



## Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

903 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

Kamiah, Idaho 83536

Media Contact: (208) 983-5143

lasmith02@fs.fed.us

[www.fs.usda.gov/nezperceclearwater](http://www.fs.usda.gov/nezperceclearwater)



## Clearwater Basin Collaborative

Media Contact: (208) 935-5565

Elayne Murphy

[www.clearwaterbasincollaborative.org/](http://www.clearwaterbasincollaborative.org/)

# News Release

## Clearwater Basin Collaborative group receives Abraham Lincoln Honor Award

Kamiah, Idaho (November 18, 2015) – The Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC) group was recently recognized with the Abraham Lincoln External Partnership Honor Award (formally known as the Secretary of Agriculture’s Honor Award) for their thoughtful, deliberative problem solving that resulted in accelerated restoration and ecological, social and economic benefits for the citizens of North-Central Idaho.

Convened by Idaho Senator Mike Crapo in 2008, the Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC) has changed the tone of public dialogue regarding forest management in North-Central Idaho. The group has collaborated on dozens of restoration projects, including Farm Bill priority landscapes, and built public support for active management within the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests. Consequently, the Forest Service has accelerated restoration activities.

Cheryl Probert, Forest Supervisor for the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests shared, “I am very pleased that the leadership of USDA has selected the Clearwater Basin Collaborative for this national honor. This group of dedicated people has volunteered their time to help the Forest work through issues and get a tremendous amount of good work done on the ground while supporting the economic and social well-being of this area. Through collaboration, cooperation, and better understanding of people’s viewpoints, the CBC provides a valuable perspective on management of the National Forest.”

Dale Harris, CBC Co-Chair said, “This award recognizes and honors nearly 8 years of hard work by members of the Clearwater Basin Collaborative, the Forest Service, the State of Idaho, Nez Perce Tribe, the Idaho Delegation and several other agencies and individuals. As one of the Co-Chairs of CBC it was humbling and as well as an honor to travel to Washington DC and personally receive this national recognition on behalf of all the people who have committed to the economic and ecologic

health of the Basin through their own time and efforts. While we still have a lot of work to do, it is important to pause and reflect on how much has already been done.”

CBC and the Forest Service worked together to bring a Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) project to the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest. This program has provided funding for critical restoration and economic development needs since 2010 and will provide five more years of funding. There have been measurable benefits as a direct result of the CBC’s efforts including creating and maintaining jobs through terrestrial and aquatic restoration providing employment opportunities for rural residents.

To address the diverse groups of their member’s interests, the CBC formed six subcommittees that examine any and all opportunities for meeting their mission.

- Landscape Health and Forest Policy Subcommittees work to understand management problems and develop solutions that improve, restore, and sustain forest and aquatic health in the Forests. The CBC is operating as a resource for the Forest Service and has been instrumental in supporting projects and funding for programs like the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program and Agricultural Act of 2014 (Farm Bill).
- Land Allocation Subcommittee is studying a variety of potential legislative land protection designations for the landscapes.
- Rural Economies Subcommittee is developing options for vibrant and sustainable economies. They are working on a package of options to increase economic stability now and into the future; including diversification of the timber industry and development of the capacity for outdoor recreation.
- Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative Subcommittee has convened partners with an interest in wildlife management to design an effective wildlife habitat improvement strategy based on monitoring and sound science.
- Recreational Uses Subcommittee is developing options for quality recreational opportunities for all forest users which supports communities and protects forest health.

With their diverse interests, the CBC works with the Forest Service to develop and refine restoration projects so the agency has broad-based public support to successfully implement the projects. As the result of their successes in supporting restoration on the Forest, the CBC was instrumental in the Forest being chosen for one of the initial CFLRP projects. CFLRP requires a successful collaborative being in place in order to compete. The Selway-Middle Fork Clearwater Project was a joint effort by Forest Service and the CFLRP provides for critical funding for restoration work. This funding leverages funding and in-kind service from partners (e.g., Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Nez Perce Tribe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Montana Conservation Corps, Selway-Bitterroot Foundation, Backcountry Horsemen and others) for a total contribution of over \$7.5 million over the last five years.

Additionally, “success builds success” with the Regional Office recognizing that the Forest is a good investment and has funded accelerated restoration the last two years which increased timber production from 40 million board feet (MMBF) to 60 MMBF and met critical restoration needs.

The success of the CBC has resulting in more opportunities to the local residents and visitors to the Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forests in terms of jobs and recreation.

The Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP project involves terrestrial and aquatic restoration in the Selway and Middle Fork Clearwater Rivers. This project was a product of collaboration between the CBC and Forest Service; collaboration is a requirement of the program. From 2010 to 2014, the Forest has received more than \$16.1 million with additional leveraged contributions from partner funding and in-kind matches and product value match of more than \$7.8 million.

In 2013, the CBC partnered with the Forests to conduct a pilot youth work program on the Forests. The pilot program included field-based work projects and instruction for six local youth on several aspects of natural resource management. In 2014, the CBC and Forest Service partnered with Idaho Dept. of Labor to offer an 8 week paid youth work program for 20 youth in three communities— Kooskia, Elk City and Pierce. The 2015 program provided employment for 20 youth, expanded to the community of Orofino, and added another partner in the US Army Corps of Engineers. The youth program exposes youth to natural resource career opportunities and develops practical problem solving skills while working along CBC, Forest Service and Corps of Engineer specialists on projects that restore aquatic and terrestrial habitat and promote healthy rural communities. The Clearwater Basin Youth Conservation Corps was recently recognized as the State of Idaho’s “2015 Outstanding Project” by the Idaho Resource Conservation and Development Association.

###