

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Intermountain
Region



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Lost Creek–Boulder Creek Landscape Restoration Project

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



Payette National Forest

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Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Lost Creek–Boulder Creek Landscape Restoration Project

USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region

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Abstract

The Forest Service is analyzing proposed landscape restoration treatment activities in the 80,000 acre Lost Creek–Boulder Creek Landscape Restoration Project area on the New Meadows Ranger District of the Payette National Forest. The purpose of the proposed action is as follows:

- 1) Move vegetation toward the desired conditions defined in the Forest Plan and consistent with the science in the Forest’s draft Wildlife Conservation Strategy.
- 2) Move all subwatersheds within the project area toward the desired condition for soil, water, riparian, and aquatic resources and improve the Boulder Creek subwatershed from the “Impaired” category to the “Functioning at Risk” category as described in the Watershed Condition Framework.
- 3) Manage recreation use in Boulder Creek and in the vicinity of Lost Creek with an emphasis on providing sanitation facilities, identifying and hardening dispersed recreation areas, and developing new trail opportunities.
- 4) Contribute to the economic vitality of the communities adjacent to the Payette National Forest.

The preferred alternative is Alternative B. This alternative proposes non-commercial and commercial thinning, prescribed burning, watershed improvements such as road closures, road decommissioning, and fish passage improvements, and recreation improvements including ATV/UTV trails and dispersed camping improvements. Alternative B responds to the purpose and need as stated above, and incorporates the recommendations of the Payette Forest Coalition and other concerns expressed in comment letters and public meetings.

Comments on this DEIS should be postmarked or received no later than 45 days after a Notice of Availability is published in the *Federal Register*. Comments should be addressed to the Payette National Forest; Attn: Holly Hutchinson, 800 West Lakeside Avenue, McCall, ID 83638, or sent electronically to comments-intermtn-payette@fs.fed.us. Electronic comments must be submitted in plain text or another format compatible with Microsoft Word. Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to comments at one time and to use the information to prepare the Final Environmental Impact Statement, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision-making process. Reviewers have the obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process so that it is meaningful and will alert the agency to reviewers’ positions and contentions (*Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553, 1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statements (*City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, 1986 and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 [E.D. Wis. 1980]). Comments should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement or merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

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