



BEFORE THE REGIONAL FORESTER, INTERMOUNTAIN REGION, USDA FOREST SERVICE

PAYETTE FOREST COALITION

Objector

v.

Linda Jackson, Forest Supervisor

Responsible Official

Objection to the Cold July Restoration Project Draft Decision Notice, New Meadows Ranger District, Payette National Forest

Objector's Contact Information:

PAYETTE FOREST COALITION

P.O. Box 10 McCall, Idaho 83638

SteeringTeam@payetteforestcoalition.org

Certification of Filing

This objection was timely filed by electronic transmission to objections-intermtn-regional-office@usda.gov, ATTN: Objection Reviewing Officer.

DATED this 23 March, 2022.

Sincerely, Payette Forest Coalition Steering Team, Payette Forest Coalition

Objector's Notice, Statement of Reasons

Notice of Objection

Pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subpart B and § 218.5(a), the members of the Payette Forest Coalition (PFC) listed in Attachment 1 (appended to this document) object to the Cold July project, proposed by Payette National Forest (PNF) Forest Supervisor Linda Jackson on the New Meadows Ranger District.

Connection between prior specific comments

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 benefit to surrounding communities. The PFC has been engaged in discussions and deliberations on this project area as far back as March 2011. We have participated in numerous discussions about the specific aspects of the project during PFC meetings between 2011 and 2021, covering vegetation and landscape restoration, fuels management and fire mitigation, as well as future management actions for terrestrial and aquatic species of interest in the project area and management of roads and recreation in the project area. On April 21, 2021, the PFC provided overall recommendations to be applied to upcoming projects on this landscape, including this Cold July project. The PFC provided letters to the Payette National Forest on June 9, 2021, July 7, 2021 and December 16, 2021, reinforcing recommendations, providing clarifications and expressing our specific interests in the Forest providing adequate explanations for the action in the EA. The PFC reached consensus on recommendations to the Payette National Forest in December 2021 with regard to support for the Proposed Action and Draft Environmental Assessment. The PFC supports a draft Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact that is aligned with the recommendations and past letters of support the PFC has provided on this Cold July Project.

Statement of Reasons

The PFC has invested significant time and effort developing recommendations for the Cold July 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 Finding of No Significant Impact 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 important landscape restoration.

However, uncertainties exist in future steps toward implementation, in particular the potential for ecologically-uninformed attempts at litigation. We intend to use the objection process as a means to strengthen the project record, participate in any objection resolution discussions with other objectors, address any remaining issues of uncertainty, and update the approach to better guide project implementation as needed.

Should other objectors raise additional concerns or bring additional information to the Forest Service's attention, we hope to use the objection process to review this information and offer our perspective on any needed project modifications. We are concerned that if another party requests changes, the final outcome may not strike an appropriate balance between PFC's restoration goals.

If there are no other objections or no new relevant information is brought forward in the objection process and the Payette National Forest is committed to moving forward to implementation, the PFC would be willing to withdraw this objection.

Attachment 1
PFC Supportive Objection Voting Record

PFC Member Name	Organization	Support
Linden Davis	Circle C Ranches	Enthusiastically support
Gloria Pippin	Heartland Back Country Horsemen	Enthusiastically support
Ron C. Hamilton	Adams County Natural Resources Committee	I can live with it
Rick Tholen	Society of American Foresters	I can live with it
Rachel Vandenburg	Boise Cascade Wood Products	Enthusiastically support
Wendy Green	Adams Soil & Water Conservation District	I can live with it
Randy Fox	Idaho Conservation League	Enthusiastically support
Michael Gibson	Trout Unlimited	I can live with it
Sandra F. Mitchell	Idaho Recreation Council/Idaho State Snowmobile Assoc.	I can live with it
Larry Laxson	Valley County	I can live with it
Frank Schwartz	Weiser River Cattle Association	I can live with it
Garret Visser	Idaho Wildlife Federation	I can live with it