



**NEWS
RELEASE**



United States
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Forest Service
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FINAL ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS NOW AVAILABLE

SALMON, Idaho – The Salmon-Challis National Forest has released the final assessment of current conditions and trends on the Forest. This assessment, which includes socioeconomic, cultural and ecological conditions, was completed as the first phase of the forest plan revision process. The current Challis and Salmon forest plans were created in the late 1980s.

A draft assessment was released in November 2017. In response to stakeholder requests, the feedback period was extended for 60 days and then another 120 days and ended in May 2018. Since that time, members of the public, organizations, state, federal, and local governments and tribes have provided feedback and new information to the forest plan revision team. Forest plan revision team leader Josh Milligan said public feedback helped shape the final assessment. He said the Forest has re-organized the document for better readability, added information and details in many places, and made closer ties between the assessment and the needs for change statement. “We’ve also added a case study specifically about livestock grazing on the Forest because we heard so much interest in that topic,” Milligan said.

“I think the Salmon-Challis National Forest is in a really fortunate place as we conclude the assessment phase,” said Forest Supervisor Chuck Mark. “The purpose of assessment is to figure out what issues need to be addressed with revised forest plan direction, to organize our data, and to build relationships with stakeholders who want a seat at the table. The amount of interaction we’ve had with the public through this early phase sets us up for success as we move on to developing a plan.”

Milligan says the Forest expects to publish a Notice of Intent to revise the plans in early fall. The team is developing a scoping package that will help guide public involvement in this next phase. The Forest is also examining Wild and Scenic Rivers eligibility and suitability and conducting a Wilderness inventory and evaluation as required steps of revising the forest plan. The Forest is also currently reviewing feedback received as part of the initial identification of Species of Conservation Concern and will be providing a recommendation to the regional forester in the coming months. The information from these three parallel processes will be used to develop plan alternatives.

The final assessment is available at http://bit.ly/SCNF_Final_Assessment. A limited number of hard copies will also be available at the Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor’s Office in Salmon, and at the North Fork, Leadore, Challis-Yankee Fork, and Lost River ranger stations. For more information, please contact the Public Lands Center in Salmon at 208-756-5100.

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