



IDAHO ROADLESS COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED 2008

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Idaho Roadless Commission Meeting

NOTES

October 29-30, 2018
Boise National Forest, Supervisors Office

Introductions

Commission Members present: Bob Cope, Jonathan Oppenheimer, Brad Gilbert, Alan Prouty, Bill Higgins, Michael Gibson, Dale Harris, Jim Caswell, Dan Dinning, Alex Irby, Billy Barkland

Forest Service: Nora Rasure, Julie Schaefer, Brian Riggers, Leann Marten, Bruce Anderson

Idaho State: Sam Eaton, Mitch Silvers, Mike Roach, Mike Hanna, Rena

Peter Stegner

SECTION I: Welcome and Briefing

Travel forms were circulated to the group and welcomed Rena to the Office of Species Conservation; she replaced Terry McRoberts.

There was some conversation about the Act and whether individuals wanted paper copies. Everything gets circulated electronically, but some did request paper copies. There were those who responded to a call prior to the meeting for provisions of paper copies; not having to produce 20 copies saves paper.

Open Meeting Law

We are under a new situation with the Statute that has been passed, and the Open Meeting Law applies under Executive Order. Legislature changed the statute, so we have some new rules. There are a few new things to comply with and Counsel will advise the group.

It adds a layer of formality creating transparency. No later than 5 days prior the meeting will be announced and no later than 48 hours for agenda changes. At the end of the meeting we'll move to indicate which projects want to be returned to a meeting. There can be motions and counter-motions and there can be "no" votes that can be recorded if requested.

- *Does that affect Forest participation?* The Forest is not on the Commission and this is a discussion, think of it as being ex-parte participants. We can include your input, you just cannot vote.
- *Does this impact the Sunshine Law or Freedom of Information Act?* Everything is public. Previously we weren't subject to Open Meeting Laws, but we are now. Communications to the Commission must be done at meetings; there cannot be email "question and answer" sessions as this does not allow for public input.
- *Is posting an issue?* It was posted downstairs and we are working to get this on the Forest Service website in the future. People in the Washington Office aren't "web page people", but we'll get it figured out.
- *Website and presence?* We'll have to work through this. The Washington Office didn't get it posted for the Forest Service.
- *What about the Action Items?* We could take that as an Action, but historically we haven't taken a vote on whether we endorsed a project or not. Today, we can take a different tact and indicate whether a project conforms to the Rule. We should vote after each forest presents and "move to carry forward X and Y projects" to the next meeting. If we don't need to see a project carried forward, don't include it.
- *What about projects being compliant with the Idaho Roadless Rule?* Don't want to have motion on whether projects meet rule or not – that's not the role of the IRC.
- *What about public comment?* Public comment should be made available at the end of the meeting or at the end of each day if meetings are split between days.
- *Does the Chair have the authority to allow public comment at project specific times?* That would be a call for the Chair; I would encourage at the end, but if the Chairs elect to do so they can.
- *Technically, we are an Advisory Committee and ultimately I do not believe we are here to approve or disapprove projects; we are here to advise the Governor on particular projects. Ultimately, it is the Forest Service's role to make the determination.* I would suggest that we continue on the road we have been on. If the Commission wants to support a project,

intervening for example, they can make that recommendation that a project is consistent with the Rule and recommend that the Governor's Office Intervene or otherwise.

- *Was there a formal decision on that?* Through the project development and hearings before the Commission, we know fairly well what we think about the project. This Commission focuses on the words, the application and use of those words and we'll learn more each time we meet about the language involved with the Rule.

We have made the gathering information for this evening and everyone is invited to the event. There are about 45 people who have RSVP'd to the event.

Purpose and Mission of the Idaho Roadless Commission

The members discussed the original purpose and mission of the Commission as it relates to the implementation of projects and the relationship to the original RACNAC.

At the same time, Commission members want to ensure that we don't overstep the bounds of the Roadless Rule. We can recommend whatever we want, but ultimately the Forest Service will make the decisions on a project.

The Agency is the decision maker, we understand that and they have to ultimately balance their workload to accommodate or postpone projects.

Other discussion / Topics for Future Discussion

There was a meeting of several IRC members in Grangeville in July prior to the Dixie Comstock field trip. Alex, Alan, Bill Jonathan, Jim, Sam, Nora, Christine, Brian, Julie, and Dale were at the meeting. Jim didn't send out notes after meeting but will send them out shortly. Update on roles and relationships with IRR. Agreed we need to review and update the MOU, which expires in a year. Ex: no need to have all the words about cooperating agency status. IRC wants more input on prioritization/strategizing of where and when projects occur. Agreed that IRC would provide FS with a set of issues they would like to provide input on.

Papers were circulated to the group for reference

Would it be helpful to have a request information on the Cohesive Strategy and how it relates to the Roadless Rule? That's one you can send in for more information and discussion.

On the meeting with the Forest, for those of us who were able to participate, it was good to hear the comments and questions by the Forest staff and it was a highly informative process. We'd like to get back to where we are periodically doing that.

Forest Health and Community Protection

It was suggested to take a look across the Idaho Roadless Area and identify those communities that are present, evaluate some of the potential risks for discussion and identify those areas that may need a strategic discussion.

Doesn't the CWPP should already prioritize the areas for highest risk?

Please send feedback, comments and questions to the Chairs of the Commission.

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:

Forest/IRA/Theme	Project	Activity	Notes
Payette/Hells Canyon/Seven Devils/PMTV	Big Bar to Cuprum underground line replacement	Replace existing underground electric distribution line.	Direct plow, hand bury on steep ground. 6 miles of line replacement
Payette/Secesh/BCR	Midvale Telephone Co. buried phone line	Amend existing SUP to install additional buried line along centerline of Burgdorf Road for <1/2 mile.	Disturbance all in existing road bed on Rd. # 50480
Payette/Cottontail Point, Pilot Peak/BCR	Sisters water system SUP	Issue new SUP for existing water system for domestic water.	Spring box, settling box, 2000 feet of buried water line in area previously disturbed by '96 flood.
Caribou-Targhee/Reynolds Pass, Mt. Jefferson, Winegar Hole/GFRG, BCR, PMTV	Ashton/Island Park Eight Allotment Range Analysis	Reauthorize livestock grazing on 138,983 acres in Upper Henrys Fork, Teton subbasins	Expected decision May 2019.
NezPerce-Clearwater/West Fork Crooked River/BCR	Orogrande adjacent property	Allow adjacent landowner to yard across unit 8 and haul on temp road in Orogrande project	DM signed July 7, 2018
Idaho Panhandle/Salmo-Priest/FPSA	North Fork Hughes white pine planting	Plant white pine on 220 acres burned in NF Hughes fire.	
Idaho Panhandle/Grandmother Mountain, Mallard-	Fire recovery reforestation	Plant approximately 5700 acres burned during 2015.	

Larkins, Pinchot Butte, Selkirk/BCR, WLR			
Salmon-Challis/Jesse Creek/BCR	City of Salmon Water System SUP	Re-issue SUP for existing water system.	Only POD is inside IRA.
Salmon-Challis/Italian Peak/BCR	Hawley Creek Watershed Stream Restoration	Bank stabilization with rootwads, boulders and willow planting.	Logs/rootwads and willows obtained outside IRA.

“Move to carry forward ...xx.. project for review at next Commission Meeting.....” would be an example of how Commission Members could ask to send a project forward.

Hearing no motion to carry any projects forward, we will now proceed with Individual Projects.

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 Winter 2018; Objections Fall 2019, Decision Winter 2020	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>XX</u> Exception: 294.24(c)(1)(vii)	No
Commission Discussion: Q: have you determined which alternative will be preferred?		

A: No, we have not.
 Q: 14 miles and how many within an IRA?
 A: Approximately 4
 Q: What is the timing now?
 A: We anticipate a decision in Winter 2020
 Q: Where is this project?
 A: All of it is within Valley County, maybe a small portion in Idaho County
 Q: Are they cooperating in the NEPA process?
 A: Yes, they are part of the Collaborative group creating the initial proposal to start the project.

Action Requested: None

Project: Stibnite Gold		
District: Krassel	Roadless Area: Burnt Log, Black Lake, Meadow Creek, Caton Lake, Horse Heaven	
Status: Refining Proposed Action; Developing range of 3 Action Alternatives; Draft EIS in spring 2019; FEIS/ROD mid-2020	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 - XX Exception: _294.23(b)(iii); 294.24(c)(vii)___	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: Any changes relative to the Burntlog route and the trail for full-size vehicles? A: Midas has come up with a section of reroute of Burntlog Route and is still their preferred route beyond the mine site. We are also reviewing an alternative to provide public access through the mine site, but there are complicating factors. That Alt might be considered to get the public through the site and to points beyond without putting public on Burntlog Route. Not necessarily changes to PA, but changes to address Roadless issues.		
Action Requested: Need further clarification of proposal from MIDAS and forest		

Project: MIDAS Geophysical Investigation

District: Krassel		Roadless Area: Horse Heaven, Meadow Creek	
Status: Analysis in progress; Decision 2/18, One year Plan of Operation	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. They are completely done with 8 hole drilling and were complete in March. There are no plans for future drilling. Not all 62 holes were drilled. The plan doesn't expire until February 2019, they could technically do more work.			
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No - XX	
Commission Discussion: 8 holes drilled in Feb/March. Didn't do all holes, but got the info they needed. No more work in IRA. Q: Essentially it's done? A: Yes			
Action Requested: None.			

Project: Huckleberry Landscape Restoration Project			
District: Council		Roadless Area: Rapid River, Indian Creek, and Hells Canyon/Seven Devils IRAs	
Status: Scoping Sep 2016; new ID Team; Alternatives developed; currently in analysis; DEIS Feb 2019; FEIS Jul 2019; ROD Sep 2019	Table Location: Table 2 (NEW)	Project Lead: Mark Fox	
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:	
Project Summary: Vegetation treatments including non-commercial, commercial, meadow restoration, Whitebark pine restoration, fuel breaks and Rx burn. Soil treatments include road decommissioning and storage. Fisheries improvements include culvert replacements, road relocations and road graveling. Wildlife habitat and recreation improvements are included.			
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes – Exception: 294.24(a), 294.24(b)	No	
Commission Discussion: Q: Is this all in Roadless? A: A lot of it is not in Inventoried Roadless, small portions of each. 12,700 are proposed for non-commercial and thinning. We are not excluding Rx burn except RNA in Bear Creek. Q: Is there Commercial operation outside of Roadless? A: Yes, there is harvest and non-commercial treatments. Treatments are Whitebark Pine restoration and restoring meadows (hand felling) of larch encroachment. Q: The figures 1-4 are difficult to read, figure 5 is better A: These are preliminary maps put out with Scoping, we will have better maps with the DEIS and as we update on next briefing.			

Q: Figure 2 and Figure 4 have diagonal polygons, are those IRA?
A: Correct, the SW portion is Indian Creek, the NW portion (black line) is Hells Canyon 7 Devils and the most in NE section is Rapid River.
Q: Scoping in 2016, I assume planning was done under 2012 Rule?
A: If there are any amendments, then yes – otherwise, no
Q: How does Adams County CWPP included and prioritized
A: It’s entirely included; prioritization would have to be looked into. Those are two CPZ’s in the Project Area, but not sure how they fit into County priorities. Adams County is on our Collaborative in the planning process and they helped to prioritize the order of the projects.
Q: The adjacency to Roadless to Communities – is there any issue with doing any handwork?
A: Community Protection Goals can be achieved and the IRA’s are not immediately adjacent. The one of concern is Indian Creek due to weather patterns, storms and winds move SW to the NE and with those basins create a concern for fuels. However, that area is non-forested ground and doesn’t have a lot of timbered fuels, it’s mainly grasslands. We are proposing Rx fire, but the other 2 IRAs are not of great concern.
Q: This is all wildland Recreation and Primitive?
A: Correct, 2 are Primitive and one is Wildland Recreation

Action Requested:

Project: Big Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project		
District: Council	Roadless Area: Big Creek Fringe, Placer Creek, Smith Creek, Cottontail Point/Pilot Peak, and Secesh.	
Status: Scoping Beginning July 26, 2018	Table Location: Table 2 (NEW)	Project Lead: Justin Pappani, Joshua Simpson
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: create and maintain an area of reduced fuel loading and continuity and wildfire risk on NFS lands. Approximately 2,250 acres of mechanical treatments consisting of commercial and non-commercial thinning, using tractor, jammer or skyline systems, or mastication. Approximately 550 acres of non-commercial thinning within Riparian Conservation Areas using hand treatments and pile burning. Approximately 7,800 acres of natural fuel prescribed fire burn blocks. Based on Scoping Comments we’ve added 1,084 of mechanical thinning, split out 939 acres of mastication or hand treatment, and 522 acres of hand thinning within harvest EAs.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes – Exception: 294.24(B)(1)(iii), 294.24(c)(1)(i)	No
Commission Discussion:		
Q: Under the PA, the bottom table shows the changes in the acreage?		
A: We haven’t broken that out yet. Those acreages shouldn’t change considerably. There is commercial and non-commercial, but the big change will be whether it’s mastication or hand treatment. As for acreage within IRA, that shouldn’t change. The implementation tool has changed, not the acreage.		
Q: One of the topics we raised in comments are patents were identified without structures, are they still CPZ?		

A: They aren't part of designation, but are private property which we have some responsibility to protect and they are outside IRA.

Q: This is an EA or EIS?

A: EA

Q: Is there a map that shows the pile burn within Roadless or outside?

A: It's a mixture of both, under the PA it's more of a breakdown where the acreage occurs inside versus the outside of Roadless.

Q: what kind of biomass Tons per Acre for mastication treatment? Is that realistic Rx?

A: Some of it is not ideal, but it's the best treatment tool we have. Mastication is the best tool we can see fit rather than full removal.

Q: Why is that?

A: Based on issues raised by Comments and lack of infrastructure – steep ground and limited access.

Q: There are a fair number of riparian in the roadside treatments?

A: Correct. It is hard to look at on the map scale, but everything not identified as hand piled is outside the RCA's, that's the 300 foot buffer. Everything within the buffer is identified will receive PCT hand treatment – 522 acres.

Q: ArE those ESA critical habitat?

A: they are

Q: Administrative sites –is the main FS site at the guard station?

A: yes, and a couple of dispersed campgrounds.

Action Requested:

Motion to bring projects forward: RAMP, Stibnite, Huckleberry and Big Creek

Second

Discussion on motion: Please provide photography of the mastication. I am having trouble visualizing the treatment feasibility. We do have a couple of masticator heads on the forest. There is Lodge Pole, Fir, Spruce, Mixed Conifer, and Subalpine Fir

Revised motion to bring projects forward: South Fork RAMP, Stibnite, Huckleberry and Big Creek

Second and passed

Caribou-Targhee National Forest

Project: Rowley Canyon		
District:	Roadless Area:	
Status: Preparing for Scoping and have identified PA	Table Location: Table 2	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary:		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes Exception:	No _____
<p>Commission Discussion:</p> <p>Q: to maintain this, how long before re-entry? A: the area has not been treated in the recorded past, with fire cycle we are expecting 20-40 years Q: this is not sage grouse habitat? A: we have seen sharp-tails within the area. Management area is identified as Big Game Winter Range and that is what is being promoted.</p> <p>There would be mechanical work by chainsaw and Rx fire, but where allowable on slopes we would like to perform mastication. Treating approx. this is a wildlife habitat project</p>		
Action Requested: None		

Project: Dairy Syncline Mine, Reclamation Plan and Land Exchange		
District: Soda Springs	Roadless Area: Huckleberry Basin	
Status: DEIS Nov 2018; 90 day comment; FEIS Jul 2019; ROD Oct 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 Exception: _294.25(e)(1)_	No _____

<p>Commission Discussion: Q: Anything new? A: No, must an update on DEIS being released in a couple of weeks</p>
<p>Action Requested: None</p>

Project: East Palisades Hazardous Fuels Reduction

District: Palisades	Roadless Area: Palisades	
Status: No updates. Initial planning phase. 2018 field season collected additional data. Scoping early 2019.	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. Fire lines 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> </u> 294.23(b)(2)(i-iii); 294.23(d)(2); 294.24(a)(2); 294.24(c)(i, ii, v) <u> </u>	No <u> </u>
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Commission Discussion:
Q: The temp roads are within the IRA?
A: Yes, they are not indicated on the map
Q: They are within the BCR theme?
A: Yes
Q: Which are the Roadless Units?
A: Unit 1, 2, 4 & 6 all fall within BCR in the Palisades IRA.
Q: There are 7 units, 7 of which are mechanical treatment. Each unit is going to have a piece of the road?
A: Yes, but not all units fall within IRA, the only portion construction in IRA are indicated above and the rest are outside the boundary.
Q: Is unit 7 outside the boundary?
A: Yes, Figure 1
Q: Has this Scoped yet?
A: No, just internal discussions – looking at early 2019 Scoping
Q: Can we change the 2018 comments to 2019?
A: More or less, yes
Q: There was a demo project done, was that a precursor to this project?
A: You are thinking of Rainy Creek, which is a separate project, separate area – same District and that was authorized for a test area that did some Rx burning this fall and implemented the test patch but they have not gotten back to the original PA. That was in a different area.
Q: Unit 1 is inside or outside of a CPZ? Map on page 6 and on page 9 is confusing.
A: I can’t say for certain that Unit 1 is in a CPZ, but I have to verify. **Please follow up**

Action Requested: None.

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, Comments not controversial; FEIS April 2019; ROD Jul 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 <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.24(c)(vii) </u>	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: Q: There was concern whether there would be long term access to area? A: No, there would not be		
Action Requested: Clearer maps with higher resolution.		

Project: Bridge Creek Forest Management Plan		
District: Soda Springs	Roadless Area: Caribou City and Snow Creek	
Status: initial planning phase Scoping- Oct/ Nov 2018; FONSI/Decision- Jun 2019	Table Location:	Project Lead: Kevin Norrgard
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: treat approximately 11,000 acres over next 10 to 15 years in the BCFMP project area. The project area may be split into several smaller projects that have different focuses (e.g. burning vs mechanical) as we move through the planning process. It is proposed that 9,000 to 10,000 of the treatments take place within one of the two IRAs. There are two general vegetation treatments being proposed within IRA. The treatments have been designed to address the purpose and need, to improve the overall condition of the forested ecosystem.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes - XX Exception: 294.23(2); 294.24 (1) (c) (i, iv, v, viii)	No <u> </u>
Commission Discussion: Q: is that considered road construction?		

A: no, it is an existing road, an unauthorized one
 A: we did have a discussion on user-created roads, and construction on a user created road and that fits within the construction. If you have to bring it up to standards, that would be considered construction; unless you use it unimproved.
 Q: any feedback from the recreation community?
 A: Scoping has not been done yet, so no

Action Requested: None

Return to Next Meeting?

Yes

No

Motion to bring projects to next meeting: East Palisades, Bridge Creek

Amend to include LVE Pipeline, Dairy Sincine

Motion Second

Discussion

Dairy Sincine is special notation

Rule Modification would be required to change the Rule Boundaries, along with modifications of map areas. There have been multiple changes since the Rule was adopted.

Substitute motion to include Dairy Sincine

Motion second, passed

As it relates to the CPZ identification

Mike Hanna: there appears to be some confusion on the identification of CPZ areas.

I believe those areas were supposed to be developed in conjunction with the CWPP's of the counties. There is a process to add those.

Communities would then step forward and claim their CPZ's.

Meeting adjourned for the day

October 30, 2018

Day 2 of 2

Return Welcome and Introductions

Commission Members present: Bob Cope, Jonathan Oppenheimer, Brad Gilbert, Alan Prouty, Bill Higgins, Michael Gibson, Dale Harris, Jim Caswell, Patty Perry, Dan Dinning, Alex Irby, Billy Barkland

Forest Service: Nora Rasure, Julie Schaefer, Brian Riggers, Leann Marten, Bruce Anderson

Idaho State: Sam Eaton, Mitch Silvers, Mike Roach, Mike Hanna, Rena

Peter Stegner

Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest

Project: Forest Plan Revision		
District: All	Roadless Area: All	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead: Zach Peterson
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
<p>Project Summary: Framed up Alternatives after a series of Collaboration meetings that were well attended. We’ve framed Alternatives that we will be carrying into analysis – range of “No Additional Recommended Wilderness” to a “Substantial Amount of Wilderness” and the Roadless Areas have remained static, no changes. We’ve been working with groups to resolve specific issues and concerns, with the largest concern being how Recommended Wilderness Areas would affect over-snow motorized and trail maintenance. Alternatives have different geographic areas and within those alternatives there are differences in how what would be non-conforming uses if they went to recommended wilderness and what would happen. We also have the Roadless Rule language and how that governs the management, recognizing that FPR doesn’t supersede the IRR.</p>		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No <u> X </u> _____
<p>Commission Discussion: Q: In the alternatives, is there additional roadless being considered? A: No Q: If you do change the theme, will this body have to approve that? A: we aren’t proposing any theme changes in this process. Q: you could potentially recommend areas that aren’t Wildland Recreation? Would it make sense, in the long term to make those consistent with management themes?</p>		

A: We did not limit the areas to only Wildland Recreation, our alternatives do include from Back Country Restoration to Wildland Recreation.

Q: Bighorn will be managed as Back Country until such time as we want to align the Rule. That takes Rule Making and that takes the Chief's decision.

A: Correct, based on CFR

Discussion –

- The promulgated Idaho Roadless Rule supersedes the Forest Plan, it does not. For example, Big Horn Weitas is Recommended Wilderness and say it's signed – the Forest Supervisor could say "I really want to do a Community Fuels Reduction Project" and reduce fire risk, and she could probably do that. It would probably be litigated, but she could do that. We should align the rule with the Forest Plan; we don't have to rush in and create chaos, but after the Plan is revised we should align it. It makes sense to prevent having inconsistencies. It doesn't govern chainsaw use or prescribed burning, it governs road building and timber cutting.
- In subsequent project decisions or land management decisions, if they don't align, we need to make a conscious decision to manage the area under the theme. What is the risk if you're going to implement – because you don't have a Community – what could you use? Ecological functions, maybe you could make a case. Maybe there is a T&E thing that comes along, but what is the likelihood? It's pretty remote. You can't just forget about it, that's that point. The Rule trumps the plan – it's in black and white.
- There is layering for all rules, we don't harvest right up to a stream and ignore Riparian Restoration Areas because there is a Roadless Rule – you can't remove prohibitions as part of a plan. You can't say that other rules don't apply – there are always rules and planning tools that must apply. I don't think that it's necessarily incompatible because we deal with rules on every project we do.
- I think you're confusing the Rule with Policy. It's laid out exactly what the Rule applies to and we should confuse the underlying issues.
- If we had Bighorn Weitas under BCR and there is an exception where the unit is on both sides of the canyon, we wouldn't harvest that unit as one single unit we would do it as two as there are layers – whether Plan Direction or Roadless Rule.
- We need to be sure, be on the same page.
- It's important when doing Forest Planning and analysis that you get into this, but you must be transparent in your process and indicate that there may be an underlying Roadless Rule themes and I think there needs to be more analysis in the FPR process so that the IRA is not just acknowledge, but applied.
- It's critical to document the analysis behind the designation.
- What happens if in FPR it is inconsistent with the IRR?
- To quote the IRR, it's important to note that the IRR does not make Recommended Wilderness it makes a framework for management of the landscape.
- The fact that Rule Making makes sense to align the IRR with the FPR, it should not become an impediment to making those changes. It's clear, as land management plans move forward there is a method to align those landscapes where perhaps (Salmon Challis for example) there are landscapes that don't fit the criteria for Roadless.

Q: Were the Roadless Areas included in the suitable timber base?

A: None of the Roadless Areas are suitable for timber production, but they could be suitable for timber harvest based on other constraints. Generally the BCR got applied the lowest assumption that

we could put into the model. BCR has mapped as suitable for harvest and WLR is mapped as unsuitable.

Q: What about Primitive?

A: Suitable for timber harvest because there is the permission for the Rule, but the model showed it as zero and technically it's suitable for harvest because there is permission in the Rule.

Q: On the BCR in Primitive, that was the full extent of those areas and not just adjacent to roads or CPZ?

A: Yes, that was the full extent.

Action Requested: None

Project: Dixie Comstock

District: Red River

Roadless Area: Gospel Hump, Gospel Hump adjacent to Wilderness

Status:

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. Communities in and around Dixie are being considered, with potential actions being reviewed. There are multiple authorities within the Rule and different delegated authorities.

Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?

Yes X _____

Exception: 294.23; 294.24

No _____

Commission Discussion:

Q: What tools will you use? Farm Bill?

A: Yes, if any are options we will consider them. We've gone back and done modeling surrounding fire risk and reviewing that with respect to options. It's new information.

Q: Can the handouts at the tour be distributed?

A: Yes

Action Requested:

Motion to bring both projects back

Discussion – if we can get an update or briefing on Dixie in the interim that would be preferable

Motion carried

Idaho Panhandle National Forest

Project: Snow Peak Wildlife Management Area Prescribed Burn		
District: St. Joe	Roadless Area: Mallard Larkins	
Status:	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. Did complete surveys this last summer, but due to a fire the surveys were a year late and that pushes the project out by one year. It's currently on hold due to funding for the NEPA process.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u> X </u> Exception: <u> 294.24(a)(2), 294.24(b)(v), 294.24(c)(vii) </u>	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: on the map, the proposed treatment units there are more mortality units and higher intensity A: we plan on burning beetle kill areas, but we won't burn multi-story habitat. Some polygons will shrink slightly.		
Action Requested:		

Project: Boulder Creek Restoration Project		
District: Bonners Ferry	Roadless Area: Katka Peak, Mt. Willard-Lake Estelle	
Status: Draft EA out for 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 fire line – 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 _____
Commission Discussion: Q: How many proposed units in Roadless along Boulder Creek? A: Adjacent to road, approximately 6 or 200-300 acres in the Katka or north of Boulder Creek Q: on the map there are units for harvest? A: Yes, but they are not in Roadless Q: how many acres of harvest does this project have? A: Black polygons, outside of roadless, about 3,000 acres Q: Is the Rule an impediment – when those harvest units were withdrawn was it because they were in Roadless? A: by last April, or early spring, we were too far along the line with analysis that we would have to go back with an EIS and revisit and rescope the project. With our timeline for such few acres, we decided to get what we could.		

Q: was that due to the Roadless or other factors?

A: between our horsepower and capacity, by the time we went out with an EA and the Forest Supervisor went out with the 10 points of significance we would have had to restart the whole process and the budget and timeline prevented that. We weren't afraid of the Roadless area. The condition and integrity of the land and resources came first and we went through the procedure and protocol and kept to the spirit of the Rule.

- Jeanie Higgins – over the last several months we released the final EA and Decision Notice and through Objections were received by Alliance by the Wild Rockies. After review there were no further instructions and the ROD was issued yesterday.
- Was the objection in relation to Roadless? It covered many topics, including lynx, Roadless and a variety of other issues. The conclusion of the review was that the analysis was adequate and complete and the ROD was issued.
- It's important to acknowledge that there were efficiencies realized in this process and it was a straightforward process.
- I'm concerned that it's becoming a defacto policy that we don't harvest in IRA
- From the Region level we recognized some level of frustration and breakdown in communication and there were decision made and we'll move forward to put work on the ground. There is no defacto policy that prevents harvest adjacent to Roadless.

Action Requested:

Non project specific discussion:

- There are costs associated with these alternatives, those that do not include harvest
- Until we utilize all the alternative tools, we don't know.
- We all have resources at our disposal to analyze research papers, walk through the woods, analysis of fire and prescribed burn – the Roadless purview of projects under the Rule – let's look at what's happened after 10 years under the Rule.
- My concern is that provisions of the Rule are not being utilized; they are being underutilized and refrained from.
- Yesterday there was a discussion paper circulated, at one of our meetings we should have the RO's and FS's come forward and talk to us about their perspectives and potentially review a couple of projects that had prescribed fire versus commercial harvest. Maybe we take a field trip and review those project outcomes.

Sawtooth National Forest

Project: Elk Mountain East Vegetation Management		
District: Sawtooth NRA	Roadless Area: Hansen Lakes	
Status: Alternative development. Awaiting concurrence from SHPO	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), 294.24(c)(1)(i,v) </u>	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: It appears you will be hand piling and burning about 12 acres? A: we have some trails we wish to burn for control lines, that is associated with being adjacent to the trails we will be using as control features. Q: This is in BCR? A: Yes, 12 acres in BCR and there are also 6 acres in Primitive Q: Rather than thinning and burning, could it be mechanically treated? A: no, because we'd have to build roads and cross riparian areas, causing issues Q: There is good firewood potential A: yes, and we have areas where we are trying to identify where we can provide firewood. One unit we did make firewood available for the public at the roadside, locals were very happy with that.		
Action Requested: None.		

Project: Albion - RAFT		
District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead: Scott
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Aspen restoration project using prescribed fire and hand thinning. 4500 acres designed for burning and 1200 acres of hand thinning. 1 acre in BCR and 1,560 in General Forest for broadcast burning. Cut, hand pile and burn 4 acres in General and 500 acres of lop and scatter. Timber sale is outside of Roadless Area. No road construction proposed.		

Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: on the drop, lop and scatter we found that when it isn't removed immediately it will burn much hotter if conifers are not removed they will take out an aspen stand if fire comes through. A: yes, it's primarily small doug fir that has come up, but we will pile and burn to get rid of it. Cope recommended taking the lopped trees out so that they wouldn't create more of a fire hazard in the aspen stands and then lose the stand. Scott said they factored that into the project.		
Action Requested: None.		

Motion to not return either project

Second

Motion passed

Salmon-Challis National Forest

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. Work is in progress and the first timber sale will be offered in 2019.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes <u>X</u> _____ Exception: <u>294.24(c)(1)(v)</u> _____	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: The Decision authorized maintenance of existing roads within Roadless? A: We pulled all the roads out of that Q: The Briefing Paper we have says otherwise A: We would have to follow up to be certain Q: As we discussed yesterday, maintenance on user created roads A: on existing FS roads, we can maintain to a road management level, but we cannot increase or make improvements to the road. We can maintain it to the design level. But the discussion yesterday was regarding user created roads that would be decommissioned after. Q: when considering effects and doing analysis, was there a court decision that said you should not only analyze the project but effects of not doing the project? A: that sounds like HFRA authorities, which have No Action explored		
Action Requested: None		

Project: Forest Plan Revision		
District: All	Roadless Area: All	
Status: Moving into plan component analysis	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> _____
<p>Commission Discussion:</p> <p>Q: Are you performing an inventory to evaluate Roadless boundaries or new areas?</p> <p>A: we are doing an inventory to determine if there are to be wilderness recommendations, but we are not exploring Roadless themes or boundaries</p> <p>Q: you are going to make it part of the analysis?</p> <p>A: your conversation from this morning is timely.</p> <p>Q: as you're looking at management themes of the FPR, as it relates to the IRR, a transparent analysis of both themes and how they affect each other.</p> <p>A: it should be an interesting discussion</p> <p>Q: when does the forest deal with the inaccuracies of the boundaries?</p> <p>A: I cannot answer the when, but we are aware that there are several mapping errors across the forest that could be agreed upon for correction or amendment.</p> <p>Q: how did that happen?</p> <p>A: now we are ground truthing them, per project, per the FPR</p> <p>Q: is there anyone on the Commission that doesn't think we should ground truth and/or perform a GIS exercise to review boundaries? It should be brought forward, logically, during this timeframe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couldn't you use the directives from Chapter 70 and put those in perspective after the Planning Process; otherwise it would make the plan process too lengthy • The FPR is when you gather the information, the process of correcting the boundaries is a separate item • Wouldn't it be more efficient forest-by-forest rather than project-by-project • That's what Chapter 70 is all about • Is this an appropriate place to send a letter to the Supervisor indicating that this is an opportunity to inventory the Roadless Areas – there will be areas that should be incorporated and those that should be dropped. • There were 30 areas in the North Zone and only 2 of them didn't have roads <p>A: there are two different questions. The 2012 Rule arrives at the question if something is suitable or not and the process is driven to answer that question. The Roadless question is different; you would be expanding the analysis because it's more of an advanced question – proper boundaries, proper characteristics, etc.</p> <p>Q: isn't the first cut of that analysis whether it is roadless?</p> <p>A: no, you look at roads, buffer them out and look at major improvements and buffer those out and then look for 5,000 acres.</p>		
Action Requested: None.		

Project: Salmon Challis Conifer Encroachment		
District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: authorize 200,000 acres of conifer removal and sagebrush step, incorporating 22 roadless areas and 2 themes – BCR and Primitive. Hand labor, use of existing roads with lop and scatter or if heavy fuels it would be thin, pile and burn.		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception:	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: the rule reference would be timber sale, cutting and removal – are you actually going to remove? A: there could be a little, but it’s mostly cutting with very low commercial potential. Some could occur near FS system roads with public access and we would encourage firewood use. Q: isn’t a fair amount of that in general forest? A: some of that could be in the Panther Creek area. Q: south of Napoleon Ridge? A: yes, quite possibly we could be looking in there. Q: you are just starting Scoping? A: Scoped in March 2018 and we do have comments (generic) related to Roadless, mostly procedural and related to the scope of the project as it relates to the significance of roadless. Q: how many acres in Roadless? A: don’t have specific answer at the moment, but over 50% in Roadless. There is no timeline on this with the exception of changed circumstances.		
Action Requested: None.		

Project: Arnett Creek Drilling		
District:	Roadless Area: Haystack	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary: Under 1872 Mining Law, for information only		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: ___	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: in certain laces, where the ground is frozen we conduct activities – is that a practical thing to consider?		

A: if necessary, to minimize impacts, but a lot of cases are in areas that are high and dry already. We can require that, but typically we don't have to.

Q: instead of building a temp road, if they do this over snow during the winter, therefore avoiding the need for temp road construction

A: it's conceivable, but that puts an extra burden on the operator to make that happen as they then need to perform extra work to get through the snow. It also presents a hazard.

A: it depends on the landscape, the deepness and the drilling rig – some are more mobile than others. Sometimes the steepness of the area prevents it, and then you add snow.

Q: you mention there were cultural resource concerns, so some roads were changed; we have some flexibility in terms of reasonable access and the feeling is that people want to make sure we have done all we can to protect the Roadless characteristics and to consider all those

A: all mineral administrators ensure that operators avoid those changes to the resource

Q: are we exploring for gold?

A: 4 of the 6 are for gold, 2 are for cobalt

Action Requested: None.

Project: Little Deer Exploration Drilling

District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary:		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: ____	No _____
Commission Discussion:		
Action Requested: None.		

Project: Retrack Placer

District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary:		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: ____	No _____
Commission Discussion:		

Action Requested: None.

Project: Moose Drilling Exploration		
District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary:		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: __	No _____
Commission Discussion:		
Action Requested: None.		

Project: Rabbit Drilling Exploration		
District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary:		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: __	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: is Panther Creek rehabilitated? A: yes Amanda Kreewok is now the contact for project		
Action Requested: None.		

Project: Sweet Repose Drilling Exploration		
District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:

		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary:		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No _____
Commission Discussion:		
Action Requested: None.		

Sweet Repose is a CE and Moose may be a CE if company will restrict operations to one year, otherwise they will all be EA's due to length of proposed operation or length of road construction.

For Moose and Sweet Repose will be batch scoped within the next week or two

About a year from now they should be about wound up? NEPA for them should be, yes

Project: Bear Creek Stream Restoration		
District:	Roadless Area:	
Status:	Table Location:	Project Lead:
		Link to Project Briefing Paper:
Project Summary:		
Does Proposed Activity require use of an Exception?	Yes _____ Exception: _____	No _____
Commission Discussion: Q: relocating the boundary would allow this road? A: once constructed we believe we can manage under the IRR, but we did include in the briefing as something we could look into. But it's a small addition; there is a larger problem that needs to be dealt with. Q: the road now is Level 2? A: Yes, and will be same class of road		
Action Requested: None.		

Motion to bring Forest Plan Revision, Bear Creek Stream Restoration, Salmon-Challis Conifer Encroachment back to next meeting

Second

Motion carried

Jessie Creek

The Upper Salmon Municipal Watershed project was signed a month ago and will implement soon. It's conservative management, water source for city of Salmon and taking a conservative approach – combination of thinning and Rx burning with roughly 500+ acres per year.

Public Comment / Discussion

- It's been requested that information and training regarding subjects discussed by the Commission be disseminated in a thoughtful manner. Perhaps separate the meeting into application of the Rule and projects – maybe Subgroups – but something that makes it more efficient.
- If you are having questions or are hearing the decisions are being made outside of the Rule, bring that to the Regional Office attention.
- It's been 4-5 years since we've performed an educational series to Line Officers and there has been significant turnover and change.
- We don't want to give the impression that we avoid areas where there is Roadless, but we are prioritizing our actions according to what the landscape needs and according to the resource.
- We need to ensure that we allow sufficient time to review questions and concerns surrounding the technicalities of the Rule.
- The value of bringing projects to the Commission is to uncover the various layers associated with the Rule and to understand them. There is an element of education with what we do.

Motion to adjourn

Second