



File Code: 1950
Date: March 15, 2019

Dear Interested Party,

We have completed an environmental assessment (EA) for the Brebner Flat project on the St Joe Ranger District. The EA is a site-specific evaluation of management activities proposed in the project area, i.e. a proposed action. The 11,779-acre Brebner Flat project area is located directly south of Avery, Idaho, in portions of Benewah and Shoshone Counties. The project area lies directly south of Avery, Idaho and includes the Theriault Creek, Kelly Creek, Williams Creek, and Siwash Creek drainages. Legal description of the project area includes portions of T45N, R5E, Sections 13,14,16,22,24,26,28,34,35,36 BM, T44N, R5E, Sections 1,2,11,12 BM, T17N, R32W, Sections 30, 31 BM.

Reconnaissance indicates that existing conditions for vegetation composition, structure, and health in the Brebner Flat project area deviate from the desired conditions described in the 2015 Land Management (Forest) Plan for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests (IPNF).

The project interdisciplinary team analyzed in detail two scenarios: continuing current management in the area (no action) and implementing specific proposed activities in response to the purpose and need for action in this area. Proposed activities include timber harvest, prescribed fire, and tree planting. The proposed action also includes culvert upgrades, road reconstruction and maintenance, to provide safe access to the project area. At the completion of the project some roads will be put into long-term storage or decommissioned for a variety of reasons including reducing road maintenance costs and increasing wildlife security or because the road is not needed for management of the national forests. In addition to providing the necessary infrastructure for accomplishing restoration goals, objectives and desired conditions outlined in the Forest Plan, forest products resulting from management activities on National Forest System lands contribute to the local economy and to the sustainability of the local forest products industry.

Project development, public involvement, and the ongoing analysis process have followed the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508). Early public involvement efforts were used to assist in development of the proposed action. These included discussions with local, state and county government, Shoshone-Benewah Forest Collaborative, and others. Scoping was conducted in accordance with NEPA regulations (§1501.7). The scoping period (36 CFR 218.24(b)(3)) was initiated with a letter describing the need for action in the area, the preliminary proposed activities, the potential for openings over 40 acres in size, and the possibility of a Forest Plan amendment.

The EA, maps, resource reports, scoping comments and other information are available for your review on the project webpage <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53048> Your comments



are very important to determining the best course of action in the project area. As provided for in 36 CFR 218.25(a)(1)(i), the opportunity to comment on the EA will end 30 days following the date of legal notice announcing availability of the EA in the newspaper of record (*Coeur d'Alene Press*, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho). It is the responsibility of all individuals and organizations to ensure that their comments are received in a timely manner (36 CFR 218.25(a)(4)). Comments submitted must meet the requirements outlined in 36 CFR 218.25(a)(3), including:

- Name and postal address. (Email address in addition is recommended but not required.)
- Title of the proposed project or activity (Brebner Flat).
- Specific written comments (as defined in 36 CFR 218.2) regarding the project. Specific substantive comments should be within the scope of the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and must include supporting reasons for the responsible official to consider.
- Signature or other verification of identity upon request and identification of the individual or entity that authored the comment(s).

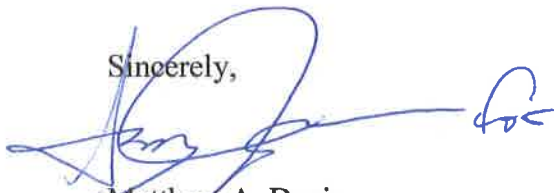
Comments can be submitted via the following methods:

- Electronic comments can be submitted on the project website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53048> . On the right-hand side "Get Connected", click "Comment on Project" to submit comments on this project. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format that is readable with optical character recognition software and be searchable, such as MS Word (.doc or .docx), plain text (.txt), or rich text format (.rtf).
- **Email** comments-northern-idpanhandle-stjoe@fs.fcd.us (Subject: Comments – Brebner Flat). An automated response should confirm your electronic comment has been received. As with other electronic comments, emailed comments must be submitted in a format that is readable with optical character recognition software and be searchable.
- **Fax** to (208)245-6052 (ATTN: Project Leader for Brebner Flat Project)
- **Mail or hand-deliver** to: St Joe Ranger District, ATTN: Project Leader – Brebner Flat Project, 222 7th Ave., St Maries, ID 83861 (Business hours are 7:30am-12:00 and 12:30-4:00pm for hand-delivered comments)

The proposed Brebner Flat Project is implementing a land management plan and not authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (**HFRA**); therefore, it is subject to the Project-Level Predecisional Administrative Review Process under 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Only individuals or organizations who submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project during a public comment period (such as this one) will be eligible to file an objection.

The responsible official for this project is Jeanne Higgins, Forest Supervisor for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests. If you need a copy of the Brebner Flat EA or have other questions regarding the project, please contact Brebner Flat Project Leader at the St Joe Ranger District by telephone (208) 245-6034 or by email (mreinhart@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,



Matthew A. Davis

District Ranger