



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office

Northern Idaho Field Office

11103 East Montgomery Drive

Spokane Valley, WA 99206



August 28, 2013

Ms. Mary Farnsworth, Forest Supervisor
Idaho Panhandle National Forests
3815 Schreiber Way
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

Subject: Biological Opinion for the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan
(Forest Plan) for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests,
FWS Reference: 01EIFW00-2013-F-0331

Dear Ms. Farnsworth:

This document transmits the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) biological opinion based on our review of the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Revised Forest Plan) for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests and its effects on listed species, in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

On March 11, 2013, we received your request for formal consultation, along with the Forest's final biological assessment of effects on grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*); bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) and its critical habitat; Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) and its critical habitat; and woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) and its critical habitat. The Forest and the Service exchanged additional information, corrections, and clarifications after March 11, 2013, which are documented in the record. We appreciate the extent of the interagency cooperation on this project. Due to the complexity of this consultation, we mutually managed the extended timeline. The relevant consultation history is summarized chronologically in the biological opinion (enclosed).

Our biological opinion is based on information provided in the Forest's biological assessment, supplemental information to the biological assessment, related NEPA documents, personal communications with Forest staff, scientific literature, unpublished reports, field investigations, and other sources of information cited therein. We appreciate

your interest and cooperation in meeting our joint responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act. If you have questions regarding this opinion, please contact me at (509) 893-8030.

Sincerely,



Ben Conard
Field Supervisor

Enclosure

Copy to: USFWS, Boise, ID (Attn: Brian Kelly)
IDFG, Coeur d'Alene, ID (Attn: Chip Corsi)
ID OSC, Boise, ID (Attn: Dustin Miller)