

# NEWS RELEASE

Pacific Northwest Region - Colville National Forest  
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## *Draft Revised Forest Plan Available For Public Comment and Review*

**Colville, WA** –The U.S. Forest Service is seeking public comment on the Draft Revised Forest Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Colville National Forest released today.

The collaborative development of the draft plan spanned more than 10 years and was shaped by the best available science, current laws and public input gathered at over 60 public meetings and more than 15 public community-based work groups. These meetings identified the core values of local communities and highlighted the many points of agreement that exist among diverse participants.

“This draft plan is a huge step forward for the management of the Colville National Forest,” said Colville National Forest Supervisor Rodney Smoldon. “Many years of hard work and collaboration have resulted in a draft plan that we believe provides an effective balance for the multiple demands on the forest’s natural resources and public services.”

The Colville National Forest (CNF), working in partnership the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (U.S. Institute, [www.ecr.gov](http://www.ecr.gov)), will offer a variety of opportunities for public participation throughout the remainder of the CNF’s forest plan revision process.

Between February 19 and May 19, 2016, the Forest Service will be sharing information about the draft plan and analysis reports in a variety of settings. Members of the public will have online opportunities to learn about the proposal via interactive webinars, on-line open houses and the Forest website, all of which are designed to help people understand the proposal and how to submit comments on the draft plan. In addition, listening sessions where members of the public will be able to provide verbal comment, are planned for later in the comment period.

Additional meeting information will be announced via news releases, notices to the mailing list and also posted to the [project website](#) once details are available.

The documents released today are available for download and review online at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/colville/plan-revision>.

These documents are also available for viewing at Colville National Forest offices in Republic, Kettle Falls, Colville, Newport and Metaline Falls, in addition to the Forest Service Information Desk at the Spokane District BLM in Spokane. Community libraries will also have copies for viewing.

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The 90-Day comment period starts February 19, 2016, with publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register, 2016. The comment period will close on May 19, 2016. Electronic comments on the draft plan and DEIS should be submitted to: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?project=45826>

A limited number of compact discs or paper copies of these documents may be requested by phone 509-664-9247 or email: [colvilleplanrevision@fs.fed.us](mailto:colvilleplanrevision@fs.fed.us).

To assist in the tracking and analyzing comments we are asking people to submit electronic comments to the web database system noted above. However, written comments will be allowed if you are unable to submit electronically: Colville National Forest, Forest Plan Revision, 765 South Main St., Colville, WA 99114.

**Background:** Much has changed since the current forest plan was approved in 1988. Even though amendments have been made to the plan over time, the current forest plan does not fully reflect the current needs of the forest and neighboring communities. National forests are required by law to have a forest plan, and to update or revise their forest plans.

The national forest faces many challenges including increasing demands for multiple uses on the Colville National Forest and development of surrounding lands. The draft plan lays the foundation to address the ecological and social needs of forest stakeholders, while continuing the legacy of protecting water and restoring forests that began a century ago with the Weeks Act.

The management direction in the draft plan addresses the needs to: supply clean water; restore and maintain ecosystems; improve the resiliency of forest vegetation to disturbances and potential climate change effects; provide financially and ecologically sustainable access to the forest; offer a diversity of recreation opportunities including remote settings; and utilize best available science.

The goal is to provide an improved forest plan that better reflects the current and future needs of the forest, wildlife and plant species, as well as the needs of people who live near and enjoy the beauty of the Colville National Forest. We encourage everyone with an interest in the management of their national forest to check out the project webpage to learn about and comment on the draft plan.

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*The mission of the US Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. Recreational activities on our lands contribute \$14.5 billion annually to the U.S. economy. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world.*



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