

**Scoping and 30-Day Opportunity to Comment  
On the ‘Notice of Proposed Action’  
USDA Forest Service, Sawtooth National Recreation Area, Sawtooth National Forest  
Warm Springs Placer Plan of Operations  
Custer County, Idaho**

The Sawtooth National Recreation Area is analyzing a Plan of Operations submitted for placer mining activity on the Warm Springs Placer unpatented mining claim located on lands administered by the Sawtooth National Recreation Area Forest in Section 29 of T 11N, Range 16 E, Custer County, Idaho. The proponent and associated claimants propose to camp near the mining claim and engage in placer mining activity as a group on specified weekends throughout the summer.

The Warm Springs unpatented mining claim is located on the east side of the Salmon River between Torrey’s and Snyder Springs on lands administered by the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. The area is accessed via Forest Road 454 from Slate Creek. The unpatented mining claim has valid existing rights predating the designation of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area.

Mining activity is to consist of excavating soil and rock using hand tools, rakes and shovels within the boundaries of the unpatented mining claim. No placer mining will occur below the high-water mark of the Salmon River. Material would be classified according to size and transported using 5 gallon buckets and wheelbarrows to a designated area for panning and sluicing. The amount of material to be moved is estimated at ¼ - ½ yard per day. The operator is proposing to draw water from the Salmon River. All panning and sluicing would take place away from the river. Waste water produced from the gold panning would be discharged into a depression on the claim and processed sand and gravel would be used to backfill and reclaim depressions and diggings.

A detailed proposed action description and other information are available for review at the Sawtooth National Recreation Area Headquarters Office. Additional information regarding this action can be obtained from: Heidie Torrealday, 2603 Hiland Avenue, Burley, ID 83318, 208-678-0430, [htorrealday@fs.fed.us](mailto:htorrealday@fs.fed.us). The purpose of this comment period is to provide an opportunity for the public to provide early and meaningful participation on a proposed action prior to a decision being made by the Responsible Official.

**How to Comment and Timeframe**

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of this notice in the *Challis Messenger*. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this analysis. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period.

Written comments must be submitted to: Joby Timm, Area Ranger, 5 North Fork Canyon Road, Ketchum, ID, 83340, or by FAX 208-727-5029. The office business hours for submitting hand-delivered comments are 8:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official’s office during normal business hours via telephone @ 208-727-5013 or in person, or at an official agency function (i.e. public meeting) that is designed to elicit public comments.

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), and Word (.doc) to [comments-intermtn-sawtooth-nra@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-intermtn-sawtooth-nra@fs.fed.us) . In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required for eligibility to object. A scanned signature can be used for verification.

The initial scoping period is being combined with the ‘Notice of Proposed Action’ 30-day Comment period

### **Eligibility to Object**

It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. Those who provide comments during this comment period are eligible to object the decision under the regulations and must provide the following information:

1. Name and Address;
2. Title of the proposed action;
3. Specific facts or comments on the proposed action, along with supporting reasons that the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision;
4. Signature or other verification of identity upon request; identification of the individual or organization who authored the comments(s) is necessary for eligibility;
5. For multiple names or multiple organizations, a signature must be provided for the individual authorized to represent each organization, or for each individual that wishes to have objection eligibility, and
6. Individual members of organizations must submit their own comments to meet the objection eligibility requirements as an individual. Comments received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity provider and employer.