegetation Improvement .....	Update/Status
Bayhorse V2 .....	Update/Status
Big Creek Restoration .....	Update/Status
North Zone Vegetation Improvement .....	Update/Status
S-C Fuels Reduction and Restoration .....	Initial Briefing
Morgan Creek Summit Tree Collection .....	Initial Briefing
Colson Cobalt-Copper #3 Minerals .....	Initial Briefing
S-C Rock Source Project .....	Initial Briefing
Darling Creek .....	Initial Briefing
Big Gulch Forest Products .....	Initial Briefing
Navarre Exploration Drilling.....	Initial Briefing
BTAC Drilling .....	Initial Briefing
Pope Shenon Trenching and Drilling .....	Initial Briefing

### **Kootenai National Forest**

Lenexx Exploration Drilling.....	Initial Briefing
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### **Boise National Forest**

Payette-Ola C Allotment Bull Trout Protection .....	Initial Briefing
Southwest Idaho Resilient Landscape (SWIRL) .....	Initial Briefing
Tamarack Resort Special Use Permit .....	Initial Briefing

### **Sawtooth National Forest**

*No projects*



#### **Home**

#### **About OSC**

The Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation (OSC) is dedicated to planning, coordinating and implementing the State's actions to preserve, protect and restore species listed as candidate, threatened and endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). This work is done in coordination with the State's natural resource agencies and input from the citizens of Idaho, while taking into consideration the economic vitality of the State. The OSC provides constituent services for state, federal and private stakeholders seeking assistance with ESA issues.

***The Roadless Commission website is now hosted through OSC's webpage [under the planning tab.](#)***

## Next Steps

The Commission plans to meet in person for the spring 2022 meeting, with a possible hybrid component if the Forest Service is still not allowed to meet in person at that point in time due to COVID 19. The Commission will complete the normal project reviews and may address one or more of the following policy questions with the Forest Service.

- The subcommittee on inventory and theme adjustments will begin meeting regularly with the Forest Service this year. The first meeting is scheduled for January 31, 2020.
- The Commission will add a new permeant agenda item to the regular biannual meetings beginning this spring. There is interest in reviewing projects that have been or are being implemented to evaluate how well objectives are being met. This is a learning opportunity for everyone. The Commission is particularly interested in focusing on prescribed fire projects.
- The Commission will plan a field trip this summer to tour old project sites in IRAs as well as sites that are under consideration for treatment.
- The Commission will be recommending to the Governor candidates to backfill or offer the reinstatement of the three commissioners that are at the end of their two-year appointments.



Upper Palisades Lake, Caribou Targhee National Forest

Credit: Jacob Stapleton