

## **Payette Forest Coalition**

Thursday, January 19, 2022 – 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Hybrid meeting: in-person at Idaho First Bank Community Room, 475 Deinhard Lane, McCall, ID 83638

and [Join Zoom Meeting](#): Meeting ID: 815 3909 0811 Passcode: 703461

One tap mobile: +13462487799, 81539090811# US (Houston)

### Desired Outcomes

- (1) Discuss updates from Forest Service on the Granite Goose proposed action.
- (2) Reach consensus on key points to include in a comment letter for the Railroad Saddle draft Environmental Assessment (EA).
- (3) Review and discuss the new supportive objection template letter for use on future projects.

### Agenda

- 10:00 AM Introductions, review agenda and desired outcomes
- 10:10 AM Granite Goose proposed action updates, Jenni Blake
- 10:45 AM Railroad Saddle draft EA, Dana Harris
- 12:00 PM Lunch
- 12:30 PM Railroad Saddle cont'd
- 2:00 PM Review updated supportive objection template letter
- 2:30 PM News and Updates

### *References for Meeting*

[December 2022 meeting notes](#) (includes differences between PFC recommendations and draft proposed action)

[Railroad Saddle draft EA](#) (see additional info. on the Topic Information Sheet below)

Project [Story Map](#)

Draft EA [Forum thread](#)

[PFC Recommendations for projects within former LCBC landscape](#) (see more info. below)

[RR saddle proposed action comment letter](#) (see further details below)

Draft supportive objection template letter (appended to agenda) and [August and October 2022 meeting notes](#) (for review of rationale for the letter)

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### **Topic Information sheet**

#### **Railroad Saddle draft EA**

Following an overview presentation of the draft EA, the Coalition will discuss whether it wishes to submit comments to Forest Service and, if so, what those comments should be. The threshold for that decision will be consensus minus 1. Comments are due by February 7.

The EA and relevant project documents are available at the [project's webpage](#). There is also a [Story Map](#) showing the proposed treatments described in the EA. (Note: If you click on the "Comment Period" folder and nothing happens, try right-clicking on the folder, opening it in a new tab, and then click on the folder to view and open its contents. Alternatively, you can click the "Download" button, download the entire zip file to your computer, and then open it.)

To gauge whether the EA is consistent with PFC's recommendations, they along with the Coalition's proposed action comment letter can be seen in the PFC [Project Document Library](#). The revised recommendations (submitted 4/21/21) for restoration projects contained within the five watersheds included in the LCBC project are found under Cold July. The comment letter is found under Railroad Saddle. Hint: Select the project's name from the drop-down list and click "Search" to see the corresponding documents.

A [Forum thread](#) has been set up to post questions and observations.

#### **Granite Goose draft proposed action updates**

Following Forest Service's update on the proposed action, there will be an opportunity for discussion. Members are asked to review last month's meeting notes which include differences between the Coalition's recommendations and the draft proposed action.

#### **Supportive objection template letter**

Following discussions last August and October about why the PFC's supportive objection for the Cold July EA was rejected, the Steering Team drafted a different supportive objection template letter for use on future projects. The objective will be to discuss whether the letter meets recommendations made at the October PFC meeting. The draft letter is appended below. A review of PFC's August and October meeting notes will help members remember the rationale and recommendations made for its development.

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### **Draft Supportive Objection Template Letter**

#### **BEFORE THE REGIONAL FORESTER, INTERMOUNTAIN REGION, USDA FOREST SERVICE**

#### **PAYETTE FOREST COALITION**

P.O. Box 10 McCall, Idaho 83638

[SteeringTeam@payetteforestcoalition.org](mailto:SteeringTeam@payetteforestcoalition.org)

#### **Certification of Filing**

This letter was timely filed by electronic transmission to [objections-intermtntregional-office@fs.fed.us](mailto:objections-intermtntregional-office@fs.fed.us),  
ATTN: Objection Reviewing Officer.

DATED XXXXXXXX.

Dear Objection Reviewing Official,

The members of the Payette Forest Coalition (PFC) are requesting to meaningfully participate in the discussion and resolution of any objections that are received on project XXXXX. This request is submitted pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subpart B and § 218.5(a). The PFC is requesting to participate in the objection resolution process which might change any aspect of the published decision proposed by Payette National Forest (PNF) Forest Supervisor XXXXX on the YYYY Ranger District.

The Payette Forest Coalition is a group of organizations and individuals which formed to work with the Payette National Forest on planning and executing large-scale forest landscape restoration projects. The goals of the PFC are to improve the forest's resiliency to wildfires, enhance access for recreation, resource management and safety; improve watershed health and water quality, improve habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species, and bring economic benefit to surrounding communities.

The PFC has been engaged in discussions and deliberations on this project area since the project inception. The PFC reached consensus on recommendations to the Payette National Forest in (Insert date) with regard to support for the Proposed Action. The PFC supports a draft Decision Notice and (Insert FONSI or ROD as appropriate for the action) that is aligned with the recommendations (and past letters of support, if applicable) the PFC has provided on this project.

The PFC has invested significant time and effort developing recommendations for this project. We want to see the project successfully implemented in a timely manner and in such a way that projected benefits are realized and negative effects of no action or reduced vegetation and other restoration treatments are successfully avoided, minimized, and mitigated.

We support the project's overall purpose and feel that the draft Decision Notice and (Insert FONSI or ROD) will have a beneficial impact on this landscape's forest health. As noted above, we have had extensive discussions on this project with the Payette National Forest, and we look forward to proceeding with this

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important landscape restoration. We are concerned that if another party requests changes, the final outcome may not strike an appropriate balance between PFC's restoration goals and could result in action or inaction that the PFC does not support.

We request your consideration and immediate response to this letter requesting that the PFC be allowed to meaningfully participate in any and all objection resolution meetings and discussions for this project. We believe the PFC's participation in these projects is beneficial to the Forest and the PFC's continued support on these projects will contribute to our common goals.

Sincerely, Payette Forest Coalition Steering Team, Payette Forest Coalition