

## Payette Forest Coalition

Thursday, April 18, 2024 – 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Hybrid meeting: Payette National Forest Supervisor's Office, 500 N. Mission Street, McCall, ID

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

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

### Desired Outcomes

- (1) Learn about smoke management in regard to natural events and Rx fire
- (2) Begin evaluation of PFC's zone of agreement

### Agenda

10:00 AM Introductions, review agenda and desired outcomes

10:10 AM Smoke management, Mark Boyle, ID DEQ

11:10 AM News and Updates

- Granite Goose final EA status
- PFC Steering Team—additional members needed
- Veg Committee—chairperson/subject matter expertise needed
- Summer field trip topics
- Collaborative funding options
- Follow up on some of February's Action Items
  - PFC public outreach on future projects
  - Availability of draft Specialist Reports on future projects
  - Define unaddressed issues from Granite Goose likely to surface on future projects

12:00 PM Lunch

12:30 PM PFC Zone of Agreement

- Setting the stage: How national priorities impact Forests' work, Linda Jackson, Tim Leishman, John Riling
- Begin examination of zone of agreement, Facilitator and PFC

### *References for Meeting*

Clicking the link in the meeting email announcement will take you to the meeting packet which includes references below.

[February 18, 2024 meeting notes](#)

[PFC Zone of Agreement \(Using Granite Goose as example\)](#)

**Payette Forest Coalition  
Meeting Notes  
February 15, 2024**

**Desired Outcomes**

- (1) Review outcomes regarding the Granite Goose comment letter and identify potential ways to address them.

**Granite Goose comment letter review**

- Additional information provided during discussion appears in bullets under some numbered points below.
- Context for review: The PFC was unable to reach consensus support for the Granite Goose draft EA at January's meeting. Members agreed that a qualified comment letter should be submitted. The letter's content was negotiated and agreed upon at the meeting, drafted by the PFC Steering Team afterwards, and posted to the Forum for review. The subsequent online vote on whether the letter reflected the agreed-upon content and its submission to Forest Service failed to reach the required level of consensus.

**What did the PFC intend to do?**

1. Draft a qualified letter of support 1) indicating PFC's broad support for the proposed vegetation, watershed, wildlife, and roads and recreation treatments, 2) briefly stating the issues which prevented consensus support of the entire draft EA (i.e., proposed Granite Mountain closure and the post-scoping addition of heavy equipment logging in IRAs).
2. Post the letter to the Forum for review.
3. Hold an online vote to determine whether the letter's language reflected agreed upon content and whether to submit it to Forest Service.

**What actually happened?**

1. Issues and information not discussed at the meeting surfaced after the letter was drafted and posted to the Forum. Subject matter included an unexplained Bear Basin equestrian trail closure prior to the EA's release and mountain biker-equestrian conflicts in the same area, grazing-related issues, the wolverine listing and the proposed National Old Growth Forest Amendment.
  - The trail in question lies within the project area but is managed under a separate NEPA (this explains the closure). **Actions:** The Forest will look into what more can be done to help alleviate those user conflicts. Ken Rider offered to help connect the Backcountry Horsemen with CIMBA so some educational efforts about how bikers should act around horses can be done.
  - Currently, there is no information on how the wolverine listing and Old Growth amendment might affect the project. Once there is, Forest Service (FS) will consult on the wolverine. Old Growth will not require consultation, has not occurred, and the process will likely not be complete until 2025. If the amendment creates the need for changes to the EA, the Forest Service (FS) will reassess the situation and determine

the best path forward. The PFC will be kept fully informed and engaged in these steps.

2. Information/clarifications requested from Forest Service by certain members to aid or solidify decision making were not received.
3. Explanations/rationale given at the meeting about certain proposed actions were confusing, created doubt, and eroded support for the letter as written after the meeting. Example: the terms “historical,” “modeled,” and “suitable” habitat were used interchangeably while discussing Whitebark Pine (WBP) planting which raised concerns about where plantings might occur and corresponding impacts to recreation, grazing and timber.
  - The Forest stated WBP would be planted in historical habitat. Before planting they will review for the presence of trees, records of confirmed WBP historical locations, and WBP snag areas (evidence of WBP mortality, hence historical locations). The planting of WBP is for proactive reasons to help with its persistence, not to curtail how other resources are managed on the Forest. FS stated that the only impact to livestock grazing permits is that salt blocks are not to be placed in WBP stands. This has been dealt with in annual livestock permits and is not part of this project’s analysis.
4. Little public outreach in Valley and Adams counties about this project and none once draft EA was released contributed to suspicion of FS and a lack of willingness to support the project among some PFC member constituencies. Linda Jackson acknowledged that it would have been good for the Forest to have held a public meeting or open house either leading up to the comment period or during it. She said this oversight was her error. *Additional information from Forest Service:* Notification was sent to over 280 individuals by email and hard copy mailing for the scoping and comment periods and news releases went out for both. The Forest Service held a scoping period open house on February 22, 2023. Twenty-three people attended. Star News ran two stories on the project after each public comment opportunity.
5. Some members wanted to add additional content to the letter while under review, were told this was not possible, and felt this was an arbitrary decision/rule.
6. Given the above, some members thought PFC’s comment letter would not lead to changes in the EA they desired and decided to withdraw support for the letter and submit their own comments as a last-ditch effort to be heard.
7. Although it appears PFC members were able to view the draft letter and received notices of postings and replies (one non-member reported they couldn’t), some members struggled with navigating and using the Forum.
8. Support for the letter’s content and its submission eroded and the subsequent vote failed to reach the required threshold of consensus minus 1.

#### **Why the difference between what was intended and what actually happened?**

1. Some groups with PFC representatives did not discuss the EA before the PFC meeting. Representatives found out afterwards that their decision did not align with what their groups wanted. Others thought the proposed Old Growth Forest Amendment would potentially result in unacceptable changes to proposed actions and it would be better to wait on moving forward with the EA until impacts were known.

- Facilitator noted that slowing or pausing a project contradicts PFC's stated interest to increase pace and scale.
2. Some requested information from Forest to aid decision making was not received and some withdrew their support for the letter. It was acknowledged that the PFC needs to find a way to have this requested information shared with the entire PFC and not just the requester. Not having it hindered members' ability to understand if their concerns were being addressed.
    - Some members' felt their concerns and interests had gone unaddressed throughout the project and they felt ignored. Examples given were grazing's baseline contribution to fine fuels management, the potential for expanded WBP plantings using modeled versus historical habitat, and the proposed Granite Mountain extended closure.
    - FS noted grazing is addressed in the EA as part of the project's baseline (No Action Alternative) since livestock grazing is part of the current condition. No changes to livestock grazing are being proposed with this project.
    - FS noted that there are contradictory desires among the PFC concerning the Granite Mtn extended closure. Some want it extended and some do not. It was also noted that the outcome of the closure extension is still being evaluated.
  3. The PFC comment letter was not specific enough: 1) It did not provide a more detailed explanation of why PFC couldn't reach consensus on the two main points, and 2) Adding other topics, concerns, and recommendations regarding issues that surfaced after the meeting and about those which had gone unaddressed was not possible.
  4. There was not enough time to do the above, hold a vote, and submit the letter by close of the comment period.
  5. Lack of specialist reports made decision making difficult.
    - Reports were still in draft form when the draft EA was released and will not be finalized until after the comment period. FS sees how reports could aid decision making. It was understood by the PFC that reports would need to indicate that they are drafts and that changes could occur after the comment period. **Action:** Linda Jackson will discuss this with Kara Kirkpatrick-Kreitingner and district rangers for future projects.

### **What will you do next time?**

1. Give space for more context (i.e., more detail about why PFC can't reach consensus) and content (i.e., to describe issues members agree and disagree about).
2. Members would like to see specialist reports.
3. While the Forest takes the lead role in informing the public about restoration projects, the PFC should also play a role in explaining what a given project is about and why it is important. This could also help create trust between communities and FS as well as make the public more aware of PFC and its work. **Actions:** Wendy Green will reach out to Valley Soil and Water District about how they attracted 60 people to a recent meeting and the Facilitator will ask Dennis Murphy whether and how the PFC's Facebook page could be used as a communication tool. *Facilitator note:* Dennis informed me that anyone with a Facebook account can post on it. Would this be something the Communication Committee could take on?

4. Improve communication between PNF and PFC (e.g., follow up with members who individually request information).
5. Improve communication between PFC to members (e.g., pass such information along to all using the Forum).
6. Improve communication between PFC representatives and their constituents (i.e., representatives should communicate that a decision point is coming and there is a need to meet beforehand so representative knows what to communicate, what they can support or not support). *Facilitator note: While it is implicit here that groups should meet before a PFC decision so their representatives are ready, I wonder if there should be a standalone, explicit point to this effect given the significant role this played in what happened.*
7. Explore changing the rules regarding consensus? Should it be a lower threshold?

### **What are next steps now?**

1. Review final EA/draft Decision Notice (45 days, slated for May or June) and decide whether to support. If yes, supply a letter of support and supportive objection. If not, no comment. Question: Does this mean the PFC would have no seat at the table if there is an objection? *Additional information from Forest Service:* The PFC submitted comments during the project's scoping period and therefore, has standing on the specific written comments previously submitted.
2. Be prepared to meet twice if final EA release doesn't coincide with two regularly scheduled meetings.

### **Potential future topics to discuss and follow ups with the Forest Service**

A number of things surfaced organically during the review above. The Facilitator will connect with Forest Service to see whether, when, and how these could be discussed.

- State of PFC-PNF partnership, how strengthen/improve?
- Unaddressed issues from Granite Goose *Facilitator note:* I am unsure whether this refers to the baseline discussion of grazing's contribution to fine fuels management or some other subject matter that was not discussed at the January meeting. If anyone knows, please let me know. I do believe, however, that this is intended to be a future-focused discussion, not a rehash of past GG conversations.
- Was information requested by PFC members at the Jan 21 meeting sent to them?
- Potential impacts to the EA regarding wolverine consultation and the Old Growth amendment (this may be one for further out given so little is known at this point).
- Lessons learned: Discuss how communication between Forest and PFC can be improved when it comes to issues like the Backcountry Horseman's (see page 1, What Actually Happened) to avert a PFC member withdrawing support for a project and/or PFC decision.
- In light of what happened and what is seen under Other Analysis below, could something be learned from other Forest-collaborative partnerships? Could Tim Leishman share experiences, lessons learned, and suggestions based on his work with collaboratives on the San Juan National Forest?

## Other analysis

The Facilitator posed a number of questions to the group which could respond in three ways: no (thumbs down), somewhat agree (hand and thumb turned sideways), or completely agree (thumbs up). Not everyone responded to each question.

- Do you think there is something going on within the PFC that leads to events like what happened in January? No: 9, somewhat agree 6.
- Is collaboration on the Coalition happening effectively? Somewhat agree 12, completely agree 2.
- Do members agree on the scope of PFC's focus (i.e., what the PFC's purpose is, what it does and does not do)? Somewhat agree 4, Completely agree 11.
- Do members agree with and support PFC's collective interests? No 1, somewhat agree 3, completely agree 10.
- Are members willing to put the PFC's collective interests above their own in the interest of seeing projects move forward (i.e., if you don't always get what you want are you willing to support the commonly-held interests of the group)? No answers.
- Would you like to improve the PFC-PNF partnership? Completely agree 14.

## Observations:

- Why the 60-40 split on the first question? Should this be explored?
- While all felt collaboration is happening effectively, 12 (86%) responded with "somewhat agree." Why? Is this a reflection of differing definitions of collaboration or something else? Does it relate to the observation above, below, or maybe both?
- One member observed after answering the 4<sup>th</sup> question that PFC's zone of agreement seems to have shifted and needs to be evaluated.
- The question about collective vs. individual interests, which received no answers, revealed members feel the answer is nuanced and depends on how many times you are asked to "give" instead of "get" something. Linda Jackson observed many PFC members were willing to "give" when it came to RR Saddle and Cold July which were exclusively vegetation treatment projects.
- PFC desires to improve its partnership with the Payette.

Agreement that the PFC's zone of agreement should be discussed at a future meeting.

## News and Updates

- Garret Visser is stepping down from the Steering Committee. His term ends in November. His work plan has been re-directed and he has life changes coming that will affect his commitment. **Action:** Facilitator will investigate the process for filling this position.
- Based on feedback in January, meeting agendas and reference materials will now be accessible by clicking a link contained in the meeting notice email. Members reported this worked well and appreciate the change.
- PFC Forum:

- Under “Question” on the Forum, Dennis has posted a tip about what you can do to help ensure you get notifications that someone has commented on a post. Look for the posting called “How Do I Make Sure that I Receive Notification of Comments?”
- When someone posts during critical junctures (like the comment letter review in January), Dennis will forward notifications to PFC members as a back-up to ensure everyone receives those notices.
- Consider adding [support@uuki.live](mailto:support@uuki.live) to your email contacts. Doing so may help prevent your email program from thinking emails from the Forum is spam.
- The Facilitator will watch to make sure there aren’t multiple threads going up about the same subject on the Forum in the future.
- A reminder that all Zoom, hybrid, and in-person meetings are open to the public. Agendas and Zoom details for participation are posted on the PFC website’s home page a week or more in advance of a meeting. Meeting announcements are also emailed to over 220 people, not just PFC membership, the goal being transparency and ensuring that PFC is not perceived as an exclusive club.

**Adjourned at 1:15 pm.**

**Next meeting: March 21, 2024**



# MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project:	Payette Forest Coalition	Meeting Date:	February 15, 2024	Meeting Time:	10 am-2 pm
Facilitator:	Paul Litow	Place/Room:	McCall Supervisor's Office		

First Name	Last Name	Organization	E-Mail	Round Trip Miles	Round Trip Hours
Boches	Vandenburg	Woodgrain	rvvandenburg@woodgrain.com	200	4
Jim	Wassmuth	Emergent Forest	EVERGREENFIRE1NM@gmail.com	45	1
Frank	Schwartz	Wellsor River Cattle Assn.	frankmvt@gmail.com	130	3+
LARRY	Larson	V.C.	larsen2co.vauxh.w.us	84	2
Viki	Purdy	Adams County	rpurdy@adamsco.id.us	45	1 hr
Sandra	Mitchell	Idaho Recreational	SMitchell@alcoff.com	200	4+
April	Pippin	Heartland Back Country Horsemen	gloriapippin51@gmail.com	90	2
NEAL	THOMPSON	VC-COMMISSIONER	DNT520828@YAHOO.COM	2	5 MIN.
John	Lewinski	CITIZEN	chukshunter1@yahoo.com	-	-
Randy	Fox	Idaho Conservation League	rfox@idahoconservation.org	-	-
Linda	Jackson	Payette NF	Linda.L.Jackson@usda.gov	-	-



## PFC Meeting Sign-In (Remote) Feb 2024

1/18/2024 11:59:34	Gloria Pippin	Heartland Back Country Horsemen	gloriapippin51@gmail.com		
2/15/2024 10:07:16	Alex Ernst	IDPR, Recreation Bureau			
2/15/2024 10:07:22	Lin Davis	Circle C Ranches		0	0
2/15/2024 10:07:27	Wendy Green	Adams Soil & Water Conservation District		0	0
2/15/2024 10:07:33	Michael Gibson	Trout Unlimited	michael.gibson@tu.org	0	0
2/15/2024 10:07:48	Darren Parker	Senator Risch		0	0
2/15/2024 10:11:29	Ken Rider	Brundage Mountain		0	0
2/15/2024 10:12:43	Bill Moore	Southwest Idaho RC&D	swidrcd@idahorcd.org		
2/15/2024 10:13:27	Travis Barden	Idaho Forest Group	travis.barden@ifg.com		
2/15/2024 10:17:01	William A Cawthorne	Caldwell Idaho	7thcav329@gmail.com		
2/15/2024 11:18:49	Megan Parnell	Idaho Farm Bureau Federation	mparnell@idahofb.org		

# GRANITE GOOSE PROJECT

WHY RESTORE A LANDSCAPE?	ROLE OF THE PFC	PROJECT GOALS	WHERE ARE WE GOING?
<p><b>Current forest conditions depart from those desired.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current conditions depart from the historical range of landscape structure and function</li> <li>• The conditions may be an outcome of past management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timber production goals &amp; harvest methods</li> <li>• Fire suppression</li> <li>• Road network design</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The desired conditions are defined based on data and analysis, and referenced in the current forest plan and pending amendments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation conditions &amp; Wildlife Conservation Strategy (Appendix A)</li> <li>• Aquatic conservation strategy (Appendix B)</li> <li>• Watershed Condition Framework</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The conditions compromise the resiliency of the forest to recover from disturbance and adapt to climate change.</li> <li>• Restoration actions will help restore ecosystem function by altering forest structures, composition and their distribution (pattern) on the landscape.</li> </ul>	<p><b>We provide recommendations to the line officer on all phases of restoration.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Project Design</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommend treatment strategies, priorities &amp; sideboards/guidelines.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in scoping meetings</li> <li>• Review scoping comments</li> <li>• Comment on draft environmental impact statement (DEIS)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Implementation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review contract type and specifications</li> <li>• Recommend priorities for retained receipts of Stewardship Contracts</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Multi-party Monitoring</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the design &amp; implementation of project monitoring.</li> <li>• Conduct site review of completed contract services, and document the review.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Our recommendations will reflect the members' diverse interests.</b></p> <p><b>Wildlife</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species, as appropriate by need.</li> </ul> <p><b>Wildfire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve forest resiliency to wildfire by restoring Potential Vegetation Groups (PVG) toward their respective historical range of structure</li> <li>• Return fire to the landscape as an ecosystem process.</li> <li>• Improve the ability to manage wildfire and protect surrounding communities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Watershed Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve water quality and watershed health</li> </ul> <p><b>Forest Access &amp; Recreation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the road and trail network to support access for resource management, outdoor recreation, and public safety.</li> </ul> <p><b>Restoration Economics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommend actions which are financially responsible and contribute to the economic vitality of adjacent communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>We will provide timely recommendations by a consensus process.</b></p> <p><b>Payette Coalition Mission</b> Build diverse community support for forest restoration projects.</p> <p><b>Project Design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PFC will submit project recommendations to the line officer by.</li> </ul> <p><b>NEPA Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping begins</li> <li>• Review comments: DEIS</li> <li>• Record of Decision</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Multi-party Monitoring</b></p>

# GRANITE GOOSE PROJECT

KEY MEASURES (Indicators) FOR PFC GOALS			
Wildlife Habitat & Wildfire	Watershed Health	Forest Access	Economics/Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acres moved towards desired condition</li> <li>• PVG acres by tree size class &amp; acres by canopy closure class of the large tree size class, with emphasis on PVGs 2, 5, &amp; 6.</li> <li>• Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) acres treated</li> <li>• Acres by fire condition class (before and after treatment)</li> <li>• Change in elk security habitat</li> <li>• Habitat restoration requirements of endangered species recovery plans, including salmon, steelhead, and Northern Idaho ground squirrel (NIDGS) habitat quantity/distribution</li> <li>• Incorporate noxious weed data and weed free areas from the Early Detection Rapid Response Program</li> <li>• Native plants: distribution of native plant communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watershed Condition Class</li> <li>• Apply/review watershed condition indicators (12 indicator model) for each 6<sup>th</sup> order watershed</li> <li>• Identify condition class for each watershed prior to project</li> <li>• Estimate condition class for each watershed post-treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net change in open system roads</li> <li>• Miles of non-system, closed roads decommissioned</li> <li>• Change in miles of maintained trails – motorized, non-motorized</li> <li>• Forest access metrics will be supported by Transportation Analysis Planning (TAP), and not substitute for TAP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scale</b> of restoration (how much should be treated), i.e.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost/benefit of road restoration (miles)</li> <li>• Cost/benefit of stand harvest (acres)</li> <li>• Cost, by watershed, to change watershed condition class</li> <li>• Revenue as % of project cost</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Allocation</b> of restoration dollars – i.e., priority of treatment types</li> <li>• <b>Income Contribution</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job years resulting from project expenditures</li> <li>• Income contribution (dollars)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Note: PFC supports economic activities on the forest that contribute to the vitality of local communities, including activities such as commercial wood products, ecological restoration, livestock grazing, recreation, mining, etc. Project analysis metrics should include both positive (gains in income) and negative (decreases in income, if any) resulting from proposed restoration actions.</li> </ul>