



**NEWS
RELEASE**

United States
Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Salmon - Challis National Forest
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SALMON-CHALLIS TO HIGHLIGHT CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS OF THE FOREST AND COMMUNITIES

Salmon, Idaho: The Salmon-Challis National Forest has spent the past several months documenting the current conditions and trends on the forest and in the surrounding communities. That assessment will soon be available in draft form. A series of public meetings November 6-14 will feature a chance to talk to the Salmon-Challis' leadership and forest plan revision team about the findings.

Forest Plan Revision team leader Josh Milligan said members of the public, as well as federal, state, local and tribal representatives have helped his team better understand what's important to forest stakeholders, and what needs to change.

"Since February, we've been meeting with members of the public, county commissioners, tribal leaders, and state agencies. We've been very pleased with the information sharing that is happening. With the release of this draft assessment and a preliminary need for change statement, it's time to check back in to make sure we're getting this right," Milligan said.

He explained that after the public has had a chance to provide feedback, the need for change statement will drive the development of a new land management plan for the Forest's 4.4 million acres. Milligan expects plan development to start early next year.

"Our ultimate goal is to produce a Forest Plan that provides useful and relatable direction that improves management of the Forest and allows us to adapt to changing conditions in the future," he said.

Lemhi County Commissioner Brett Barsalou said of the plan revision effort, "It's of the utmost importance for the community to be engaged in plan revision. As commissioners, we are involved. These are *your* public lands and this is *your* opportunity to participate in what the future management of those public lands will be."

Custer County Commissioner Steve Smith added, "Community participation helps keep local concerns at the forefront. It's the public that owns these lands and they should be involved in how these lands are managed. If we're not involved, that's a problem."

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The public meetings will be held at the following locations:

Challis, Monday, November 6, 6 -8 p.m., William Cobbley Senior Center

Salmon, Tuesday, November 7, 6 -8 p.m., Idaho Dept of Fish and Game Salmon Region

Arco, Wednesday, November 8, 6 -8 p.m., Arco-Butte Innovation Center

Mackay, Thursday, November 9, 1-3 p.m., American Legion Hall

Ketchum, Tuesday, November 14, 6 – 8 p.m., Ketchum Community Library

The Forest is also offering a virtual meeting on Thursday, November 16, from 1 – 2:30 p.m. Anyone with an internet connection and a phone line can join this meeting at <https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/scnf-fpr/>.

The draft assessment and preliminary need for change statement will be posted on the Salmon-Challis National Forest website by Friday, November 3.

For more information about the meetings, email jmilligan@fs.fed.us or call at 208-756-5560.

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