



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Northern Region

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

November 2025

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest Canada Lynx Habitat Forest Plan Amendment

Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact



Contents

Executive Summary	1
Decision and Reasons for the Decision	2
Other Alternatives Considered	4
Alternative 1: No Action.....	4
Public Involvement and Scoping	4
Finding of No Significant Impact	5
Both Short- and Long-Term Effects And Both Beneficial and Adverse Effects	5
Effects of the Modification of Lynx Analysis Unit Boundaries and Habitat Model	5
Consideration of Best Available Science.....	6
Providing for Connectivity.....	6
Effects on public health and safety	7
Effects that would violate Federal, State, or local law protecting the environment.....	7
Conclusion	7
Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations	7
National Forest Management Act (NFMA)	7
Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960	8
Endangered Species Act	8
Project and Activity Consistency with the Plan.....	8
Application of Decision	9
References Cited	11

Executive Summary

In 2000, when the Canada lynx (lynx) was listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service agreed to identify and map lynx habitat and lynx analysis units (LAUs) on several national forests, including the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest (Forest). The Forest uses lynx habitat maps to understand if an area can support residential lynx. LAUs are static analysis areas that contain lynx habitat and provide context for effects of forest management activities. The initial mapping effort in 2000 lacked precision and refinement because recommended data for identifying lynx habitat was not available for the Forest and the process for delineating LAUs was not completed.

At the time of federal listing, the Forest was not considered “occupied¹” by lynx. Several verified lynx observations in 2017-2019 prompted the change to occupied status in 2020 (Western Lynx Biology Team 2020). In 2020, the Forest updated the lynx habitat map and LAU delineations to incorporate improved data sources, relevant science, and recommendations from the Interagency Lynx Biology Team².

This plan amendment modifies where the 2009 Beaverhead-Deerlodge Land and Resource Management Plan’s Wildlife Standard 7 would apply on the Forest by replacing the 2000 lynx habitat and LAU maps with the 2020 updated maps. This amendment does not propose any active management; all existing forest plan lynx conservation components would remain in place.

The purpose of this Forest Plan amendment is to apply the best available scientific information to more accurately identify Canada lynx habitat and LAUs. There is a need to update where Forest Plan Wildlife Standard 7 applies on National Forest System lands managed by the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. Wildlife Standard 7 incorporates the Northern Rockies Lynx Management Direction (NRLMD) Record of Decision³ (USFS 2007a) into the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest Plan. NRLMD objectives, standards, and guidelines apply to management projects in lynx habitat, in lynx analysis units, in occupied habitat, and in linkage areas. Identification of lynx habitat and delineation of LAUs determines *where* the NRLMD applies, in addition to the NRLMD objective, standard, and guidelines that apply to all projects within linkage areas in occupied habitat. While designed to conserve and promote recovery of Canada lynx, the NRLMD was also designed to complement the Forest Service’s multiple-use directive. Therefore, it is also important to identify areas within the Forest that do not provide habitat for lynx so other Forest Plan goals can be achieved.

The need to update the lynx habitat map and LAU boundaries is based on the availability of improved mapping information as well as the change in occupancy status on the Forest. Additionally, public feedback was considered regarding this update.

¹ Occupation is defined as having at least two verified lynx observations since 1999 unless they are verified to be transient individuals or there is evidence of reproduction in a National Forest (USFS and FWS 2006).

² A national interagency Lynx Biology Team with representatives from Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service was appointed by a national lynx steering committee in the late 1990s and operated as a group throughout the 2013 revision of the LCAS (Interagency Western Lynx Biology Team 2022).

³ NRLMD is referenced many times in this document, therefore the Record of Decision (USFS 2007a) and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (USFS 2007b) will only have citations for the first instance of each reference.

Decision and Reasons for the Decision

Based upon analysis provided in the environmental assessment and associated record, I have decided to authorize Alternative 2, replacing the 2000 lynx habitat and LAU maps with the 2020 updated maps. This amendment does not propose any active management; all existing NRLMD objectives, standards and guidelines would remain unchanged.

Forest Plan Wildlife Standard 7 will apply to approximately 1,481,876 acres of modeled lynx habitat on Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest System lands in 77 LAUs under the 2020 mapping. Details about the number of acres of lynx habitat by ownership by LAU are in Appendix C. Alternative 2 modeled lynx habitat and LAUs are depicted in Figure B2, in Appendix B – Maps.

Alternative 2 best meets the purpose and need of responding to a changed condition and is based on new local information as well as the best available scientific information:

- The NRLMD applies to National Forest System lands occupied by lynx. The NRLMD record of decision (USFS 2007a, page 1) states that unoccupied Forests should consider the direction, especially the direction regarding linkage areas, but are not required to follow it. The change in Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest occupancy status based on verified lynx observations in 2017, 2018, and 2019 has prompted the update to the lynx habitat map and delineation of LAUs.
- Alternative 2 applies the best available scientific information from the second and third editions of the Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy (LCAS) (Ruediger et al. 2000, Interagency Lynx Biology Team 2013), the NRLMD final environmental impact statement (USFS 2007b), and numerous research publications that indicate winter snow is an important habitat component (see Appendix A).
- Alternative 2 applies more refined technology and information to model lynx habitat and to delineate LAUs and follows LCAS methodology more precisely.

In 2020 when the Forest created the first set of habitat maps and LAU delineations to comply with the now-mandatory lynx management direction (NRLMD) as an occupied forest, the requirement to apply NEPA to the updated habitat mapping was not recognized. As discussed in the environmental assessment at pages 6-7, the Forest Service in the NRLMD final environmental impact statement (FEIS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in their biological opinion on the NRLMD, and the LCAS all expected that lynx habitat maps would be updated. Appendix A of the NRLMD FEIS (page 401) differentiated between plan decisions that guide or limit selection of projects and were included [in NEPA] versus how to map lynx habitat, which is an inventory process and not a plan decision. Therefore, the Forest did not apply the NEPA process to the updating mapping procedures because it followed NRLMD, FWS, and LCAS direction to apply improved mapping technology when available. Because the initial 2020 habitat mapping was incomplete, the Forest Service did not consider itself to have “changed” the maps. Instead, its approach was to create the first comprehensive lynx habitat maps that incorporated all the direction provided by the LCAS and the NRLMD for application as an occupied Forest.

The Forest consulted with FWS regarding the on-going effects to lynx from the 2009 Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest Plan because of the change in occupancy status, basing the biological assessment on the 2020 habitat model. The FWS based their incidental take statement on the number of acres of lynx habitat identified by the 2020 habitat model and consultation was completed with a biological opinion received April 2021. The biological assessment included an appendix describing the process for creating the

habitat maps and delineating LAUs which was reviewed and approved by the Forest Service Northern Region lynx expert.

The Forest then tiered to the 2021 lynx biological opinion and applied the 2020 habitat model to project-specific analysis supporting lynx effects determinations. In consideration of recent District Court of Montana rulings, the Forest decided this updated habitat model should go through the NEPA process.

There is currently one process to identify lynx habitat to work in conjunction with NRLMD. As described in detail in Appendix A, the Forest carefully followed all applicable guidance for identifying lynx habitat and delineating LAU boundaries. The foundation of lynx habitat identification is based on habitat types, which do not change, and there have been no improvements in mapping technologies from 2020 to date to cause the Forest to update the Alternative 2 mapping exercise.

Some commenters believe that Alternative 2 mapping and LAU designation is pre-decisional and suggested other alternatives should be considered. I carefully reviewed all the alternatives brought forward through the public involvement process, see the discussion in the environmental assessment for further detail. Commentors suggested that we consider the Montana Natural Heritage Program, the Olson et al. (2021) and the Western Lynx Biology Team lynx habitat distribution maps as well as consider historical observations as alternatives to the 2020 Forest maps.

- The Montana Natural Heritage Program lynx habitat models were not adopted because the Heritage Program did not endorse the use of their lynx model at fine scales, nor was this method considered best available scientific information (refer to the Montana National Heritage meeting notes in the project record).
- Olson et al. (2021) is considered best available scientific information for landscape level lynx distribution, and it independently validated the areas on the Forest identified as LAUs by Alternative 2. Alternative 2 LAUs represent residential habitat and include over 99% of high (reproductive and residential) and moderate (residential) habitat modeled by Olson on the Forest. I chose not to expand Alternative 2 LAU boundaries to capture the remaining less than one percent of Olson modeled high and moderate probability habitat because Olson was not designed for project-specific analysis. Also, Olson was based on 250-meter rasterized cells so it does not identify habitat at the forested stand-level fine scale that Alternative 2 was designed for.
- The Western Lynx Biology Team Tiered habitat approach was not adopted because it drastically reduces the acreage of areas to be managed for lynx conservation and is not considered best available science but rather a proposed policy document.
- Historical observations of lynx were not used to identify lynx habitat due to issues with species verification, the inability to differentiate between residential and transient observations, and a lack of location specificity to correlate to habitat type.

This amendment is narrowly focused on identifying lynx habitat and LAU boundaries for NRLMD application (see Appendix A, page 1). The modeling and mapping processes for this amendment do not classify structural stage. Structural stage is a description of the physical orientation and arrangement (vertical and horizontal) of a forested stand and includes attributes such as height, diameter, crown layers, shrubs, snags and down woody debris (see definitions, Appendix A). Structural stage classification is a separate process that occurs after lynx habitat is identified. Lynx habitat is identified where the forested site potential is boreal subalpine forest and does not depend on the existing structural stage. Unlike site potential, structural stage changes with forest growth and with wildfire, harvest or other disturbances. The

structural stage conditions do not inform identification of whether a site is lynx habitat and consequently does not inform delineation of LAUs. Structural stages are classified using the same process regardless of alternative selected and therefore is not a part of this amendment. Structural stage existing conditions and effects are described in site-specific project analyses.

Other Alternatives Considered

In addition to the selected alternative, I considered Alternative 1, the No Action Alternative. A comparison of these alternatives is in the environmental assessment.

Alternative 1: No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the 2009 Forest Plan would continue to guide management of the project area, and there would be no revisions to the 2000 modeled lynx habitat and LAU boundaries. Alternative 1 is problematic because:

- When the Alternative 1 habitat model was created in 2000, the Forest did not have new technology or potential vegetation type information, so instead relied on classification of satellite imagery of vegetation from the 1990s. This provided a characterization of the vegetation that existed at that point in time, but it did not provide information about the inherent capability of a site to provide lynx habitat, and in some cases, failed to identify lynx habitat where it existed.
- Alternative 1 did not precisely follow the LCAS methods for delineating LAUs that contain the home range needs of a female lynx.
- Alternative 1 over-estimated the amount of lynx habitat because it included many low elevation areas that lack consistent winter snow in LAUs.

Public Involvement and Scoping

A proposal to amend the Forest Plan to update the lynx habitat model and LAU delineation was listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions on January 15, 2025. The proposal was provided to the public and other agencies for comment during scoping with a legal notice published in the *Montana Standard*, the newspaper of record, on March 8, 2025. Following scoping, the agency published a legal notice on May 31, 2025, announcing the availability of the draft environmental assessment and comment period. Following the draft environmental assessment comment period, a legal notice was published on August 30, 2025, announcing the availability of an updated environmental assessment, finding of no significant impact, a draft decision notice, and objection period in the newspaper of record.

Concerns raised during scoping and the comment period included the effects of updating the habitat model and LAU boundaries, whether the best available scientific information was considered in the effects analysis, and whether lynx habitat connectivity would be provided for by the selected alternative. The environmental assessment analyzed these issues.

Objections were also received, which included; assertion that an environmental impact statement is necessary for this analysis, concerns about how lynx habitat was identified, concerns about effects to linkage areas and connectivity, assertions that the NRLMD is not adequate for lynx recovery, assertion that historical habitat should be considered in habitat identification, concern that the Forest is not using

the correct wildland-urban interface information, concern that there is not population trend data, and concern that the Forest misrepresents effects to lynx habitat.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The Finding of No Significant Impact documents the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Anticipated effects of the proposed amendment are based on the interdisciplinary team's professional experience and the best available scientific information. A range of public comments both supporting and objecting to various aspects of the proposed action were received through the scoping, 30-day comment period, and the objections process. I reviewed the environmental assessment, effects analysis, project record, comments, and literature submitted by the public during the comment and objections periods; these are incorporated by reference. I found that the adverse and beneficial impacts will not be significant and that no information was presented that indicates substantial controversy about the effects of the project. Consideration of public comments is included in the project record.

I have made the following determinations with regards to the potentially affected environment and degree of effects considered for a Finding of No Significant Impact.

Both Short- and Long-Term Effects And Both Beneficial and Adverse Effects

Effects of the Modification of Lynx Analysis Unit Boundaries and Habitat Model

Overall, there would be both short- and long-term beneficial effects to lynx from implementation of Alternative 2, because it more accurately models lynx habitat and delineates LAU boundaries and therefore the conservation measures of the NRLMD would be more appropriately applied. This would lead to better conservation outcomes for lynx. It is beneficial to first accurately identify lynx habitat, because the spatial arrangement of an adequate amount of habitat is used to delineate LAUs.

An LAU is a static analysis area that contains enough primary habitat to support a reproductive female on a home range. LAUs are used to measure the amount of management of lynx habitat with NRLMD objectives, standards, and guidelines. Alternative 2 delineates LAUs that more closely incorporates the best available scientific information included in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000, Interagency Lynx Biology Team 2013) and the NRLMD final environmental impact statement. Updated LAU boundaries result in an appropriate context for analysis of project effects to lynx and lynx habitat leading to better analysis conclusions

There may be limited negative effects to dispersing lynx under Alternative 2 because the NRLMD does not apply to forested areas outside of LAUs. These areas of lynx habitat could potentially be harvested or subject to other management actions that could cause this habitat to become unsuitable. These areas of lynx habitat outside of LAU boundaries are not supporting residential lynx but they may be providing "stopover" habitat for dispersing lynx. These effects would last as long as it would take for the forest to regenerate through succession to again provide lynx habitat. However, these effects would not rise to the level of significance because again, these areas are not large enough to support a reproductive female and

lynx have demonstrated the ability to disperse across all kinds of habitats. There is no scientific basis for concluding that removal of foraging habitats or other structural stages providing lynx habitat outside of residential areas leads to significant effects.

Alternative 2 allows for management in non-lynx habitat important to other wildlife species, ecological functions, or fuel reduction in places not important to lynx. This would improve the resiliency of areas to wildfire possibly preventing the spread into lynx habitat.

Consideration of Best Available Science

I have considered the best available scientific information and determined that continued implementation of NRLMD with the habitat modeled by Alternative 2 will provide beneficial effects to lynx. Alternative 2 aligns with research published since the NRLMD and second edition of the LCAS.

Olson et al. (2021) (Olson model) is considered best available scientific information for landscape level lynx distribution that modeled habitat using a different, but complementary approach to habitat identified for NRLMD application. The Olson model is a large landscape model based on biotic and abiotic covariates that correlate with locations from 93 radio-collared lynx. This model assesses where a reproductive (high habitat probability) or residential (moderate habitat probability) lynx could live, whereas the Forest habitat models are designed to identify individual forested stands that provide lynx habitat and where enough habitat exists to support a residential female (LAU). Although these models were built for different purposes and from different methods, Alternative 2 LAU boundaries are an excellent fit because they include ninety-nine percent of the reproductive and residential habitat on the Forest modeled by Olson et al. (2021).

Public comment received on the proposal suggested that the NRLMD may no longer be best available scientific information for lynx conservation and that the Forest should be using the Western Lynx Biology Team⁴ (WLBT) Spatial Framework (Interagency Western Lynx Biology Team 2022). The WLBT Framework is a synthesis of scientific information, but it is not original science. The Framework suggests a policy proposal that has not been adopted to date by policy makers. As noted in the environmental assessment, the Framework is not a comprehensive lynx management strategy. Adopting this Framework with its reduced lynx habitat areas prior to development of a comprehensive plan that considers wildfire risk, forest resiliency, habitat fragmentation, human disturbances, recreation, connectivity and other effects to lynx and lynx habitat is premature. The Northern Region of the Forest Service recommends that the WLBT Spatial Framework does not replace or supersede existing land management plan direction (Allen et al. 2025). The Alternative 2 LAU boundaries include ninety-nine percent of the Tier 2 and Tier 3 habitat polygons modeled by the WLBT; Alternative 2 will provide NRLMD protection to the habitats that both the Olson model and the WLBT identified as important lynx habitat.

Providing for Connectivity

There will be no significant short-term or long-term effects to connectivity because the NRLMD provides protection for linkage areas. Alternative 2 would maintain home range habitat connectivity because the NRLMD Standard ALL S1 would still be in place, which directs that “new or expanded permanent development and vegetation management projects must maintain habitat connectivity in an LAU and/or

⁴ The Western Lynx Biology Team was formed in 2019 in response to a need to evaluate new lynx science that was mostly pertinent to the western United States and enacted by an interagency and inter-regional Steering Team of Federal, regional and state directors within the Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management within the geographic scope of the western range of the Canada lynx (Interagency Western Lynx Biology Team 2022).

linkage area.” Linkage areas are not dependent on lynx habitat or on LAU boundaries that will be changed by this amendment. The identification of lynx habitat and delineation of LAUs does not impede dispersal connectivity because any kind of vegetative cover including shrub-steppe habitats and riparian corridors can provide travel cover for lynx. As noted above, there may be some localized adverse effects to individual lynx from the management manipulation of lynx habitats outside of LAU boundaries. This is not expected to be significant because the large scale nature of lynx dispersal movements considered in context with the fine scale nature of forest management coincident with small parcels of lynx habitat mapped outside of LAUs and the behavioral plasticity demonstrated by dispersing lynx would not be sufficient to result in population-level negative consequences for resident lynx (FWS 2017, page 105). The Forest Plan provides additional protections for habitats that lynx may use for dispersal through other resource standards as discussed in the project lynx report and the 2021 biological assessment in Appendix H. Effects on connectivity and adherence to ALL S1 will be considered and analyzed at the project-level. This will ensure lynx can continue to disperse through the Forest over the short- and long-term.

Effects on public health and safety

My decision will have no significant or unacceptable effects on public health and safety because it will not result in on the ground activities. Lynx habitat mapping and LAU delineation do not impact public health and safety. The proposed action complies with all Forest Plan direction that ensures public health and safety.

Effects that would violate Federal, State, or local law protecting the environment

The proposed amendment would not violate any Federal, State or local laws protecting the environment.

Conclusion

After carefully considering the environmental effects described in the environmental assessment and specialist reports, I have determined that Alternative 2 will not have significant effects on the quality of the human environment considering the context and intensity of impacts. Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

National Forest Management Act (NFMA)

The National Forest Management Act 1976 is the law that requires the Forest Service to develop land management plans for national forests. The 2012 Planning Rule is the regulation that outlines the process and content requirements for creating those plans.

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) states land management plans “may be amended in any manner whatsoever after final adoption after public notice.” The NFMA’s implementing regulations (the 2012 Planning Rule) at 36 CFR 219 describe the process and requirements of developing, revising, and amending land management plans. This amendment is consistent with those requirements.

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to change where Wildlife Standard 7 (direction for Canada lynx habitat management) applies on the Forest. Based on the purpose and likely effects of the amendment, the directly related requirement is 36 CFR 219.9 (b)(1): The requirement to determine

whether or not the plan components required by 36 CFR 219.9 (a) provide the ecological conditions necessary to contribute to the recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species, conserve proposed and candidate species, and maintain a viable population of each species of conservation concern within the plan area.

The FWS in their Species Status Assessment determined that lynx conservation measures and habitat management guidance adopted by the Forest Service via formally amended or revised management plans (i.e. NRLMD) have a positive influence on the Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of lynx populations that occur on Federal lands and will continue to provide benefits as long as those measures and guidance are implemented (FWS 2023). The FWS also noted that they have found no information, since the DPS was listed in 2000, that Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management timber harvest, silvicultural activities, or other management actions have diminished lynx habitats or resulted in a change in lynx analysis unit (LAU) condition from meeting to not meeting standards and guidelines developed to promote lynx habitat conservation (Ibid. pg. 33). Therefore, the Forest is contributing to the recovery of the federally listed threatened Canada lynx through adherence to NRLMD.

Regulatory requirements, Forest Service Handbook, and Manual direction applicable to specific resources, are outlined by resource discipline and incorporated by reference in the environmental assessment. The resource specialist report and supporting documentation are contained in project record.

Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960

It is the policy of the Congress that the national forests are established and shall be administered for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes. The purposes of this Act are declared to be supplemental to, but not in derogation of, the purposes for which the national forests were established as set forth in the Act of June 4, 1897 (16 U.S.C. 475).

This amendment aligns with the act. More accurate mapping of lynx habitat will contribute to potentially increased productivity across the Forest.

Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires all Federal agencies to review any project authorized, funded, or carried out to determine that the action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any proposed, threatened, or endangered species. In 2021, the Forest consulted with FWS on the effects to lynx from implementation of the 2009 Revised Forest Plan. The biological assessment was based on the modeled lynx habitat and LAU delineations in Alternative 2 (USFS 2021). The FWS determined that ongoing implementation of the 2009 Revised Forest Plan is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Canada lynx (FWS 2021). The Forest has prepared an addendum to the 2021 biological assessment and has submitted it to the FWS for consultation.

Project and Activity Consistency with the Plan

Authorizations of occupancy and use made before this decision document is approved may proceed unchanged until time of reauthorization. At time of reauthorization, all permits, contracts, and other authorizing instruments must be made consistent with the plan as amended, subject to existing valid rights. Projects and activities authorized after approval of the plan amendment must be consistent with the plan as amended 36 CFR 219.15(d).

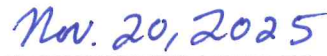
Application of Decision

The Forest received objections to the draft decision notice. The Objection Reviewing Officer, Acting Deputy Regional Forester Chris Carlton, has responded in writing to all objections, finding the responsible official provided an adequate analysis of issues raised and provided acceptable documentation showing compliance with applicable law, regulation, and policy. Some areas within the project record, environmental assessment, the Canada lynx report, and Draft Decision Notice have been clarified or updated with clearer connections and references to existing data and completed analyses.. Therefore, this decision will be immediately applied upon signature. For further information concerning this project, contact Allison Landro, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest Environmental Coordinator, allison.landro@usda.gov.

Approved by:



COREY R LEWELLEN
Acting Forest Supervisor
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest



November 20, 2025

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

References Cited

- Allen, L., Jackson, S., Probasco, D., and Roberts, L. 2025. Direction for Application of the Western Lynx Biology Team (WLBT) "Spatial Framework for the Conservation of Canada Lynx Habitat in the Western U.S. and Associated Management Tiers (2022)" in the Northern Region (Internal guidance memo on file). Northern Region (R1) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species – February 2025. Dated: February 20, 2025. Missoula, MT: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USDA Forest Service). 3 p.
- FWS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2017. Species status assessment for the Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) contiguous United States distinct population segment. Version 1.0. Lakewood, CO: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Regions 1, 3, 5 and 6. 292 p.
- FWS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2023. Species status assessment addendum for the Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) contiguous United States distinct population segment. Report Number. Denver, CO. U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Regions 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. 122 p.
- FWS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service., 2021. Biological Opinion on the effects to Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) from implementing the 2009 Revised Forest Plan and the Northern Rockies Lynx Management Direction (NRLMD) on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. Report Number. 53 p.
- Interagency Lynx Biology Team. 2013. Canada lynx conservation assessment and strategy. 3rd ed. Dated: August, 2013. Forest Service Pub. R1-13-19. Missoula, MT: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USDA Forest Service), U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS). 128 p.
<https://www.fs.fed.us/biology/resources/pubs/wildlife/index.html>
- Interagency Western Lynx Biology Team. 2022. Spatial Framework for the Conservation of Canada Lynx Habitat in the Western U.S. and Associated Management Tiers. Dated: December 2022. 51 p.
- Olson, L.E., Bjornlie, N., Hanvey, G., Holbrook, J.D., Ivan, J.S., Jackson, S., Kertson, B., King, T., Lucid, M., Murray, D., Naney, R., Rohrer, J., Scully, A., Thornton, D., Walker, Z., and Squires, J.R. 2021. Improved prediction of Canada lynx distribution through regional model transferability and data efficiency. *Ecology and Evolution* 11(4): 1667-1690.
- Ruediger, B., Claar, J., Gniadek, S., Holt, B., Lewis, L., Mighton, S., Naney, B., Patton, G., Rinaldi, T., Trick, J., Vandehey, A., Wahl, F., Warren, N., Wenger, D., and Williamson, A. 2000. Canada lynx conservation assessment and strategy. Report Number. Missoula, MT. USDA Forest Service and U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service. 118 p.
- USFS, USDA Forest Service. 2007a. Northern Rockies lynx management direction Record of Decision, national forests in Montana, and parts of Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah. Missoula, MT: Northern Region (R1). 71 p. https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd1106433.pdf
- USFS, USDA Forest Service. 2007b. Northern Rockies lynx management direction: Final environmental impact statement (vols. 1 and 2). Dated: March. Missoula, MT: Northern Region (R1).
https://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet!/ut/p/c5/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gJAwHwtDDw9_AI8zPwhQoY6IeDdGCqCPOBqwDLG-AAjgb6fh75uan6BdnZaY6OiooA1tkqlQ!!/d13/d3/L2dJQSEvUUt3QS9ZQnZ3LzZfMjAwMDAwMDDBOBPEhWTjJNMDAwMDAwMDA!/?navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&cid=stelprdb5160650&navid=1601200000000000&pnavid=1600000000000000&ss=1101&position=Not%20Yet%20Determined.Html&ttype=detail&pname=Region%201-%20Resource%20Management
- USFS, USDA Forest Service. 2021. Biological assessment for Canada lynx, effects of the 2009 revised forest plan and the northern Rockies lynx management direction. Series Editor: Gatlin, J., ed. Dillon, MT: Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. 208 p.

USFS, USDA Forest Service and FWS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2006. Canada Lynx Conservation Agreement. edited by U.S. Department of Agriculture, F.S. and U.S. Department of the Interior, F.a.W.S., eds. Report Number. Washington, DC

Western Lynx Biology Team. 2020. A review of Canada Lynx occupation status on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. Series Editor: Hanvey, G., ed. 7 (31) p. Reprinted as Appendix A of https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd901415.pdf