



**Roadless Area Conservation: National  
Forest System Lands in Idaho**

**Proposed Rule**

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## Outline of the presentation

- Overview of the proposed rule
- The draft Environmental Impact Statement
- How you can help

Remember this is a Draft Rule –

It can be improved with your help!



## The proposal and purpose

- State Petition submitted by the Governor of Idaho and accepted by Secretary of Agriculture, as recommended by the Roadless Area Conservation National Advisory Committee (RACNAC)
- Provide State-specific direction
- Integrate local management concerns with national objectives
- Protect roadless values and characteristics



## Proposed action – Idaho Roadless Rule

- Designates a system of lands called “Idaho Roadless Areas”
- Establishes five management themes for individual roadless areas
- Provides prohibitions and limited permissions for
  - Road construction and reconstruction
  - Mineral activities
  - Timber cutting, sale or removal
- Provides for modifying designations and classifications.



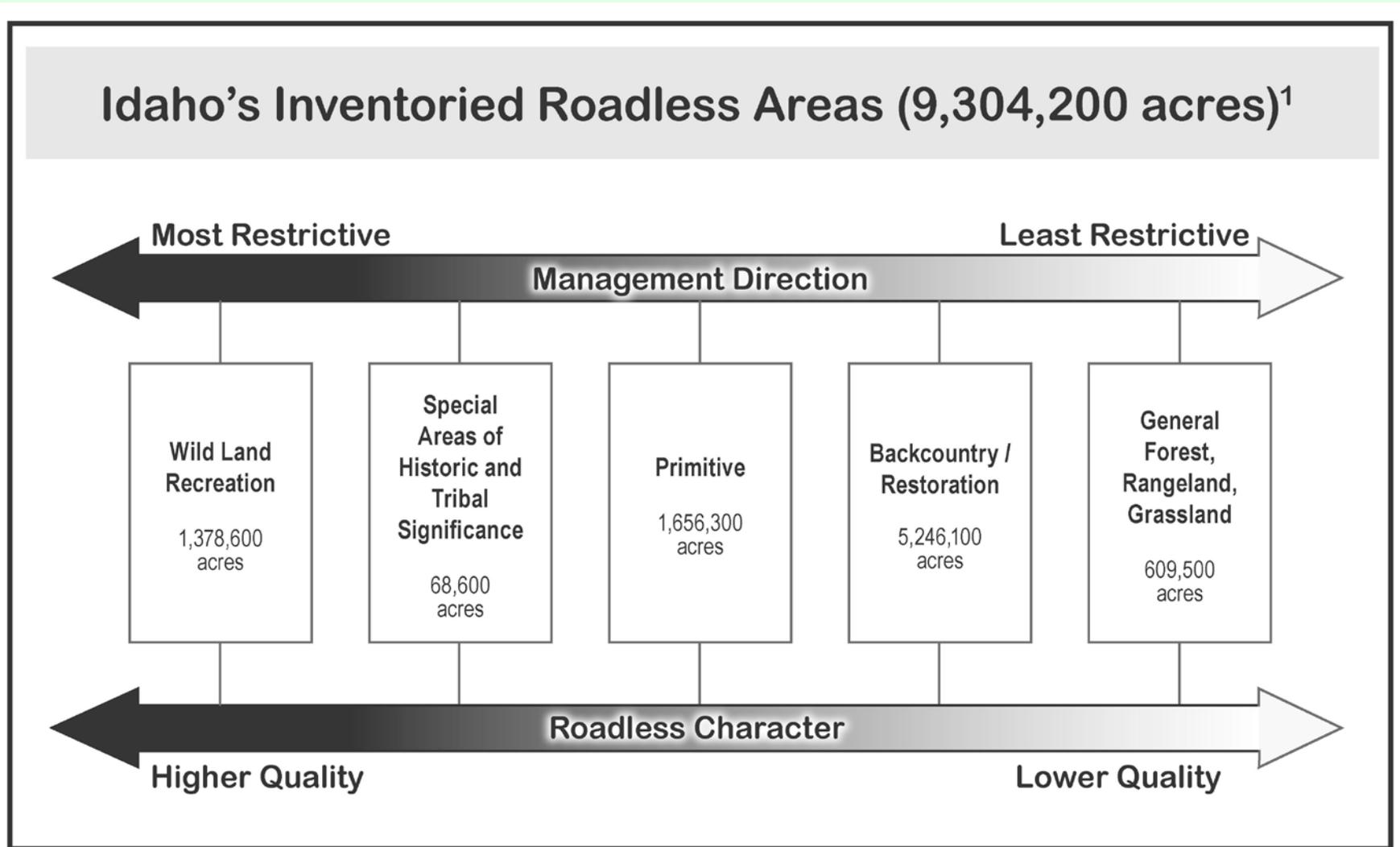
## The Proposed Rule does not apply to:

- Status of existing roads or trails
- Grazing
- Motorized equipment and mechanical transport
- Locatable minerals
- Appropriate management response to fires
- Existing rights including responsibilities to Tribes

**Any activities permitted still require environmental review – and consistency with Forest Plan standards and guidelines**



# Idaho Roadless Area Continuum



<sup>1</sup> 345,100 acres of forest plan special areas will be managed in accordance with applicable current and future forest plans

## Wild Land Recreation (1,378,600 acres)

- Lands show little evidence of human-caused disturbance
- Natural processes predominant
- Road construction/reconstruction – prohibited
- Timber cutting – prohibited
- Mineral activities – surface use and occupancy – prohibited.
- More protection than 2001 Rule





# Special Areas of Historic or Tribal Significance (SAHTS) (68,600 acres)

- Relatively undisturbed by human activities
- Natural processes predominant
- Three areas
  - Pilot Knob
  - Nimiipuu and Lewis and Clark Trails
  - Pioneer Area
- Road construction/reconstruction – prohibited
- Timber cutting – permitted to a very limited degree
- Mineral activities – surface use and occupancy – prohibited.
- More protection than 2001 Rule



Idaho Roadless Meeting



## Primitive (1,656,300 acres)

- Relatively undisturbed by human activities
- Natural processes predominant, but allows for limited forest health activities
- Road construction/reconstruction – prohibited
- Timber cutting – permitted to a very limited degree
- Mineral activities – surface use and occupancy – prohibited.
- More protection than 2001 Rule



## Backcountry/Restoration (5,246,100 acres)

- Retain undeveloped character
- Provide for a variety of recreation opportunities
- Permit limited forest health activities
- Similar to 2001 rule but further addresses needs to protect communities, homes and property from the risk of severe wildland fire





## Backcountry/Restoration (5,246,100 acres)

- Road construction/reconstruction – generally prohibited – but has 7 situations where permitted
- Routine timber cutting – prohibited
- Forest health timber cutting – permissible if it maintains or improves one or more of the roadless characteristics
- Mineral activities – road construction/reconstruction prohibited, except for those associated with phosphate leasing
- Surface use and occupancy for mineral activities-permitted



## Stewardship roads in Backcountry ....

Permits limited road construction only when needed  
 “to protect public health and safety in cases of”:  
 + ***significant risk*** or  
 + “***imminent threat***  
 of flood, fire or other catastrophic event that,  
 without intervention, would cause the loss of  
 life or property”; or to facilitate forest health activities  
 permitted under timber cutting

Purple from 2001 Rule, Green from HFRA



## Stewardship roads in Backcountry for forest health activities permitted when

Timber cutting will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless characteristics and is needed for one of the following:

- “To improve threatened, endangered, proposed, or sensitive species habitat; or
- To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure” or to reduce the significant risk “of wildland fire effects”.

Purple from 2001 Rule, Green from HFRA



## Backcountry – roads and timber cutting

- Reducing significant risks before they become imminent threats to communities helps the Forest Service be a good neighbor.
- The proposed rule incorporates concepts established under the 2003 Healthy Forests Restoration Act.
- Not intended for routine forest management.
- There must be a “significant risk” present to warrant an activity.
- Not every acre is at significant risk and not every acre at significant risk will be treated.
- Road construction is not the objective – it is a tool to be used only when there are no reasonable alternatives.



# General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland (609,500 acres)

- Provides a variety of goods and services
- Broad range of recreational activities
- Conservation of natural resources
- Road construction/reconstruction – permissible
- Timber cutting – permissible
- Mineral activities – permissible

About 87,000 acres more in GFRG than was identified in the Petition



## Accommodating change to roadless area boundaries or management themes

- Provides process for minor or significant changes
- All changes require public notification
- Two-tiered approach
  - Correct technical errors; or changes beyond the scope of this proposed rule
  - Mechanism for modifying boundaries or management direction
    - 30-day notice
    - If determined to be significant, notice and comment rule-making would be undertaken

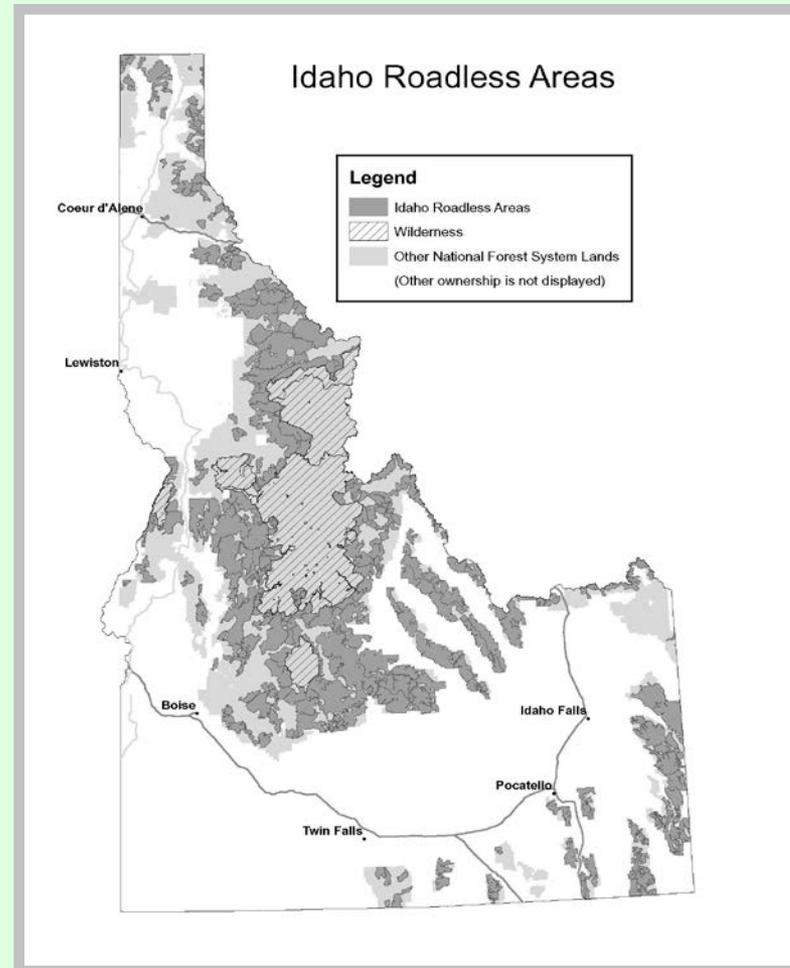


## Summary

- FS and State are committed to conserving and managing Idaho Roadless Areas
- State-specific rule allows state-specific consideration of the needs of these areas
- Recognizes national values and local situations
- Provides more protections based on the unique values
- Provides for more flexibility to address values at risk

# Draft Environmental Impact Statement

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# DEIS alternatives

- 2001 Roadless Rule
- Existing Forest Plans
- State Petition as presented by Governor Risch – Idaho Roadless Rule



## Environmental analysis assumptions

- Focusing on changes from no action.
- Focusing on roads, timber harvest and minerals.
- Budgets are projected to continue a downward trend, meaning roadless area projects are a low priority.
- Past and future activities in Idaho Roadless Area's are projected to be quite limited.
- There is no attempt to limit or change existing rights.





## Idaho Roadless Rule theme and equivalent themes for the 2001 Roadless Rule and Existing Plans (in acres)

Theme	2001 Roadless Rule	Existing Plans	Idaho Roadless Rule
Wild Land Recreation	0	1,320,800	1,378,600
Primitive	0	2,131,400	1,656,300
Special Areas of Tribal and Historical Significance	0	0	68,600
Backcountry/Restoration	9,304,200	4,244,500	5,246,100
General Forest, Rangeland, and Grassland	0	1,262,400	609,500
Other Lands – The Petition would not apply to these other special areas			
Forest Plan Special Areas	0	345,100	345,100
	9,304,200	9,304,200	9,304,200



# Projected road construction/reconstruction

Projected miles of road construction/ reconstruction activities; yearly average	2001 Roadless Rule	Existing Plans	Idaho Roadless Rule
Permanent - other	0.8	0.8	0.8
Temporary - other	0.2	0.2	0.2
Reconstruction - other	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>
Permanent – timber	0	4	0.0
Temporary – timber	0	2	1.5
Reconstruction - timber	0	5	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>
Decommissioning	1	4	3
Net Change	0	8	1



# Projected timber cutting

<b>Projected timber cutting</b>	<b>2001 Roadless Rule</b>	<b>Existing Plans</b>	<b>Idaho Roadless Rule</b>
timber harvest yearly average (MMBF)	0.5	14	4
timber harvest yearly average (acres)*	100	2,800	800

\* based on the assumption an average of 5 MBF/acre would be harvested.



## Implementing projects under the Idaho Roadless Rule

- Projects screened at Regional level
- Forest Service works collaboratively with the State implementation commission to develop projects consistent with the rule
- Projects undergo full environmental analysis
- Projects are required to be consistent with forest plan direction that provide sideboards on project design.



## Specific request for public comment

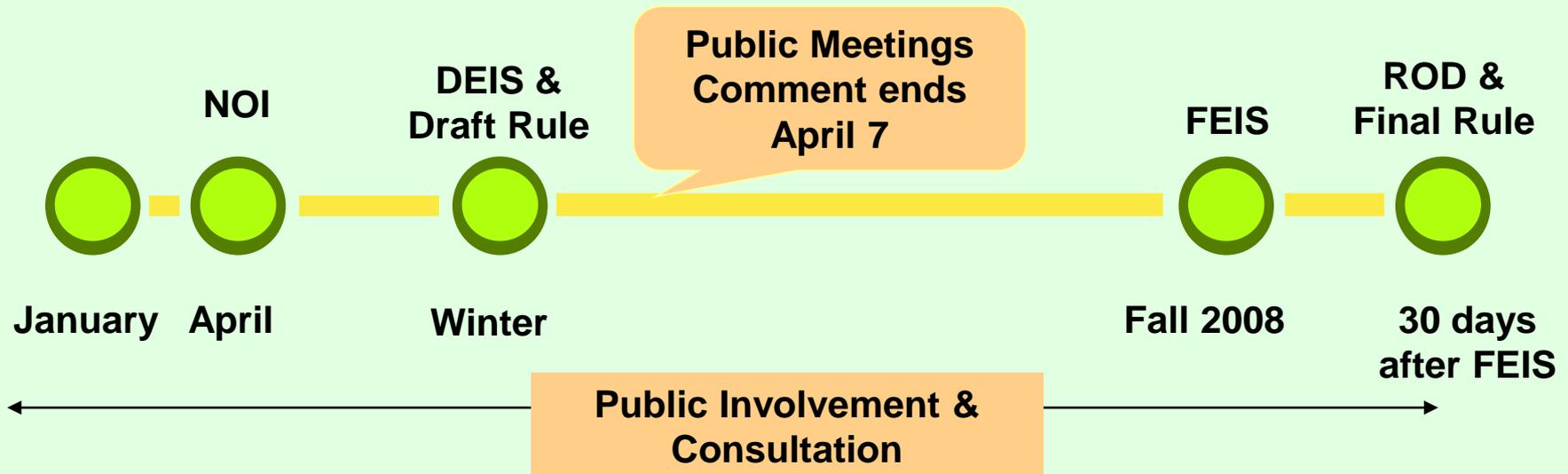
- To what extent should the FS allow building roads for the purpose of conducting limited forest health activities in Backcountry?
- Are the limitations on sale of common variety minerals and discretionary mineral leasing appropriate?
- Will the proposed mechanism for administrative corrections and modifications be sufficiently adaptive for the future?





# Projected Schedule

- Notice of Intent April 2007
- DEIS and Draft Rule published Jan 2008
- FEIS Published Fall 2008
- ROD and Final Rule Published Fall 2008





# Questions?



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