



***NEWS
RELEASE***

United States
Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Salmon - Challis National
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Salmon-Challis N.F. Submits Proposals for ARRA Funding

The Salmon-Challis National Forest has submitted numerous projects at the request of the Forest Service Washington Office for consideration as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Nationally, the Forest Service will receive \$1.15 billion to allocate to projects that will create private sector jobs. Over 30,000 jobs are expected to be created through this Forest Service funding.

“The ARRA funding is all about jobs, jobs, jobs,” said Salmon-Challis Forest Supervisor Bill Wood, “and the intent of the projects proposed by the Forest is to create private jobs to accomplish the projects through contracting.”

The Administration’s expectation is that much of the funding is contracted out as soon as possible and the Forest worked quickly to respond to the request for project proposals. “A significant amount of work went into developing the proposal in a one week time frame,” Wood said. “The Forest tried to position the local counties in the best light to be competitive for the funding.”

Categories for the projects include Capital Investments (improving roads, trails, bridges and facilities); Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Mitigation; Improving Forest Health; and work on Abandoned Mines.

All of the projects proposed by the Forest were submitted to the Forest Service Washington Office for review last week. They will submit the final proposals to the Department of Agriculture by the end of this week. “We expect selected projects to be approved by the Secretary of Agriculture within two to three weeks,” Wood noted. Local Forest officials don’t know what the national selection criteria will be, but expect that the unemployment percentages of counties will be a big factor in determining which projects are approved.

Wood also said that until the final selection of the projects the Forest will have no information as to what this may mean locally. He did say “If the Forest is fortunate

enough to have projects selected, we will quickly start developing contracts to accomplish the work.

Forest Service funding through ARRA may also be available through the State for increasing biomass utilization, treatment of hazardous fuels on state and private lands, wood to energy grants, volunteer fire assistance and state fire assistance.