

File Code: 1920
Date: April 20, 2022

Dear Interested Party,

The Idaho Panhandle National Forests (IPNF) have completed a Biennial Monitoring Evaluation Report (BMER) as required by the 2012 Planning Rule at 36 CFR 219.12(d). It evaluates monitoring questions and indicators presented in the Land Management Plan (LMP) monitoring plan chapter, in relation to management actions carried out in the plan area. Providing timely, accurate monitoring information to the responsible official and the public is a key requirement of the plan monitoring program.

Monitoring results are evaluated to make *findings* on the status or existing conditions of plan components selected for monitoring. Based on the findings, *recommendations* can be made for changes needed in forest plan direction, such as plan components or other plan content that guide management of resources in the plan area (e.g., forest plan, management activities, monitoring program, or forest assessment). The BMER is designed to provide the necessary information to help the responsible official determine a course of action based on the recommended management adjustments of this BMER. *It is not a decision document.* Future management decisions with appropriate environmental documentation may occur based on the BMER recommendations.

This BMER did not result in any recommendations for changes to the language of the current IPNF forest plan. Recommendations were warranted for changes in the monitoring programs and management activities. A summary of the findings and recommendations can be found in Table 1 of the full 2021 biennial monitoring report for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, which is available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/ipnf/landmanagement/planning>.

Based on the BMER recommendations for changes to the monitoring plan, administrative changes are proposed for public notice and consideration of comments [36 CFR 219.16(c)(6)]. A summary of the administrative changes is provided in the attached table; a more complete discussion of the proposed administrative changes to the monitoring plan and recommended changes to management activities is available in the full report.

Comments on the BMER findings and recommendations and/or the proposed administrative change may be sent to comments-northern-idpanhandle@usda.gov. Comments will be accepted through May 25, 2022, allowing a minimum of 30 days as provided in Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 (Section 21.5). *(Please note: This is a different comment method than provided in an earlier notification letter dated April 18, 2022, because there were technical issues associated with using that method. As a result, the comment due date has been changed to ensure the public has a full 30 days to comment.)*

Administrative changes are not subject to the objection process (36 CFR 219.50). After consideration of comments, the proposed changes to the LMP Monitoring Plan will be finalized



and become effective upon signature of the responsible official (Forest Supervisor), and published to the Idaho Panhandle National Forests website identified above.

If you have questions about the BMER, please contact Michelle Caviness, IPNF Ecosystems Staff Officer (michelle.caviness@usda.gov).

Sincerely,

CARL PETRICK
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure: Proposed Administrative Modifications to the IPNF LMP Monitoring Plan