

## How to Participate in the Forest Plan Objection Process

- In order to object to the revised Forest Plan, you must have previously submitted substantive formal comments related to the Plan revision during the public comment periods. Objections must be based on previously submitted substantive formal comments attributed to the objector unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the opportunities for formal comment.
- The 60-day objection period begins with the publication of a Public Notice in the Newspapers of Record (the *Coeur d'Alene Press* in Coeur d'Alene, ID and the *Missoulian* in Missoula, MT) and the issuance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), revised Forest Plan, and Draft Record of Decision (Draft ROD). . Notice will also be posted on the plan revision web page and in the Federal Register. A letter or email stating that these documents are available will be sent out to those people and organizations who have submitted formal comments on the Plan revision. The documents will be available hard copy, on DVD, or on our web site. .
- If you wish to object to the analysis in the FEIS, to the revised Forest Plan, or to the Draft ROD you must do so in writing during the objection filing period, which is the 60 days following the publication date of the public notice in the Newspaper of Record (Note: time extensions are not allowed). The objection must be sent to the Reviewing Officer (the Associate Deputy Chief) in the Washington Office of the Forest Service. The address and contact information are found in the Public Notice, in the letter or email sent to the public, and at the end of the draft ROD. If the objection is sent via email the objector will receive an email confirming receipt of the objection.
- The objection must contain the following information:
  - The objector's name, address, and or email address if available;
  - Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection);
  - Identification of the lead objector, when multiple names are listed on an objection. Verification of the identity of the lead objector if requested;
  - The name of the plan revision being objected to, and the name and title of the responsible official (for this plan revision, this is Faye Krueger, Regional Forester, Northern Region);
  - A statement of the issues and/or the parts of plan revision to which the objection applies;
  - A concise statement explaining the objection and suggesting how the proposed plan decision may be improved. (Note: This information is very important because it will help to set the tone and agenda for the meeting discussions.) If applicable, the objector should identify how the objector believes that the plan revision is inconsistent with law, regulation, or policy; and
  - A statement that demonstrates the link between prior substantive formal comments attributed to the objector and the content of the objection, unless the

objection concerns an issue that arose after the opportunities for formal comment. (Note: The objection procedure regulations require this linkage for issues raised in objection.)

- Once the objection is received by the Reviewing Officer it will be reviewed to determine if it contains the necessary information and if the objector commented on the draft Forest Plan. The Reviewing Officer will confirm receipt of the objection, and accept, partially accept, or set aside the objection in writing.
- After the 60-day objection filing period ends, a 90-day objection review period will begin.. The review period may be extended at the discretion of the Reviewing Officer. If there is a time extension the Reviewing Officer will notify all parties.
- Within ten days after the close of the objection filing period the Responsible Official (Faye Krueger, Northern Regional Forester) will publish a Legal Notice in the Newspapers of Record and on the revised Forest Plan web site listing those people and organizations who have objected to the revised Forest Plan. This Legal Notice will also ask for those members of the public who wish to be considered an “interested person” to send a request to the Reviewing Officer. The contact information will be contained in the Legal Notice. There is a 10-day period to make this request. An “interested person” is someone who may, or may not have objected or commented during the Forest Plan Revision process, but who has an interest in supporting or opposing a submitted objection.
- One or more meetings, via teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or in person, will be held with the Objectors, Reviewing Officer, Responsible Official, Interested Persons, and Forest Staff during the objection reviewing period to discuss each objection. All parties will be notified of the meeting time(s), location(s), and any necessary conferencing contact information. These meetings are open to the public.
- At the end of the objection reviewing period the Reviewing Officer will issue one or more written responses to each objection. The written response(s) will set forth the reasons for the response, but is not required to be a point-by-point response. It may contain instructions to the Responsible Official. The written response will be the final decision by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the objections.
- Once the Reviewing Officer has issued the response to the objections, and the Responsible Official has followed any instructions contained in the written response, the Responsible Official may sign the final ROD for the revised Forest Plan.
- For more detailed information on the objection process, see [36 CFR 219 Part B](#).