



WEST CENTRAL
IDAHO INITIATIVE
CFLRP

JANUARY 2020



All photos were taken within the West Central Idaho Initiative CFLRP Boundary

This proposal is subject to any other requirements that the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, determines to be necessary for the efficient and effective administration of the program.

West Central Idaho Initiative – Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Proposal

Proposal Overview

Project Map

The West Central Idaho Initiative Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project (WCII-CFLRP) encompasses 2.25 million acres, including around 597,000 and 1.07 million acres of the Boise National Forest (BNF) and Payette National Forest (PNF) (Forests), respectively, and close to 583,000 acres of other ownership including private, state, and other federal lands. Attachment A shows Forest, WCII-CFLRP, and Shared Stewardship boundaries, planned restoration project and mill locations and land ownership. The Forests' landscape restoration needs are highlighted in the 2018 Wildfire Hazard Potential, Tree Mortality (TCA 1), and Insect and Pathogen Risk (TCA 8) spatial layers in the [Landscape Restoration Project Proposal Map](#) (WebMap). Additionally, the Forests have developed more detailed layers for Mean Fire Return Interval (MFRI), fire cycles missed by Potential Vegetation Group (PVG), density of Maintenance Level 2-5 roads and motorized trails, Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed anadromous fish critical habitat, and invasive plants susceptibility. These layers have been uploaded to [AGOL](#), and a link to the AGOL map is included in the WebMap attribute table. Examples of these layers are depicted in the images below.

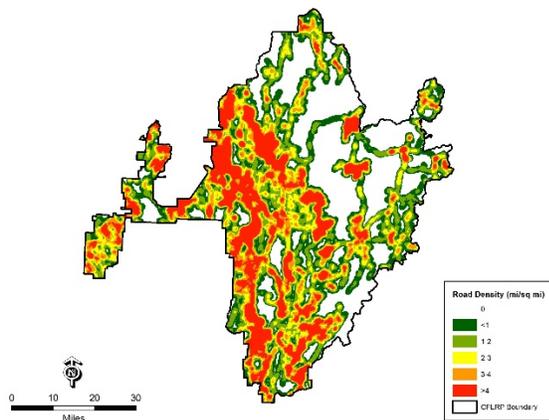


Figure 1: Density ML2-5 roads + motorized trails
Dark Green = 0 mi/mi² Red = >4 mi/mi²

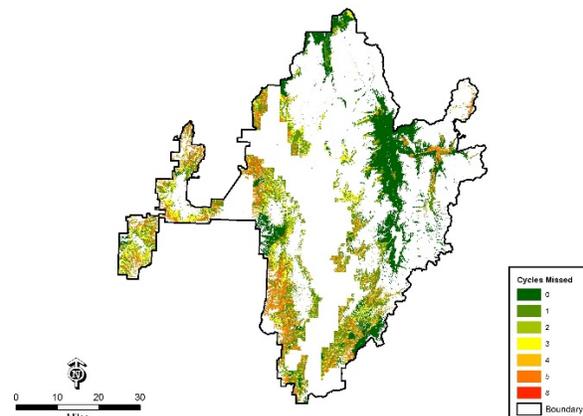


Figure 2: MFRI fire cycles missed by PVG
Dark Green = 0 Red = 8 fire cycles missed

Landscape Boundaries

The WCII-CFLRP area is a Regional and Statewide priority landscape as identified by the deeply dedicated collaborative groups [Boise Forest Coalition](#) (BFC) and [Payette Forest Coalition](#) (PFC) and numerous partners with funding that share restoration goals and successful stewardship strategies. It provides ample opportunities for watershed and vegetation restoration projects, which are supported by the BNF and PNF Forest Plans. The Forests have established agreements with [Idaho Department of Lands](#) (IDL), [Idaho Fish and Game](#) (IDFG), [Idaho Conservation Corps](#) (ICC), [Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association](#) (SITPA) and other partners that allow the Forests to prioritize work, bolster social support, and more efficiently use resources to accomplish restoration goals. The 2010 [Idaho Forest Action Plan](#), which is a

long-term, coordinated strategy for reducing threats to Idaho's forests while increasing the social, economic, and environmental benefits they provide, was also used in prioritizing the WCII-CFLRP area. Additionally, the Forests work closely with local governments to prioritize and compliment their efforts for projects under the [USFS State and Private Forestry Landscape Scale Restoration Program](#), such as the 2013 [Valley County WUI Protections Development Project](#). The 2018 [Idaho Shared Stewardship](#) agreement, [Good Neighbor Authority](#) (GNA) agreement, and [Nez Perce Tribe](#) (NPT) Partnership, combined with numerous signed NEPA decisions that are ready to implement, would improve watershed function, benefit the local economy, reduce the threat of uncharacteristic wildfire to communities and wildlife habitat, and restore conditions toward a functioning ecosystem.

The WCII-CFLRP includes high use recreational areas, Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), more-actively managed timber lands, and less-actively managed areas for retention of other ecosystem services (i.e. recommended Wilderness and Inventoried Roadless Areas). This diversity in landscape coupled with other characteristics, such as habitation by species listed as Threatened and Endangered (T&E) under the ESA and the existence of forest products infrastructure, allows for landscape-scale management activities, including watershed restoration, prescribed fire, and timber harvest, to meet land management objectives. As reflected in the WebMap and AGOL spatial layers highlighted for this project, working at a large scale is important to effectively reduce the risk of undesired wildfires, improve forest health, reduce spread of invasive species, restore fish and wildlife habitat, protect cultural values, restore watershed integrity and function, and provide great benefits to the local economy.

Economic, Social, and Ecological Context

Current economic and social conditions and resources, services and values at risk

In the six WCII-CFLRP counties (Adams, Boise, Gem, Idaho, Valley, and Washington), current average earnings are about \$28,000 less than the national average, and per capita income is about \$15,000 less. Over the last two decades, average wages in wood products manufacturing shrank 14%, timber employment declined 47%, harvesting jobs shrank nearly 65%, mill jobs decreased by about 39%, and manufacturing jobs fell 42%. Meanwhile, population growth in residents 65 years and older has grown, and there are higher rates of non-institutionalized disabled residents and those without health insurance. These populations are more directly affected by disasters due to evacuation issues and medical conditions aggravated by heat and air pollution from wildfires. From a cultural and social perspective, there are risks to the NPT from loss of Chinook salmon, which is deeply tied to the Tribe's culture and history, as well as risks to recreational fisheries and sustainable harvesting and gathering on the Forests. Due to lack of tax base, local county governments are heavily dependent on activities and payments from Federal lands. Grazing by permittees on NFS lands has also provided economic and social benefits to the counties within the area. The Forests also provide high-quality recreation opportunities for activities, such as hiking, camping, skiing, snowmobiling, and rafting; these activities are supported by local operators, special use permittees, and concessionaires. The

common thread of employment opportunities and federal land is that the sustained economic viability of the communities is dependent upon healthy resilient forests.

In summary, key values at risk from a social and economic perspective include timber and recreation infrastructure and employment, sustainability of multiple uses on the Forests, and cultural and social values that are tied to the land.

Current ecological conditions and values at risk

Vegetation and Plant Communities: The Forests use the Potential Vegetation Group (PVG) classification system. Vegetation and plant communities of the area vary across the region, depending on elevation, temperature and precipitation conditions. These range from dry ponderosa pine stands to high elevation subalpine fir stands. The lower elevations are composed of dry montane forest characterized by stands of ponderosa pine either alone or in combination with Douglas-fir and western larch. Although dry montane forest is a fire-maintained ecosystem that historically was sculpted by low and mixed severity burns, the history of management action has made these forests more susceptible to stand-replacing events. Higher elevations are composed of moist mix conifer forest characterized by stands of Douglas-fir, either alone or in combination with grand fir, other true firs, lodgepole pine, and other pine species. These higher elevation ecosystems historically were sculpted by mixed severity, often lethal fires. Whitebark pine, which is a candidate species for ESA listing, is ecologically very important in maintaining snow pack and regulating runoff, initiating succession after fire or other disturbance events and providing seeds that are a high-energy food source for many species of wildlife. Threats to whitebark pine include habitat loss and mortality from white pine blister rust, mountain pine beetle, catastrophic fire and fire suppression, environmental effects resulting from climate change, and regulatory insufficiency. Leaving the Forests in their current state would likely make them more susceptible to stand-replacing fires and epidemic insect outbreaks, potentially leading to slow recovery or establishment of an altered ecological state that is neither natural nor desirable.

Invasive and Exotic Species: Both Forests have identified several thousand acres of invasive plant infestations. The main invasive species of concern currently include spotted knapweed, diffuse knapweed, gypsyflower, dalmatian toadflax, rush skeletonweed, Canada thistle, leafy spurge, yellow star thistle, and sulfur cinquefoil. The Forests' Invasive Plants Susceptibility spatial layer in the AGOL map shows that another 400,000 acres are susceptible to becoming infested with weeds within the WCII-CFLRP area.

Insect and Disease Concerns: As shown in the Tree Mortality and Insect and Pathogen Risk spatial layers in the WebMap, the WCII-CFLRP area has been heavily impacted by insect and disease, and large areas are at further risk. Insects of concern include tussock moth, non-native balsam wooly adelgid, pine beetle, and spruce budworm. The landscape within the WCII-CFLRP area exhibits a different pattern of forest cover and structure types compared to what historically existed there. These changes have altered the natural succession of the forest and have affected the normal functioning of ecological processes, such as fire and insects and disease relationships. The area has a high density of trees, which has created competition for

nutrients and stress on the trees, thereby limiting their natural development. The high density of trees has also created a corridor in which insects and disease can spread easily.

Fish, Wildlife, and T&E Species: The WCII-CFLRP area includes ESA-listed as threatened Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout and designated critical habitat for all three species, which is shown in the Forests' Critical Habitat spatial layer in AGOL. The most recent Recovery Plans for these species (2015 BT, 2017 STH and CHI) all concluded that historical habitat loss and fragmentation, interaction with nonnative species, and fish passage issues are widely regarded as the most significant primary threat factors affecting salmonids. Many of the critically important watersheds for both migration and spawning/juvenile rearing have habitats that are classified as Functioning at Risk under the Watershed Condition Indicators (WCIs). Fish habitat connectivity and hydrologic function are being impacted by culverts, threatening the long-term viability of locally isolated populations, and sediment delivery from system and non-system roads is contributing to degraded water conditions.

Wildlife species within the WCII-CFLRP area include ESA-listed Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel (NIDGS) (threatened) and North American wolverine (proposed threatened). The 2003 NIDGS Recovery Plan identifies the primary threat to the species as habitat loss due to forest encroachment into formerly suitable meadow habitats. Forest encroachment results in habitat fragmentation, eliminates dispersal corridors, and confines NIDGS populations into small isolated habitat islands. NIDGS are endemic to only two counties in Idaho, both of which are in the WCII-CFLRP area. Forest sensitive species on IDFG's Species of Greatest Conservation Need list include NIDGS, white-headed woodpecker, Lewis's woodpecker, fisher, Columbia spotted frog, and great gray owl. Elk is a Species of Special Interest and is considered when managing for big game habitat, including critical winter range. Low to mid-elevation dry montane forests provide crucial habitat for this wide range of species. This forest type is considered a threatened ecosystem, and Idaho Partners-In-Flight identified late-seral ponderosa pine as the second "highest priority" habitat for restoration in Idaho. Past management activities, including fire suppression, have degraded this habitat type to the point where there is decreased range and population size for several species. The Forests' multi-scale assessments indicate that the loss and decrease in quality of habitat are due to several factors: substantial reductions in the abundance and extent of the large tree size class and old forest habitat, especially legacy ponderosa pine, western larch, and large snags in managed areas; substantial increases in tree densities and ladder fuels within stands; and reductions in forest cover from uncharacteristic wildfire and/or insect and disease events.

Watershed Condition, Function, and Water Quality: Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's Integrated Report (IDEQ 2016) identifies 1,055 of the 2,755 waterbodies assessed within or downstream of the WCII-CFLRP boundary as having some level of water quality impairment that limits full support of beneficial uses. Current Watershed Condition Framework (WCF) ratings for most watersheds in the WCII-CFLRP area are "Functioning at Risk" or "Impaired Function," and there are many watersheds on the Forests that have been identified since the 1980s as being moderate to high priority for restoration. As the table below

highlights, there are 24 Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) priority watersheds and 71 Watershed and Aquatic Recovery Strategy (WARS) watersheds with ‘active-high’ priority between the Forests.

ACS and WARS Priority Watersheds*					
ACS Priority		WARS	Restoration Priority		
			High	Moderate	Low
Yes	24	Active	71	46	45
No	173	Passive	24	2	7
		Conserve			2
*This table breaks out the 197 watersheds (as identified at the time of the strategy development) by ACS priority (yes, no) and illustrates the WARS Priority and Strategy associated with each.					

In the last seven years, the Forests have successfully implemented actions in three of the four ACS Priority Watersheds with existing Watershed Restoration Action Plans (WRAPs); the fourth is nearly complete. The implementation of these actions changed the condition class of these three watersheds to ‘Fully Functioning.’ In other watersheds, the Forests have been working to reconnect aquatic habitat, decommission roads, increase ground cover for soil development, and mimic historic fire regimes. For example, in the form of watershed restoration activity partnership with the NPT, the Tribe contributes matching funds, which have helped to remove excess road inventory from the landscape on the Forests. This CFLRP is an opportunity for the Forests to increase and target our efforts.

Roads and Trails: Within the WCII-CFLRP area there are approximately 3476 miles of Maintenance Level 2-5 roads and 2311 miles of motorized trails. These roads and trails are of particular interest from a wildlife, water quality, and fisheries perspective as higher motorized road and trail densities correlate to increased habitat fragmentation and reduced wildlife habitat security as well as increased potential risk for water quality and fisheries impacts due to runoff and sedimentation and fish passage obstruction. The density of motorized road and trail miles in the WCII-CFLRP ranges from 0 to 15.2 miles/square mile, as shown in Figure 1 and the Road Density spatial layer in AGOL. The map displays road densities in 1 mile/square mile increments. Density greater than 1.7 mile/square mile is considered high risk to wildlife and fisheries resources under the Forests’ Plans and in scientific literature. Yellow, orange, and red colors depict areas with densities of more than 2.0 miles/square mile of motorized road and trail and are areas of potential restoration opportunities to improve wildlife and fisheries habitat and address water quality concerns due to road-related factors.

In summary, key values at risk from an ecological perspective include further departure from desired vegetation conditions, loss and degradation of habitat, including for T&E species, reduced growth and higher mortality of trees from insect and disease, increased risk of invasive species infestations, and impacts to watershed function and water quality.

Wildfire Conditions

Current and Desired Fire Regime: Similar to other forests of western North America, the landscape mosaic of tree density in dry montane forests of the WCII-CFLRP area is greatly influenced by disturbance events. Fire constitutes the primary disturbance, but insects, disease, and windthrow also play a role. Generally, the area experiences a prolonged dry season every year, which creates the conditions that support fire. Currently fuel loadings in the grass and timber litter are higher due to longer return intervals, as depicted in Figure 2 and the MFRI fire cycles missed by PVG spatial layer in AGOL. These conditions can result in higher severity fires. The desired fire regime would reflect historic conditions: historically, fires on drier sites in the low-mid elevation mixed conifer burned in the non-lethal fire regime while wetter and cooler sites at mid-high elevation burned in the mixed 1-2 fire regimes. Low-severity surface fires promoted low-density forests with grassy understories and large early seral species, such as Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir, that were fire resilient. These fires were characterized by creeping through the understory, consuming surface fuels, and having small pockets of overstory mortality with occasional dense pockets of fuel and stands on steep slopes receiving higher consumption and mortality. The mean fire return interval for these fire regimes was 15-20 years, which favored regeneration of conifers, like Ponderosa pine, by exposing bare mineral soils. At the mid-high elevations in wetter and cooler sites, or on steep slopes, by contrast, mixed conifer stands experienced some crown fire due to larger fuel accumulations and dense stands. The mean fire return interval in these stands was 15-36 years, which led to higher fuel loadings, denser stands, and larger overstory mortality patches. Fire history data and forest age structures show variation in the history of fire severity along elevation, topographic, and moisture gradients within mixed conifer forests. Given the extensiveness of high to very high wildfire potential throughout the WCII-CFLRP area, the Forests are looking at landscape scale wildfire conditions and opportunities.

Current WUI and Community Wildfire Protection: Population growth in the WCII-CFLRP WUI has increased and more communities are at risk from wildfire due to the increase of hazardous fuels, such as surface, ladder, and canopy fuels. The 2018 wildfire hazard potential map (WHPM) shows most of the WCII-CFLRP area has high or very high potential for wildfire hazard, including within the WUI. All six WCII-CFLRP counties have Wildfire Mitigation Plans or All-Hazard Mitigation Plans that address wildfire mitigation: Adams and Boise (2012), Gem (2018), Idaho (2015), Valley (2018), and Washington (2019). These plans were developed using the best available science from partners and integrated local and regional knowledge about wildfire risks and behavior. The State of Idaho, in partnership with USFS, has identified an area that encompasses most of the proposed WCII-CFLRP boundary as a priority for Shared Stewardship in Southern Idaho to address communities at risk to wildfire. Region 4 developed a wildfire hazard risk map by forest ranging from very low-very high using fire behavior, fire type, and fire effects as metrics to assign ratings. Idaho Department of Lands used that information in conjunction with theirs to establish a priority treatment area.

Values at risk from wildfire, both in the WUI and the broader WCII-CFLRP area, include the potential for high severity fires that would destroy forest ecosystems and habitat and result in

increased erosion and sedimentation in streams, and that would put people living in proximity to the WUI and nearby communities at risk for loss of property and infrastructure, reduced human and forest health, and threats to livelihoods and lives.

Landscape Strategy and Proposed Treatments

Desired Conditions and Strategy

Fisheries, Roads, and Trails: The WCII-CFLRP area is covered by the ACS, which identifies road density targets and certain roads and culverts that have a direct effect on aquatic movements and habitat. ESA-listed fish species would benefit from improved water quality and overall watershed function from decommissioning roads and road surfacing. Unauthorized roads in the WCII-CFLRP area would be prioritized for decommissioning, and roads with greatest impacts on fish species would be priority candidates. Successful road restoration activities would include: surfacing on high priority roads needed for the transportation system but focused where sediment is currently being delivered to streams, replacement of identified culverts that function as barriers to fish passage with Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) structures (e.g. open bottom arches) to restore habitat connectivity, and implementing site-specific streambank and wetland restoration activities where stream channels, wetlands, or riparian areas are in a degraded condition to improve water temperatures and quantity. Improvements to popular fishing access points would minimize impacts to Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs) and decrease sediment delivery in and around spawning habitat. The Forests have agreements in place with the NPT that have resulted in the integration of additional [GRAIP](#), [eDNA](#), and dispersed recreation data into project design. The Tribe is also collecting post-restoration monitoring data on road decommissioning riparian vegetation, and additional opportunities for data collection and monitoring exist in priority watersheds for salmon restoration.

User-created trails would be prioritized for removal where resource impacts are occurring. The Forests would evaluate opportunities for trail establishment, maintenance, and improvement and develop them through collaborative efforts to enhance the recreational experience and access. The eastern half of the WCII-CFLRP is part of the Central Idaho Trails Priority Stewardship Area. The Trails Stewardship Act requires USFS to increase the role of partners and volunteers in trail maintenance through trail maintenance priority areas and volunteer and partner strategy development. The Forests will continue to build and strengthen our relationships with all partners through collaborative conservation efforts in the improvement of local recreational trail systems in coordination with our partners, who include: Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), Idaho Trails Association, Idaho Conservation Corps (ICC), Montana Conservation Corps, Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), Back Country Horseman, Central Idaho Trail Riders Alliance, Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association, McCall Area Snowmobile Club, and Idaho State Snowmobile Association, as well as numerous local volunteer groups such as Emmett Roughriders ATV, Boise ATV club, Canyon County ATV club, Canyon County Back Country Horseman, Squaw Butte Back Country Horseman, Treasure Valley Trails Machine Association, and Southwest Idaho Mountain Bike Association. By improving the

trail systems, local recreational experiences improve, and local economics are positively impacted through the purchases of local services and amenities.

Wildlife and T& E Species: Portions of the project area are covered by the BNF's Wildlife Conservation Strategy (WCS), which identifies high priority watersheds and habitat types for treatment. The PNF also uses the science behind the WCS, along with the 2005 Idaho Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), to identify restoration priorities within the WCII-CLFRP area. The WCII-CFLRP landscape provides another avenue for the NIDGS recovery plan that is already being implemented through habitat restoration actions. Habitat for lynx occurs in fragmented patches in the area, and the Forests would identify opportunities to improve connectivity for this species. The WCII-CFLRP area has also been identified as important to the sustainability of nesting and foraging habitat for migratory birds and habitat for wide-ranging mammals, such as elk, bighorn sheep, wolverine, bear, and mountain lion.

NIDGS, Forest sensitive species, and big game would benefit from moving vegetation toward the desired conditions defined in the Forest Plans, wildlife conservation strategies, and the most recent science addressing restoration and management of wildlife habitat. Restoration efforts would focus on maintaining and promoting dry, lower elevation, large tree, and old forest characteristics for the associated wildlife species with a focus on the processes, function, patch size, and diversity of forested habitats. Treatments are designed around promoting and maintaining development of fire-resilient, large tree size class stands containing predominantly early seral tree species (ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, quaking aspen, and western larch) with low canopy cover in PVGs 2 and 5, emphasizing creation/retention of old forest characteristics. Treatments would maintain or re-establish fire-resilient stands containing a preponderance of early seral tree species (western larch, quaking aspen, ponderosa pine, and Douglas-fir) in areas where they have been, or are at risk of being, extirpated in PVG 6 and 7, emphasizing creation/retention of old forest characteristics. Additionally, decommissioning of unneeded roads would increase habitat patch size, increase hiding cover, and reduce the loss of large snags removed for firewood. These align with Forest Plan strategies to address elk vulnerability and security as it relates to road density and travel management impacts.

Invasive and Exotic Species: On the BNF, the essential foundation of weed management is to effectively implement Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) principles for the detection, containment, and control of noxious weeds, which would maintain existing low levels of infestations and distribution of noxious weeds on the BNF. On the PNF, weed detection and inventory remains an important component of integrated weed management. Recently, fire-disturbed habitats are highly susceptible to noxious weed infestation establishment and spread, and the WCII-CFLRP would move the ecosystem toward a properly functioning condition. Planned invasive species treatments are detailed in Attachment B.

Insect & Disease Concerns: Vegetation density reduction, reintroduction of natural disturbance, and other restoration activities would start moving the landscape towards a more historical range of variability. Landscape diversity allows for historical disturbance processes (e.g. insect and disease) to occur at moderate levels with low risks for uncharacteristic disturbance. Desired

conditions that emulate historical levels of structure, density, and disturbance processes will result in the highest level of ecosystem functionality, which will be important for mitigating concerns of large-scale insect and disease activity.

Strategy Alignment with Other Landscape Restoration and Stewardship Efforts: The Forests propose to use a broad-scale watershed condition analysis to find synergies between existing and future watershed restoration, fire and fuels, recreation, and vegetation management needs. This would provide the Forests with the opportunity to further focus our efforts—to use the models, science, and experience at our disposal to integrate Forest Plan guidance with the WCATT indicators to identify focus watersheds on both Forests for WCF priority. These priority watersheds could then be integrated into vegetation and fuels management projects to refine restoration activities. Finding restoration synergies between land and water coincides with goals and objectives for impaired waterbodies in the Idaho 305b Integrated Report (IDEQ 2019) and existing watershed and aquatic habitat restoration initiatives. Developed in partnership with the State, Tribes, and citizen coalitions, this approach would integrate with regional and State strategies. There are multiple shared stewardship projects within the WCII-CFLRP area that are in either the planning or implementation phase that integrate road decommissioning, riparian planting, removing or replacing road crossings of streams to restore aquatic organism passage, and vegetation or other treatments intended to reduce threats to soil processes and hydrologic function. These activities improve multiple WCATT indicators leading to maintaining or improving water quality, riparian, and aquatic habitats and overall watershed condition.

The WCII-CFLRP includes portions of the Governor’s [Southern Idaho Shared Stewardship Priority Landscape](#) and is part of the national insect and disease area designations. The WCII-CFLRP area is identified in the Forest Plans to have high priority areas for restoring vegetation and aquatic conservation. It includes WUI and has been a focus for collaboration with the BFC since 2012 and PFC since 2009. A variety of existing and potential new partnerships would be enhanced by the WCII-CFLRP, such as with the NPT, to restore function and integrity of watersheds with ESA-listed and culturally important anadromous fisheries. The GNA agreement with IDL aims at restoration and resilient landscape objectives across ownership boundaries through cooperative agreements and would be enhanced by the WCII-CFLRP (see Attachment H.) Cooperative efforts would help improve watershed and forest health and resilience, reduce threats to communities and watersheds from catastrophic wildfires, and create more jobs and economic benefits.

Vegetation Treatments and Alignment of Restoration Goals with Best Available Science: The WCII-CFLRP would use a wide range of vegetation treatments (see Attachment B) including prescribed fire, non-commercial thinning, commercial treatments, and wildfires managed for resource benefits to move toward the desired conditions specified in the BNF and PNF Forest Plans. The Forests will continue to work with the collaborative groups and other stakeholders in the identification of other tools/methodologies, such as livestock grazing management for invasive species/weed reduction and the utilization of biomass as local markets are developed, using the best available science to achieve ecological restoration goals. The desired conditions

contained in the Forest Plans are based upon research on the historical range of variability ([Morgan and Parsons 2001](#)). These desired conditions specify forest composition, structure, density, snag, and coarse woody debris levels and provide guidance regarding the ecological processes (e.g. fire) to create resilient ecosystems. The Forests' management direction, and the strategy for the WCII-CFLRP, is to maintain and restore old forest characteristics (e.g. snags, legacy trees, coarse woody debris, and spatial variability). The appropriateness (e.g. extent and arrangement) of these old forest characteristics is based on the best available science for the forest types in the WCII-CFLRP area. The WCII-CFLRP restoration goals and methods are aligned with recommendations from the BFC and PFC, and they are consistent with our NEPA documents. Our Forest Plans, wildlife conservation strategies, and ACSs reference hundreds of peer reviewed articles, and our implementation guides and subsequent publications have been developed to ensure efficient and effective implementation of best available science.

Wildfire Risk Reduction

Forest restoration that maximizes diversity, minimizes species loss, reduces fragmentation caused by roads, allows for endemic levels of disturbance (e.g. natural fire regimes), and restores habitat would yield the greatest resilience to the impacts of climate change and likely increase the ability to adapt to, and survive, a changing climate regime. Treatments would be designed to integrate fire management planning, community protection activities, and a broad program of forest restoration to reduce uncharacteristic fuel loads through thinning and prescribed burning. The reintroduction of fire and restoration treatments would reduce the potential for uncharacteristic wildland fire behavior while creating conditions that facilitate the safe re-establishment and maintenance of natural fire regimes. Opportunities to use wildland fire to meet restoration objectives would be considered where appropriate (such as inventoried roadless areas, research natural areas, or restored stands). In these areas, natural fires can burn without risk to communities, and treatments would be strategically timed and placed to facilitate operational management of those fires. Continued coordination with the State and public outreach to address smoke management issues would be paramount. One of the goals of working collaboratively with stakeholders through the Southern Idaho Shared Stewardship priority area is to prioritize, plan, and implement landscape scale treatments with an emphasis on WUI treatments, which would allow the Forests to co-manage risks across broad landscapes and ownerships and engage stakeholders in managing fire for resource benefits at the right time and in the right place to achieve ecological, economic, and social goals.

WCII-CFLRP Fuels Treatments: Prescribed burning is planned for nearly all harvested and thinned acres, some stands that are not in need of mechanical treatment, aspen stands, and areas with scattered timber, grass, and shrubs. These treatments would re-introduce fire and help reduce uncharacteristic fuel loads. This strategy would treat uncharacteristic vegetation and fuel conditions across landscapes and build resiliency to future climate predictions by reducing undesirable fire effects. Moving these stands to more desirable conditions would also reduce cost for future maintenance treatments across the landscape.

WUI: When applying fire near high-value assets, such as homes and timber, the amount of burn preparation increases (e.g. prior thinning to reduce ladder fuels, notifications, coordination with partnering agencies, etc.), and the resources allocated typically increase. Smoke management becomes more labor-intensive and limits timing and size of burns in and near WUI areas. The cost per hectare increases in the WUI, but it also drops significantly after the first prescribed burn. Our fire management strategy within the WUI is to prepare many sites through mechanical means then follow with prescribed fire. Maintenance using prescribed fire is planned at intervals frequent enough to maintain low surface fuel conditions and thus, limit the threat of wildfire. People in the communities around the Forests, including numerous Home Owners Associations and individual land owners, are currently increasing their own efforts to improve forest resilience on their lands, which includes preparing for and using prescribed fire. The Forests anticipate expanded opportunities within the WCII-CFLRP landscape to use natural ignitions as a management strategy for fire across a broader landscape, which would actively move stands into a more historical return interval in alignment with our Forest Plan Direction.

Remote and Roadless Areas: Strategies for applying fire across the forest change with landscape conditions. Remote and roadless areas, including but not limited to designated wilderness, are priority areas for the use of natural ignitions. Prescribed fire is an excellent tool to facilitate greater use of those natural ignitions, especially to protect the human values that exist in these remote areas. When used within the footprints of the large wildfires of the recent past that exhibit very homogenous and extensive coarse woody debris loadings, prescribed fire can provide a network of habitats and connective corridors for wildlife in addition to adding diversity to age class and structure of the previously burned areas and surrounding landscape.

Roadbed Landscapes: Many efficiencies are gained by burning across large areas, especially when burning large areas within a network of roads. Fire and Engineering staff work together to reduce ladder fuels and tree densities along roadways. This improves roadway safety (e.g. travel conditions and sight distance) and drainage and eases the application and management of prescribed fire. This reduces cost and risk to firefighters by limiting the amount of line construction needed and using the existing roads for containment. Recent maintenance burns in these landscapes have also shown that tree mortality, escapes, and smoke impacts are far less than with the initial prescribed burns. Costs of the maintenance burns are generally 30-50 percent of the cost of initial applications of prescribed fire.

Cross-boundary Collaboration, Planning, and Implementation: The 2017 SITPA agreement was established to assist with resources and use of the POD and the national Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) for prescribed burning. In 2019, a regional agreement was also created with the Bureau of Land Management to use resources and supply needs from the Boise National Cache. Cross-boundary work is being accomplished using the Wyden Authority, which allows USFS to enter into cooperative agreements with willing Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments; private and nonprofit entities; and private landowners to benefit resources within watersheds on NFS lands. GNA and Shared Stewardship will also aid in planning and implementing cross boundary work. The Forests will continue to prioritize projects within the

WCII-CFLRP boundary with our Idaho/Wyoming POD, State agencies, PFC and BFC, and our other partners, leading to successful planning and implementation.

Benefits to Local Communities

The landscape scale WCII-CFLRP would increase jobs in the area in forest products and restoration and help ensure the sustainability of those jobs into the future. The WCII-CFLRP would provide an increased and more stable and predictable supply of wood products, including saw logs and small timber, such as post and poles, to support the recently (2017) opened Woodgrain Millwork facility and other existing infrastructure. This symbiotic relationship with local industry provides opportunities to improve forest health, watershed health, and fish and wildlife habitat through thinning, road improvement, riparian enhancement, invasive species management, and fuels treatment. Revenue generated from stewardship contracts helps offset the restoration treatment costs for road and trail improvements, timber stand improvement, AOPs, and prescribed fire.

There is a strong and diverse partnership composition within the WCII-CFLRP boundary that provides local work opportunities. These partners include: ICC, IDL, IDFG, USFWS, and IDPR Trail Rangers; USFS volunteers, including the Heartland Chapter of Idaho Back Country Horsemen, ICC crews, and Council Education Resource Crew (CERC); and other USFS personnel and volunteers. The Forests would be able to provide employment opportunities for local youth through the YCC program. YCC crews would work and acquire conservation education in natural resource-based areas including recreation, range, watershed, wildlife, and fisheries within the WCII-CFLRP area. A great example of the positive benefits of the YCC program is highlighted here: (<http://fsweb.r4.fs.fed.us/unit/sc/contest/index.shtml>). The crew leader for the YCC group won First Place in the Region 4 photo/video contest for 2019 for her video documentary of the West Zone YCC summer of work on the PNF.

The economic goals for the WCII-CFLRP are to create a sustainable suite of jobs, support continued vegetation restoration objectives, including fuel reduction on the Forests and private and state lands, and develop sustainable land uses and management strategies that contribute to county economic development goals while meeting public demand for wood products. A key objective is to maintain existing infrastructure by supporting existing large and small wood products processing facilities, logging contractors, log trucking, and companies specializing in fuels reduction and vegetation restoration. Social goals of the WCII-CFLRP include increased collaboration with partners, restoration of the Forests to ensure sustainable use by the public and building stronger and more resilient communities within and adjacent to the WCII-CFLRP area through economic growth and community engagement. The beneficiaries of the WCII-CFLRP are the public who use our forests in multiple ways and WCII-CFLRP area communities who are sustained by them. In addition to employment benefits, there would be community benefits, such as sustainable gathering, hunting, fishing, and recreation and homeowner benefits from reduced fire risk along the WUI. Counties would benefit from revenues generated by timber sales, which in turn are used to fund schools.

The WCII-CFLRP aims at incorporating an all-lands approach by bringing landowners and stakeholders together across boundaries in conjunction with Shared Stewardship and GNA to decide on common goals for the landscapes they share. This approach brings multiple state government, federal government, and non-government organizations, including the BFC and PFC, together to achieve long-term outcomes based on science and socioeconomics. Our collective responsibility is to work through landscape-scale conservation to meet public expectations for all the services people obtain from forests and grasslands.

The WCII-CFLRP aligns closely with community plans to respond to wildfire. For example, in 2004 the Adams County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee, in cooperation with Northwest Management, Inc., developed a WUI Wildfire Mitigation Plan, which describes strategies for reducing wildfire risks that threaten people, structures, infrastructure, and the unique ecosystems in Adams County. This plan was developed using the best available science from all partners and integrated local and regional knowledge about wildfire risks and behavior. The plan addressed wildfire threats within the WCII-CFLRP area and private lands adjacent to the landscape and in the Little Salmon River where the town of Pinehurst is recognized as a community at risk. The county mitigation plan recommended fuel reduction treatments similar to the PFC's recommendations: (1) reducing hazardous fuels through timber harvest, (2) slash piling and burning or chipping, and (3) under-burning. The plan also addressed the need to reduce the risk of crown fire during a wildfire event.

Utilization of Forest Restoration Byproducts

Forest products from the WCII-CFLRP area are currently processed in medium and large mills located in Tamarack (Evergreen Forest Products), Emmett (Woodgrain Lumber), Grangeville (Idaho Forest Group), and Eastern Oregon (Woodgrain and Boise Cascade). These mills have been retooled in recent years to be able to efficiently process the types of small and medium-diameter raw forest products that are being supplied by the local forests, and they have sufficient capacity to handle the foreseeable supply. There is currently a large need for thinning submerchantable material, such as in ponderosa pine plantations. This can be very costly, but the Forests have shown treating these locations concurrently, when machinery is in the area, results in large cost savings for using biomass. Firewood and post and pole sales have helped to treat submerchantable material. Several smaller businesses that produce wood products in the communities within and near the WCII-CFLRP area, such as Parma Post and Pole and Payette River Lumber, rely on non-traditional forest products, such as post and poles and dead or dying materials for specialty products and fuelwood. Biomass utilization is supported by partners, such as counties, IDL, Statewide Wood Energy Team, Sustainable Northwest, and the Southwest Idaho Woody Biomass Utilization Partnership. Anticipated uses of biomass include hog fuel to feed the six-megawatt Tamarack Mill cogeneration plant, Garden Valley Schools Cogeneration Plant, and the Idaho Fuels for Schools Project at the Council High School (see video: [Idaho Fuels for Schools in Council, Idaho.](#)) The Tamarack facility currently buys approximately 100,000 tons of hog fuel annually, and the Council school uses about 300 tons annually. In addition to traditional biofuel uses, recent advances in biochar utilization has been informed by specialists from Utah State University and University of Idaho. A strong partnership also has been

established with the Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS) to capitalize on grants with the Joint Fire Science Program and others as opportunities arise.

The timber market would fluctuate with supply and demand, and the Forests have ability to capitalize on the market when times are lucrative and adjust when the market is soft. The WCII-CFLRP is designed to provide a stable and predictable supply of economically viable saw logs over the duration of the WCII-CFLRP to mills located in southwestern and central Idaho and eastern Oregon. Challenges would occur in timber sale preparation if adequate funding is not provided to treat the acres planned; therefore, sequencing the types of contracts, contract length, and coordination with partners, such as IDL, would be necessary to achieve a stable supply of wood products from multiple sources. Economic viability of small diameter material is strongly influenced by the cost of hauling or transporting the material from NFS lands to a processing facility. The current market for biomass and small diameter material is limited, and it is not anticipated that a substantial increase in biomass use would occur with implementation of the ten-year WCII-CFLRP due to the capital investments required by the private sector; however, Valley County has recently contracted a [Woody Biomass Utilization Assessment](#) and [Under Utilized Woody Biomass Go-To-Market Analysis](#) to examine the feasibility of a Forest Products Campus for woody biomass utilization. This assessment indicates potential for small business owners or operators to start businesses or expand existing operations at an appropriate scale and that the supply of post, pole, and fuelwood is available within a reasonable haul distance, which the WCII-CFLRP could help provide. This assessment is applicable to WCII-CFLRP counties as the preliminary analysis of market opportunity led to the identification of potential buyers that could be accessed from any of these counties.

Retention of existing infrastructure is a key component of the WCII-CFLRP. This would be accomplished by the WCII-CFLRP's anticipated average yearly advertisement of about 66,500 CCF of wood products with an anticipated total volume over a ten-year period of about 665,000 CCF (Appendix C). Most of the volume removed would be in the form of saw logs that would be processed in lumber mills. The west-central portion of the WCII-CFLRP is located close enough to provide economically viable biomass materials to the cogeneration plant at Tamarack Mill. In addition to employment for timber harvest, restoration work associated with the WCII-CFLRP would support local and area contractors that specialize in Forest work, such as road maintenance and construction, tree thinning, tree planting, facilities maintenance, and other work associated with trails, recreation opportunities, and stream and watershed restoration.

Collaboration

Diverse interests came together to form the BFC and PFC because of an increasing sense of urgency regarding declining forest and watershed health and negative impacts on fish and wildlife, uncharacteristic wildfires, expanded development in the WUI, lack of certainty regarding recreational access, and concern about economic stagnation of our rural communities. Working through these collaboratives, stakeholders found zones of agreement and have developed project recommendations that address these issues on a meaningful scale: [Collaboration Leads to Restoration](#). Each collaborative recognizes the need for diversity and

includes representatives from the forest products industry, statewide conservation groups, livestock industry representatives, recreation organizations, state fish and wildlife agencies, local elected officials, and members of the public. Voting members of both collaboratives are listed in Attachment D. All BFC and PFC meetings are open to the public and to new memberships. The collaboratives include both founding members and new participants. Most meetings are held during business hours, however the Land Allocation Committee, a subcommittee within the PFC, meets in the evening and provides updates to citizens that cannot otherwise attend.

To ensure that their recommendations are timely and consensus-based, both the BFC and PFC have developed a robust set of business protocols to guide processes and ensure that all the interests at the table are heard and respected and the best available science is understood and applied. Both Coalitions have charters, a list of voting members, a manual and mentorship program for new members, monthly meetings, steering committees that set agendas, subcommittees that cover special topics, and independent facilitators to manage meetings, take notes, and manage the websites. To help resolve complex issues, such as road decommissioning, the collaboratives invite resource specialists for presentations, organize field trips, and compare the effects of different alternatives. If a participant cannot agree to a proposal, protocols require that they propose an alternative to meet the same goal. If a group is unable to reach consensus on a full set of issues, they will forward issues agreed upon as well as the ones that did not.

To date, the collaboratives and Forests have developed several landscape-scale projects that integrated multiple goals. The Mill Creek Council Mountain project improved forest resilience to the Mesa Fire and saved firefighting resources. The Lost Creek project improved both salmon habitat and recreational amenities and resulted in an extra shift being added at a local mill. The Pioneer project removed hazard trees from trails, improved fish passage for bull trout, and captured the value of fire-killed trees. The PFC examined results from white headed woodpecker studies and modified recommendations for future projects. Both the PFC and BFC have proven track records in getting these multifaceted restoration projects through the planning process and implemented on the ground. The collaboratives also supported the Forests when legal challenges were filed. Court rulings cite the collaboratives' involvement in designing integrated projects. Successful projects originated from discussions with the Forests in the pre-scoping phase, were based on participant field experience and local knowledge of resource issues and were further refined during the NEPA process. A letter of commitment from the members of the BFC and PFC is included as Attachment E.

Multi-party Monitoring

The BFC and PFC both have active monitoring committees that work with the Forest staff to identify monitoring needs, complete necessary monitoring, work with scientists and researchers to complete monitoring, and document their methodologies, posting results and reports online: [Boise Forest Coalition Monitoring](#) and [Payette Forest Coalition Monitoring](#). Both collaboratives use pre- and post-treatment field trips to determine project effectiveness and

accuracy. Through a collaborative, science-driven, citizen science monitoring program, the BFC will continue to examine project-related questions addressing forest and watershed restoration, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat conditions. Current monitoring projects include: surveying legacy Ponderosa Pine and Douglas fir, establishing legacy tree parameters for Grand fir using ocular characteristics, tracking changes in canopy cover and basal area with photo plots, sampling environmental DNA in streams to determine the presence or absence of sensitive fish species, and measuring groundwater levels with monitoring wells to examine the benefits of wetland restoration undertakings. Through these programs, the BFC and Forests anticipate addressing risks and areas of uncertainty, such as intensity of vegetation treatments (are we cutting enough or too much?), wetland restoration (can strategic riparian protections raise groundwater levels and reduce channel downcutting?), and fisheries improvements (are native species repopulating historic habitats?). This program can easily export to other National Forests (NFs) and projects and provides the Forests with data for use in peer-reviewed publications. The PFC has a monitoring subcommittee to discuss goals that align with the WCII-CFRP and will be using the BFC citizen science program as a model to strengthen its own multiparty monitoring program: [BFC Citizen Science Project Plan](#).

Collaboration and multi-party monitoring efforts within the WCII-CFLRP include two research projects on the impacts of treatments and effectiveness of monitoring. The PNF, along with the Malheur and Fremont-Winema NFs, are working with RMRS to study white-headed woodpecker response to current CFLRP treatments and developing long-term monitoring management indicator species strategies. These efforts have been used to improve silvicultural prescriptions to optimize nesting and foraging requirements for white-headed woodpeckers. The PNF also has partnered with the University of Idaho, IDFG, and USFWS on a multiyear study to determine the effectiveness of various vegetation treatments designed to improve NIDGS habitat and population connectivity. The end state is to have site-specific, peer reviewed data on NIDGS response to treatments as best-available science for future planning.

The Coalitions provide a unique nexus to both bring additional partners into the community science program and communicate the results of these restoration efforts to the public at large. The Coalitions recruit monitoring participants through stakeholder volunteers and coalition members. Current partners include: conservation groups, recreationists, foresters, soil conservation districts, coalition members, graduates of IDFG's Master Naturalist Program, and private citizens. Potential future partners include the City of Boise, students from Boise State University, University of Idaho, and local high school students. Coalition members, with input and guidance from USFS personnel, develop questions related to individual projects and establish specific protocols designed for accuracy, consistency, replicability, and lay person participation. Participating members seek out new volunteers primarily through community, inter-agency, and outside agency outreach. Evaluation and monitoring contribute to determining the need to adjust goals and objectives or monitoring methods. In addition, changing climatic conditions emphasizes the need for monitoring of restored forests to allow for the modification of treatments should existing restoration tools or approaches lead to unexpected outcomes.

Using the BFC Citizen Science model, each coalition’s monitoring committee will develop project-specific monitoring questions and work with designated USFS line officers and their staff who would organize training opportunities for monitoring volunteers. The subcommittee(s) will coordinate with line officers to identify and recruit key researchers and the information needed to develop WCII-CFLRP strategies. The Forests already have a track record of supporting these efforts. In the summer of 2019, the BNF silviculturist arranged for specialists to train 12 citizen scientists. These individuals can now work to support USFS personnel or independently to train additional monitors on protocols. The BNF has already committed to expand this effort in Spring 2020. The PFC has engaged in similar efforts. To date, the Forests have worked in conjunction with the Collaboratives to monitor effects of vegetative treatments in RCAs and with RMRS staff to monitor the effects of treatments on sensitive bird species and the threatened NIDGS. In addition, the Forests has completed efforts to utilize citizen scientists to monitor whitebark pine by designing a Survey 123 application that users can complete using their own tablets or smartphones. The Collaboratives and Forests continue efforts to expand joint monitoring efforts and have committed to finding further funding opportunities. The WCII-CFLRP allows for exciting opportunities to bring in new partners and expand existing partnerships to complete monitoring topics valued by the Forests’ stakeholders. Using a multiparty monitoring system builds trust among coalition members and within communities and provides transparency and accountability regarding restoration undertakings.

Data collected during monitoring activities contributes to understanding forest restoration projects and helps guide future project and restoration work. For example, photo plot monitoring using a 360° camera and documenting basal area before and after treatment contributes to our knowledge of treatment effectiveness for adaptive management strategies for future projects. Monitoring efforts maintain the potential to provide “ground truthing” of research conclusions, allowing USFS personnel, outside researchers, and the general public to make more informed decisions regarding forest restoration and help garner support from non-participatory institutions and populations. The BFC and PFC continue to build trust amongst themselves and within their respective communities through open, respectful communication and work together to achieve sustainably managed forests and rangelands with healthy watersheds and recreation opportunities while supporting local economic health. By basing monitoring programs on science and using objective metrics and evaluation, the BFC and PFC continue working to avoid subjective input and conclusions. By developing consistent and replicable monitoring parameters, the Coalitions and the Forests work to remove personal bias from the equation.

Readiness to Implement Strategy

On the BNF, eight decisions have been signed covering a total of 42,019 acres, and on the PNF, ten decisions have been signed for another 171,907 acres, resulting in a total of 213,926 acres within the WCII-CFLRP area ready for implementation. The Forests have several projects in which the NEPA process is underway, and those decisions would cover an additional 85,052 acres on the BNF and 315,660 acres on the PNF within the WCII-CFLRP area.

Both the BNF and PNF Forest Plans are well aligned to accomplish program goals. Plans rely on the use of timber harvest, non-commercial treatments, and prescribed fire to improve the composition, structure, condition, and health of stands; to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic disturbance and maintain/reestablish natural fire regimes; and to improve wildlife habitat. Implementation of the BNF and PNF Forest Plans facilitate improvement or maintenance of water quality, watershed function, and wildlife and aquatic habitat.

The Forests have developed a realistic outcome-based program of work associated with the WCII-CFLRP. This included reviewing, updating, and compiling the Forests' five-year plans for vegetation and fuels management and reviewing and updating projections for watershed restoration activities based on anticipated allocated funding and timber receipts (through timber sale contracts, stewardship contracts, and GNA timber sale contracts). The Forests met with partners that would bring matching funds and/or ability to increase capacities (e.g. NPT, IDL, BFC/PFC) and discussed potential impacts, benefits, and expectations if the Forests' proposal is accepted. Attachments B, C, and F reflect the summaries of efforts to review and update the Forests' current and projected program of work and associated 5-year vegetation and fuels plans.

The WCII-CFLRP would use a full suite of implementation tools to accomplish our mutually-identified goals. Conventional timber sales, stewardship contracting, service contracts, and agreements with the NPT for watershed restoration work all currently are being used to complete work within the WCII-CFLRP area and would be expanded if the WCII-CFLRP is selected. The Forests also have been building their partnership with IDL under GNA to leverage personnel and expertise to expedite vegetation restoration and fuels reduction projects. Large scale reforestation projects occur annually with established partners, a trained workforce, and a reliable seed source from a local seed orchard. As plans are developed within the Shared Stewardship priority area, the Wyden Authority and programs through State and Private Forestry would be used to increase treatment on adjacent private lands. The WCII-CFLRP area closely correlates to the Southern Idaho Shared Stewardship focus area. The Idaho/Wyoming POD is establishing a timber strike team beginning in FY20 to help meet accelerated restoration and timber needs, and the WCII-CFLRP would be a focus area for this workforce.

Unit Capacity and Project Funding

The wood processing infrastructure in the WCII-CFLRP area and subsequent bid premiums over several years have allowed the Forests to gain valuable experience and see success in stewardship contracting, which has allowed other restoration work to be accomplished using timber receipts. Both Forests are skilled at stewardship contracting and using timber receipts from traditional timber sales, such as trust funds (e.g. Knutson-Vandenberg). The Forests are using program revenue from GNA timber sales through IDL to increase the pace and scale of work being implemented while minimizing the need to increase USFS workforce. Other capabilities are gained by using planning approaches that include large (e.g. 30,000 to 100,000 acre) projects, Farm Bill Insect and Disease CEs, Designation by Prescription, virtual boundaries, service contracts (including IDIQ contracts), and contracting through IDL. In addition, the

Forests have been successful in developing agreements with partners, such as the NPT, to increase capacity for watershed restoration, and with the ICC, to aid in providing internships to fill seasonal workforce positions.

The capacity to implement the WCII-CFLRP includes interdisciplinary planning teams and implementation teams composed of various staff groups that provide design treatments in alignment with NEPA decisions. The WCII-CFLRP boundary includes three interdisciplinary teams on the PNF and two on the BNF. The Forests are in the process of filling current technician and specialist vacancies. Further coordination on priorities across the Forests and the Idaho/Wyoming POD are anticipated, including use of the timber strike team to increase capacity. Prioritizing projects across the WCII-CFLRP boundary and the Region would be integral to success. To successfully accomplish the increased planning workload, the Forests would use NEPA authorities from landscape scale EISs and EAs to Farm Bill and other CEs and the GNA agreement. The Forests also would consider using Enterprise teams and contractors to supplement capacity.

The estimated annual Federal funding necessary to implement this proposal is detailed in Attachment F. If the WCII-CFLRP is selected to be funded, restoration is anticipated to continue even after CFLR funds expire. Implementation of this project will require dialogue, co-learning, and adaptation with partners across Forest boundaries. The WCII-CFLRP would require the Forests to develop new partners and strengthen existing ones with diverse stakeholders from the local wood products industry to a wide variety of recreationists and homeowners. Success for the WCII-CFLRP would require these partners to co-manage implementation and monitoring priorities. Beyond the WCII-CFLRP, the collaborative groups would continue to have a working relationship with the Forests to focus on restoration goals. Members would remain involved due to their interest in healthy forests, sound management decision-making, and contribution to public lands and would look Forest-wide to achieve these goals.

The Forests would make strategic decisions in anticipation that funding would cease if CFLRP is not reauthorized past FY23. Hiring of new positions would be kept at a minimum, and the Forests would look at partnerships and contracting options to increase capacity. If funding was not reauthorized, the pace and scale of work within the CFLR landscape would decrease, and the focus would be on project implementation and monitoring for which planning has been completed. Adjustments would be made in personnel and planning of new projects would continue at a reduced pace. Outputs would be reduced, and CFLN funded measures and costly restoration activities would be curtailed. A complete loss of CFLRP funding would create an additional priority to add to the list of priorities at the Region competing for funding, and CFLRP project objectives would need to be considered.

A full ten years of funding would allow the Forests to continue the pace and scale of the WCII-CFLRP work. The Forests would plan for the longer duration, potentially creating a “shelf stock” of projects that could be implemented in the outyears as funding and capacity allows. The Forests’ strategy during and after the program duration is to gain social support and maintain existing partnerships, develop new partners with diverse stakeholders, and grow NEPA shelf

stock for outyears to maintain a strong supply of forest products. The CFLR funding would also ensure infrastructure remains strong and results in developing additional small wood utilization opportunities, creating woody biomass sustainability, reducing mechanized treatment costs, and providing timber receipts that aid in funding other types of restoration work. Increased timber volumes would create receipts/revenue from the timber removed to meet restoration goals of the WCII-CFLRP and help accomplish more costly restoration work, including road decommissioning, AOP installment, and non-commercial thinning.

The investments anticipated within the landscape are detailed in Attachment F. The total funding request for the WCII-CFLRP is \$40 million. Over ten years, Federal investments are estimated to be nearly \$85 million. Non-CFLR funding estimates for implementation and monitoring are \$56 million, and \$27 million of non-matching non-CFLR funding would be invested in NFMA and NEPA. Primary sources of non-USFS contributions include funds and in-kind contributions through agreements with partners, such as the NPT. Estimated partner funding and in-kind contributions are \$3.5 million for watershed restoration, vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, wildlife/fisheries habitat improvement, and socio-economic goal achievement, as shown in Attachments B and C. Matching funds would come from non-USFS contributions, goods for services/GNA revenue, and trust funds/appropriated funds. Timber receipts from stewardship contracts and GNA program revenue of \$23 million are anticipated to provide substantial funding for work in the WCII-CFLRP area. Trust funds (e.g. KV, BD, and SSF) from traditional timber sales and appropriated funds would contribute an additional \$29 million. Approximately ten percent of the yearly funding plan is proposed for multi-party monitoring. Monitoring would include activities by the collaboratives, USFS personnel, university partners, and private researchers. It would involve contracting for stand exams, wildlife surveys, and watershed and aquatic habitat surveys to collect field data before and after restoration treatments.

In addition to the funding identified in Attachment F, there have been investments, which are not included in our budget, that are important to note. For example, Tamarack Mill spent several million dollars in 2019 to install a new small log head rig to increase the ability to use smaller diameter logs and gain efficiency. Our partners in the wood products industry share our common goal of investing in the sustainability of our Forests.

The Forests greatly appreciate this opportunity to highlight our extensive needs within the WCII-CFLRP area. Receiving this critical funding would allow us to make monumental strides toward achieving our program and collaborative goals of large landscape restoration: to have healthy and resilient forests that support communities, wildlife, fisheries, and local and Regional economies. With our strong partnerships with the State, BFC and PFC, NPT, and other entities combined with Shared Stewardship and GNA, we stand ready to implement ten years of projects across our 2.25 million-acre WCII-CFLRP landscape with the full support of our Forest Supervisors, as shown in Attachment G, and the BFC and PFC, as demonstrated in Attachment E. We thank the FACA committee for your time and consideration of this proposal.

ATTACHMENT B: WCII PLANNED TREATMENTS

Core Restoration Treatment Types	<i>Please briefly fill in additional background information for the prompts below</i>	Year 1*	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Years 5-10	TOTAL	Key treatment objectives	Estimated % accomplished on NFS lands (across all ten years)	Other landownership types (other federal, tribal, state, private, etc.) where treatments will occur
Hazardous Fuels Reduction (acres)	Reducing undesirable impacts to communities and public by strategically treating hazardous fuels across large landscapes with multiple jurisdictions and ownerships. A variety of methods such as prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical and biological treatments would be used.	28,200	29,450	30,450	30,000	172,400	290,500	Reducing the risk of catastrophic fire while restoring ecosystem function and process; protecting communities from undesirable impacts; working in partnership with Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and with Shared Stewardship objectives	282,500 NFS lands = 97% 8,000 Non NFS lands (IDL) = 3%	Private, State, County, Bureau of Reclamation, BLM and IDL
<i>Mechanical Thinning (acres)</i>	See above, this is a subset of total Hazardous Fuels Reduction acres	16,000	16,000	16,000	16,000	96,000	160,000	see above	100%	Private, State, County, Bureau of Reclamation, BLM and IDL
<i>Prescribed Fire (acres)</i>	See above, this is a subset of total Hazardous Fuels Reduction acres	7,900	9,250	9,950	9,400	50,500	87,000	see above	80,000 NFS lands = 92% 7,000 Non NFS lands (IDL) = 8%	Private, State, County, Bureau of Reclamation, BLM and IDL
<i>Other (acres)</i>	Targeted grazing, chemical treatments to reduce cheatgrass and other invasives, also a subset of the total Hazardous Fuels Reduction acres.	4,300	4,200	4,500	4,600	25,900	43,500	see above	42,520 NFS lands = 98% 980 Non NFS lands (IDL) = 2%	Private, State, County, Bureau of Reclamation, BLM and IDL
Wildfire Risk Mitigation Outcomes - Acres treated to mitigate wildfire risk	Reducing risk to wildfire by building more resilient ecosystems through prescribed fire and mechanical treatments. Treating across larger landscapes and ownerships will build resiliency to large disturbance events and reduce undesirable impacts to the ecosystem and surrounding communities.	16,000	17,000	17,000	15,000	74,000	139,000	see above	100%	Private, State, County, Bureau of Reclamation, BLM and IDL
Wildfire Risk Mitigation Outcomes - WUI acres	Please list the source of the WUI designation (e.g. local assessment, spatial data layer, etc.). These areas are identified by a stepdown process at the forest level that starts with communities/areas identified in County Wildfire Protection/Hazard Mitigation plans and or Urban Wildland Interface communities identified in the Federal Register August 2001. There are WUI delineation layers at the forest levels that are a starting point for buffers then get modified during the project planning phase.	900	1,000	1,000	1,100	7,500	11,500	see above	100%	Private, State, County, Bureau of Reclamation, BLM and IDL
Invasive Species Management (acres)	Improve ecological condition of the system by reducing the intensity and presence of invasive species. This will also reduce the risk for wildland fire.	2,250	2,250	2,250	2,250	13,200	22,200	Improve ecological condition of the system by reducing the intensity and presence of invasive species. This will also reduce the fine fuels for wildland fire.	21,000 NFS Lands = 95% 1,200 Non NFS Lands (IDL)=5%	Private, State, and County
Road Decommissioning (miles)	Decreases in unneeded roads on national forest system lands. Miles are measured without regard to width of road or number of lanes.	25	25	25	25	150	250	Improve and restore soil-hydrologic function, terrestrial wildlife and aquatic habitat by decommissioning non-system roads. This will improve overall watershed conditions by decreasing sediment delivery to nearby streams, improving wildlife security and improving access to and conditions of instream habitat.	100%	Private, State and County
Road Maintenance and Improvement (miles)	Road maintenance and improvements will focus on areas supporting timber harvest and restoration activities to minimize road related impacts to watersheds.	800	800	800	800	4800	8,000	Improve watershed conditions by reducing sediment impacts by maintaining roadways, performing storm damage risk reduction improvements and adding aggregate surfacing where sediment is currently being delivered to streams.	7500 NFS Lands = 95% 500 Non NFS lands (IDL) = 5%	Private, State and County

Road Reconstruction (miles)	Reconstruction is part of improvement and is included above.	see above	Reconstruction is part of improvement and is similar to the key objectives above	See Road Maintenance and Improvement Miles above	Private, State and County					
Trail Reconstruction (miles)	TL_MAINT_STD: measure includes annual maintenance and deferred maintenance (repaired, replaced and decommissioned).	438	438	438	438	2,628	4,380	Improve and restore trail systems. Improve watershed conditions by reducing erosion and sediment impacts by maintaining trails. Discourage off-trail use that is causing increased erosion, impacts to streams and meadows and destruction of vegetation.	100%	Private, State, and County
Trail Reconstruction (miles)	TL-IMP-STD: measure includes trail alteration, expansion or new construction.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	19.2	32	Improve and restore trail systems. Improve watershed conditions by reducing erosion and sediment impacts by improving trails. Discourage off-trail use that is causing increased erosion, impacts to streams and meadows and destruction of vegetation.	100%	Private, State, and County
Wildlife Habitat Restoration (acres)	Improvement through application of a variety of management techniques, such as prescribed fire and/or mechanical treatment of priority areas to obtain desired habitat condition for the benefit of wildlife. Terrestrial management activities maintain or enhance wildlife habitats that are important for foraging, breeding, cover security and movement.	9,000	9,600	9,600	10,000	57,600	96,000	Restore wildlife habitat through vegetation treatments and noxious weed control, reconnect wildlife habitat through road decommissioning and treatments and re-establish wildlife habitat through restoration of anadromous streams.	100%	Private, State and County
Crossing Improvements (number)	Many of the priority areas have been done because of work on other related and priority projects.	20	18	15	17	60	130	Improving aquatic habitats.	30 NFS Lands = 23% 100 Non NFS lands (IDL) =77%	Private, State and County
In-Stream Fisheries Improvement (miles)	Structural or non-structural improvements in streams for biological capacity and enhanced fish or aquatic species habitat measured in miles of HBT-ENH-STRM performance measure.	20	20	20	20	120	200	Improving aquatic habitats.	100%	Private, State and County
Riparian Area Improvements (acres)	Acres of riparian habitat with improved physical structure or ecological function measured in acres of HBT-ENH-STRM target.	5	5	5	5	20	40	Improving aquatic habitats.	100%	Private, State and County
Soil and Watershed resources enhanced or maintained (acres)	TL-Note: 25 miles of roads (5*25) + 35 acres of other activities per year	160	160	160	160	960	1,600	Improve and restore soil-hydrologic function through road decommissioning, planting and seeding with the goal to reduce sedimentation and recover disturbed soil conditions.	100%	Private, State and County
Priority watersheds moved to improved condition class (number)	Improve and restore ecological indicators impacting soil-hydrologic function, moving watersheds to Fully Functioning Condition.				1	1	2	Focus on reducing threats and improving degraded watershed condition indicators (WCIs) that are limiting fully functioning watershed conditions.	100%	Private, State and County
Stand Improvement (acres)	Primarily non-commercial thinning treatments to achieve desired ecological conditions including species composition, density, improved wildlife habitat and ability to introduce prescribed fire.	3,150	3,150	3,400	3,450	19,050	32,200	Wildlife and restoration habitat; to improve forest stand resiliency to enhance wildlife habitat and protect natural regimes	30,000 NFS Lands =93% 2,200 Non NFS lands (IDL) = 7%	Private, State and County
Reforestation and revegetation (acres)	Primarily reforestation after wildfire, timber harvest and to introduce rust resistant whitebark pine. Includes certification of naturals as planting. Will aid in achieving long term desired ecological condition.	4,030	4,550	4,870	3,600	20,550	37,600	Wildlife and restoration habitat; to improve forest stand resiliency to enhance wildlife habitat and protect natural regimes; re-establishing native species composition	30,000 NFS Lands=80% 7,600 Non NFS lands (IDL) = 20%	Private, State and County

Timber Harvest (acres)**	80% ground-based; 20% cable	7,450	7,550	8,500	6,750	38,650	68,900	Wildlife and restoration habitat; to improve forest stand resiliency to enhance wildlife habitat and protect natural regimes	50,000 NFS lands=73% 18,900 Non NFS lands (IDL) = 27%	Private, State and County
Rangeland Vegetation Improvement (acres)	Improve the overall health of the system by improving the health of the vegetation	750	750	750	750	4500	7,500	Improve the overall health of the system by improving the health of the vegetation	100%	Private, State and County

*Assume funding requested for Year 1 will be allocated in February 2020 at the earliest

**Note that timber volume produced from the treatment is estimated in a separate attachment - Attachment C.

ATTACHMENT D: COLLABORATIVE MEMBERSHIP

Forest Service staff representative(s) working with collaborative:

Amie Anderton CFLRP Coordinator, Payette NF
 Paul Klasner Natural Resources Staff Officer, Payette NF
 Jennifer Blake Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor, Payette NF
 Jake Strohmeyer Cascade RD District Ranger, Boise NF
 Lynn Oliver Natural Resources Staff Officer, Boise NF
 Ronda Bishop Council/Weiser RD District Ranger, Payette NF
 Erin Phelps New Meadows RD District Ranger, Payette NF
 Sean Johnson Fire Staff Officer, Payette NF
 Tawnya Brummett Acting Forest Supervisor, Payette NF

Collaborative Member/Partner Name	Organizational Affiliation (if applicable)	Was this person involved in proposal development?	Primary Issue Category	Second Issue Category	Third Issue Category	If "other," briefly describe
Anderson, John	Meadows Valley Resident, PFC					
Balch, Olin	Citizen, PFC	Yes	Environmental	Recreation (non-motorized)	Wildlife	
Beal, Art	Squaw Creek Soil Conservation District, BFC	Yes	Watershed	Forest Products	Recreation (motorized)	
Brockman, Larry	Valley County, PFC					
Caruso, Charles	Bacon Valley Ditch Company, PFC					
Davis, Linden	Circle C Ranches, PFC	Yes	Wildlife	Watershed	Wildlife	
Green, Wendy	Adams Soil & Water Conservation District, PFC	Yes	Other	Watershed	Recreation (motorized)	Soil and Water Conservation
Gibson, Michael	Trout Unlimited, PFC	Yes	Environmental	Other	Watershed	Fisheries
Gould, Sean	Unaffiliated, PFC					
Hamilton, Ron C.	Adams County Natural Resources Committee, PFC	Yes	Forest Products	County	Community Development	Multiple Use Management
Hasbrouck, Elt	Valley County, BFC	Yes	County	Recreation (motorized)	Forest Products	Forest Health
Huffman, Morris	Private Citizen, BFC	Yes	Forest Products	Environmental	Fire Ecology	
Johnstone, Becky	Backcountry Recreation Club, Idaho Recreation Council, PFC					
Kerby, Ryan	Citizen, PFC					
Kulm, Jim	Idaho Recreation Council, BFC	No	Recreation (motorized)	Recreation (non-motorized)	Wildlife	
Laxon, Larry	Valley County, PFC/BFC	Yes	Recreation (motorized)	Recreation (non-motorized)	Environmental	
Lefebvre, Mac	Idaho Forest Group, PFC	Yes	Forest Products	Fire Ecology	Other	
Lewinski, John	Citizen, PFC	Yes	Recreation (non-motorized)	Wildlife	Environmental	Close and Obliterate Excess Roads
Mitchell, Sandra	Idaho Recreation Council/Idaho State Snowmobile Association, PFC	Yes	Recreation (motorized)	Wildlife	Community Development	
Paradis, Mike	Adams County, PFC	Yes	Forest Products	Fire Ecology	Other	All Recreation
Pippin, Gloria	Heartland Backcountry Horseman, PFC	Yes	Other	Forest Products	Other	Balanced Management; Managing Access for All
Roberts, John	Society of American Foresters, BFC	Yes	Fire Management	Forest Products	Environmental	
Robinson, John	Idaho Conservation League, BFC/PFC	Yes	Environmental	Watershed	Wildlife	
Schwartz, Frank	Weiser River Cattle Association, PFC	Yes	Other	Community Development	Forest Products	Multiple Use; Livestock Grazing
Terrell, Austin	Idaho State Department of Agriculture, PFC	Yes	State	Community Development	Other	Livestock Grazing
Tholen, Rick	Society of American Foresters, PFC	Yes	Fire Ecology	Forest Products	Watershed	
Turnbull, Arlan	Cuprum Benevolent Preservation Society, PFC					
Vandenburg, Rachel	Woodgrain Millwork, BFC/PFC	Yes	Forest Products	Community Development	Other	Forest Management
Visser, Garret	Idaho Wildlife Federation, PFC	Yes	Environmental	Wildlife	Other	Sportsman's Conservation
Wassmuth, Jim	Evergreen ForestM, PFC	Yes	Forest Products	Community Development	Other	Forest Management

Attachment E – Letter of Commitment from Collaborative Members/Partners

To Whom It May Concern:

The Payette Forest Coalition (PFC) is a citizen collaborative that formed in 2009 to build diverse community support for landscape scale forest restoration projects. The Boise Forest Coalition (BFC) formed in 2010 to address natural resource, economic, recreational and societal needs.

The coalitions recognize the need for diversity and include representatives from the forest products and livestock industries, conservation groups, recreation and sporting organizations, local elected officials, state fish and game agencies, and members of the public.

While most coalition members did not know all of the Forest Service acronyms when they started up, they did know that their forests were in trouble and stewardship work was not happening on the ground. They also knew that the health of their forests and communities were interdependent.

Both coalitions have goals of improving forest and community resiliency to wildfire, improving habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species, improving water quality and watershed health, maintaining and enhancing forest access for management and recreation, and designing restoration projects so they contribute to the vitality of adjacent communities.

To date, the BFC has commented on 12 vegetation management projects and the PFC has commented on 5 integrated landscape restoration projects. Each Coalition has its own website and they also share a website and forum to compare notes on the CFLR restoration measures. To help track restoration work currently under review, authorized and completed, the BFC and PFC have compiled summaries showing progress toward goals: [BFC Summary](#) and [PFC Summary](#). For example, the Payette has authorized over 74,000 acres of prescribed burning and decision on an additional 133,000 acres is pending.

In addition to crafting consensus recommendations, the Coalitions have helped raise public awareness about commenting opportunities, participated in field trips to review implementation and effectiveness monitoring for vegetation and road treatments, engaged the media in describing the need for restoration activities, engaged in the objection resolution process and helped resolve issues so that objectors withdrew their objections, and successfully defended projects in court when challenged.

While every collaborative is unique, the foundational elements of the BFC and PFC have served as a model for several other collaborative efforts in Idaho. Coalition members are attending statewide and regional meetings on collaboratives to share lessons learned and bring new ideas back to their coalitions. Both Coalitions have members that participate in the annual Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership meeting to support forest collaboratives in Idaho.

While both Coalitions have achieved successes, restoration activities to date have yet to comprehensively address the increasing risks in the Wildland Urban Interface or adequately restore and protect watersheds important for municipal water supplies and native fish species. The Forest Service and adjacent private property owners need to do more to coordinate efforts, and leverage resources and create partnerships for hazardous fuels reduction and watershed improvement efforts. This CFLR would allow for a truly comprehensive approach to reducing the fire risk in the Wildland Urban Interface and improving watersheds.

Attachment E – Letter of Commitment from Collaborative Members/Partners

The Coalitions have been encouraged by the development of the Good Neighbor Authority and Shared Stewardship program. The State of Idaho and Forest Service's joint Shared Stewardship Program creates a venue to address these issues across multiple jurisdictions. The 2.3-million acre Shared Stewardship landscape area encompasses high priority areas for restoration and the CFLR funding would provide the means for the Coalitions and affected communities to assist the Forests in reaching their goals. While the Shared Stewardship Program is innovative, associated funding is uncertain and CFLR funding for the federal portions of the landscape would greatly assist progress toward doubling the acres of federal lands treated, among other Shared Stewardship goals. It is noteworthy that some Coalition members also serve on Governor Little's Shared Stewardship Advisory Committee. The committee is tasked with identifying key performance indicators, identifying barriers, developing a common sense of shared principles, and developing a communications plan. The Coalition members believe that experiences gained in forest restoration collaboratives can help inform and improve the Shared Stewardship program.

Should the West Central Idaho Initiative receive CFLR funding, the Shared Stewardship program would provide a unique forum for complementary actions across multiple ownerships, potentially extending the forest and watershed benefits far beyond the CFLR and Shared Stewardship boundaries. The Coalitions support the application for the West Central Idaho Initiative and look forward to the opportunity to work with the Forest Service and other partners toward the restoration and sustainable management of our forests and watersheds.

For more information please contact John Robison, Idaho Conservation League and BFC/PFC Representative: 208-559-0283

Payette Forest Coalition Signature Page

Signature

Affiliation

John Sawinski	Citizen at large
Alvin Pippin	Heartland Back Country Horsemen
Chandra F. Metcalf	Idaho Recreation Council
James D. Wassumth	Evergreen Forest
Ron C. Hamblin	Adams County Natural Resources Comm.
Wendy Green	Adams Soil + Water Conservation District
Paul D. Illin	Society of American Foresters Snake River Chapter
John M. Robison	Idaho Conservation League
Mark B. Gill	Idaho Forest Group
Parry Ly	VALLEY COUNTY PARK TREES
Dustin Terrell	Idaho State Department of Agriculture
John	Idaho Wildlife Federation
Michael T. Gish	Trout Unlimited
Mike E. Paradise	ADAMS Co.
Olga Baker	Citizen at Large

Signatures from the Boise Forest Coalition

Rachel A. Vandenberg Woodgrain Millwork, Inc.
Arthur H. Beal Squaw Creek Soil Conservation District

 Private Citizen

 CITIZEN

 Idaho Conservation League

Krista L. Swin Regional Wildlife Biologist,
Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game

 Idaho Conservation League

Elting S. Hasbrouck Valley County Commissioner

 VALLEY COUNTY PARKVILLE

 SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS

Signatories to the Letter of Commitment - PFC

Date Signed reflects electronic signature

	Date Signed	Name	Organization
1.	Jan 6, 2020	Sandra Mitchell	IRC/ISSA
2.	Jan 6, 2020	Charles Caruso	Bacon Valley Ditch Co., public member
3.	Jan 6, 2020	Lin Davis	Circle C HOA
4.	Jan 6, 2020	Gloria Pippin	Heartland Back Country Horsemen
5.	Jan 8, 2020	Rick Tholen	Society of American Foresters
6.	Jan 8, 2020	Jim Wassmuth	Evergreen Forest
7.	Jan 9, 2020	Austin Terrell	ISDA
8.	Jan 10, 2020	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League
9.	Jan 10, 2020	Frank Schwartz	Weiser River Cattle Association
10.	Jan 10, 2020	Wendy Green	Adams Soil & Water Conservation District

Signatories to the Letter of Commitment - BFC

Date Signed reflects electronic signature

	Timestamp	Name	Organization
1.	Jan 10, 2020	Darcy Helmick	Simplot Land & Livestock Division
2.	Jan 11, 2020	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League
3.	Jan 11, 2020	Jim Kulm	Idaho Recreation Council
4.	Jan 13, 2020	Bill Moore	Southwest Idaho RC&D
5.	Jan 13, 2020	Eric Oliver	Conservation Voters for Idaho

Star News, November 8, 2018

The Fire Before the Fire

Controlled burns helped contain spread of Mesa Fire

BY MAX SILVERSON

for The Star-News

Controlled burns set three months before the Mesa Fire last summer are being credited with helping slow the spread of the blaze east of Council, Payette National Forest officials said.

Because of the controlled burns, the Mesa Fire proved to be relatively easy to contain, despite being active during some of the hottest and driest days of the summer, Payette officials said.

Firefighters were able to slow the advance of the fire, plan a more precise strategy and reduce risk to firefighters, Fire Management Specialist David LaChapelle said.

“This was some of the easiest burning to catch in an August wildfire because of treatments to the forest,” LaChapelle said.

Controlled burns are lit during the spring and fall to burn small portions of a forest. The lack of undergrowth, duff and small trees slows the progress any unplanned wildfires.

The burns in the area where the Mesa Fire came through were part of the Mill Creek-Council Mountain restoration project.

The project, which finished major operations in 2016, included about 4,600 acres of controlled burns as well as logging of large and small trees.

The Mesa Fire started on July 26 when an axle broke on a car traveling on U.S. 95 north of Council.

The driver pulled over to the side of the road, but not before sparks from the axle dragging on the pavement started the wildfire.

The high temperature that day was 102, perfect conditions for a devastating blaze.

Nearly 35,000 acres burned before the fire was declared contained on Aug 25.

The fire quickly moved from the side of the highway, across grasslands and up Cottonwood Canyon in the direction of Council Mountain.

The fire caused only intermittent destruction in a relatively predictable pattern, LaChapelle said.

That predictability allowed crews to work directly on the fire line, using bulldozers and existing roads to create barriers that would contain the fire within areas that had already been burned.

“It makes it so much easier to work on a fire in an area that has been treated,” said Eli Grooms, assistant fire management officer for the Council Ranger District.

“I have less concern for the safety of the people I’m going to engage in the fire,” said Grooms, who led the initial attack on the Mesa Fire.

Without controlled fire in the area, the Mesa Fire could have expanded out of control, Grooms said.

“Had we not treated the basin near Cookhouse Gulch in the spring, the fire could have easily spread up to the top and over Council Mountain,” he said. “If it gets over to the Middle Fork side, we’re dealing with a whole different ballgame.”

Attachment E – Letter of Commitment from Collaborative Members/Partners

In contrast to the Mesa Fire, the Rattlesnake Creek Fire north of New Meadows started a week earlier but continued to burn out of control for weeks after the Mesa Fire was contained.

Terrain burned in the Rattlesnake Creek Fire had not been treated with fire like the Mesa Fire, creating a far more complex and difficult task for crews to complete.

Fire crews were still dealing with the Rattlesnake Creek Fire when Council Ranger District crews were lighting more controlled fires in the Mill Creek-Council Mountain project area three weeks ago, LaChapelle said.

Since the Mesa Fire was brought under control, Forest Service crews have conducted controlled burns on 2,300 acres of land near the area where the fire burned.

Change in the Landscape

Payette program restores vast swaths of forests

BY MAX SILVERSON

for The Star-News

Andre Snyder peered into a cavernous culvert recently installed on the west branch of the Weiser River west of New Meadows. The 14-foot wide culvert was installed to replace the previous four-foot culvert that sat in its place for years, blocking fish passage.

The culvert is just one example of how an initiative by the Payette National Forest is restoring the land and water in large swaths of national forest.

Since 2012, the Payette has selected tracts of land for what are known as Collaborative Landscape Forest Restoration Projects.

Two projects are underway, one is nearly to start, and two more are in the planning stages spanning nearly 1 million acres, half of which are on the Payette.

Commercial timber cutting is not used on all landscape projects, but when it is, the projects do not operate like typical timber sales, Payette Public Affairs Officer Brian Harris said.

The projects operate under what are called stewardship contracts, which allow the Payette to exchange goods for services, he said.

Timber value is traded for forest restoration projects such as thinning, chipping, culvert replacement to allow for fish passage, taking roads out of service and rerouting of roads that cause erosion and sediment runoff, Harris said.

The projects operate under the umbrella name of the Weiser-Little Salmon Headwaters Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project.

The largest is the 80,000 acre Lost Creek-Boulder Creek project on the New Meadows Ranger District.

The 50,000 acre Mill Creek-Council Mountain project is nearing completion, and the 50,000 acre Middle Fork-Weiser River project may begin in the spring. Both are on the Council Ranger District.

In planning is the 67,000 acre Huckleberry project, also on the Council district, and a fifth project is in the early planning process.

Fish in the west branch of the Weiser River have given their opinion on the new culvert.

"There were fish trying to swim up this when we were setting it up," Payette Fisheries Biologist Jason Greenway said.

"I don't doubt the effectiveness of it."

The culvert, which cost nearly \$100,000, provides a natural stream channel for rainbow trout, sculpin, Idaho giant salamanders and other aquatic species, he said.

The landscape projects are the result of the Omnibus Appropriations Act passed by Congress in 2009 which allows the Forest Service to collaborate with local groups on large-scale projects.

Locally, the Payette Forest Coalition was formed. Members include those from conservation and recreation groups, the timber industry and others with interests in national forests.

"The process of planning is still the same as other, smaller forest projects, but the Payette Forest Coalition comes in with recommendations during the early planning," Harris said. "It's remains to the Forest Service to accept those recommendations, but getting that local stakeholder information is critical," he said.

About \$48 million has been spent on restoration work so far and has included building or rebuilding 26 stream passages and restoring 147 miles of streams.

More than 104,000 acres of forest have been thinned by cutting or controlled burns to reduce the intensity of wildfires, and 12,000 acres have been cleared of noxious weeds and invasive plants.

A total of 2,350 miles of road and 1,069 miles of trails have been maintained and improved.

More than 232 million board feet of timber has been harvested, and about 87,000 tons of wood chips and other leftovers from logging have been produced that can be burned in steam-powered electrical turbines, among other uses.

Attachment E – Letter of Commitment from Collaborative Members/Partners

The project has created new jobs as well, with 35 full-time jobs added at the Evergreen Forest sawmill west of New Meadows, Harris said.

Payette landscape restoration projects underway, still in planning

Here is a rundown on the projects underway and in the planning stages for the Weiser-Little Salmon Headwaters Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project on the Payette National Forest.

MILL CREEK-COUNCIL MOUNTAIN

The 50,000-acre Mill Creek-Council Mountain project was the first of the collaborative projects, with implementation of restoration work starting in 2012.

Work on the project located to the east of Council is now winding down and close to completion but there is still some activity within the project.

LOST CREEK-BOULDER CREEK

The 80,000-acre Lost Creek-Boulder Creek project located to the west of New Meadows is in the early implementation stages. It is currently the most active of the five projects.

Lost Creek-Boulder Creek was approved in 2014. Five stewardship contracts have been awarded and are currently underway and three more will be starting in the next two years.

MIDDLE FORK WEISER RIVER

The 50,000-acre Middle Fork Weiser project is in the late stages of environmental planning and public involvement. It is located to the west of Council adjacent to the Mill Creek-Council Mountain project.

HUCKLEBERRY

The Huckleberry Landscape Restoration Project covers 67,000 acres northwest of Council.

The project is in the early stages of public involvement and analysis. A concrete plan is projected to be completed in the spring of 2019.

FIFTH PROJECT

The Forest Service is in the process of planning a fifth collaborative restoration project with the help of the Payette Forest Coalition, but it is in the initial planning stages.

OPINION—THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2017

Preventing fire one job at a time

As the 2017 wildfire season dies down, it appears most areas in the region were spared the devastation of fires seen in past years. That trend will continue if the Payette Forest Coalition has anything to say about it.

The Payette National Forest recently awarded a contract to a Grangeville logging company to go to work in an area near Lost Valley Reservoir, but the contract is not merely for logging trees. Instead, the project is called a stewardship contract, with all that name implies.

The Rough Finn Stewardship Contract will cover 1,300 acres and cut 10 million board feet of logs. There was a day where that would be the extent of such contracts and logging companies would pull out after taking out the highest-value timber. No longer. Since 2009, the Payette Forest Coalition has worked with a broad range of interests to leave the forest in a condition that is better than before the logging companies move in.

Not the least of that work is thinning the smaller trees that were previously overlooked in order to make the forest more resistant to rampaging wildfires. This alone would make the work an environmental success story, but stewardships projects also include improvements on roads to reduce pollution from sediment, improved recreation facilities, and enhanced wildlife habitat.

The project was carefully thought out over two years by the coalition, whose membership include government, industry, recreation groups, conservationists and average citizens whose only special interests are a desire to protect public lands. As expected, the project was challenged in court by opponents who have a short-sighted view of the coalition's efforts. But because the project showed a true collaboration, a judge dismissed the lawsuit last year and the Rough Finn Stewardship Contract was allowed to move forward.

The Payette Forest Coalition does not go out of its way to spotlight its activities, but every citizen who believes in healthy, fire-resistant forests should send them a note of thanks for their efforts.

<https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-public-land-collaborate-2017-story.html>

WORLD & NATION

Trump called for a ‘truly representative process’ for managing public land. One already exists in Idaho

Timber cutting has increased in Idaho’s national forests as a result of former enemies working together on forest management. The Idaho Forest Group’s sawmill in Lewiston is operating three shifts a day.

(Keith Schneider / Los Angeles Times)

By KEITH SCHNEIDER

DEC. 28, 2017

7:40 AM

Reporting from Lewiston, Idaho —

President Trump flew to Salt Lake City this month to remove 2 million acres from two national monuments in Utah, and to rebuke “distant bureaucrats” for acting to safeguard the West’s public domain without adequately consulting neighboring communities.

“Under my administration, we will advance that protection through a truly representative process,” said Trump, “one that listens to the local communities that know the land the best and that cherishes the land the most.”

Though the president’s critics questioned the administration’s fealty to more inclusion in managing the West’s natural bounty, one place that the president

and his aides could look for a model of a “truly representative process” is how former foes have cooperated to manage millions of acres of national forest land in Idaho.

“We do things a little different here,” said Rick Johnson, executive director of the Idaho Conservation League, Idaho’s largest state-based environmental group. “In north Idaho, the timber industry is doing well. They are putting logs in those mills. They need us to get stuff done and we need them.”

“Agreed,” said Marc Brinkmeyer, the founder and owner of the Idaho Forest Group, the state’s largest timber company. “They tell us they want more wilderness protection. We tell them we want certainty of supply. We found a way to do both.”

But in an era riven by ideological division, participants say a nearly decade-old program fostered by the U.S. Forest Service to form multi-stakeholder groups, called “collaboratives,” is under pressure from powerful political influences in Washington and Idaho.

Marc Brinkmeyer, founder and owner of the Idaho Forest Group, the nation’s eighth-largest timber company.

(Keith Schneider / Los Angeles Times)

“It’s delicate. We’ve managed until now to make collaboratives work well,” said Brad Brooks, director of the Wilderness Society’s national public lands campaign, who lives in Idaho. In 2008, he helped form the Clearwater Basin Collaborative, one of nine such groups that assist the Forest Service in managing Idaho’s 20.2 million acres of federal forest, more than in any state except Alaska and California.





SPONSORED CONTENT

Neighbor helping neighbor for a healthy Idaho

By [Regence BlueShield of Idaho](#)

With over 160,000 members and 600 employees statewide, we're helping improve the quality of life for everyone in Idaho.

“We are not focused on picking fights with people,” he said. “We realize that there is opportunity when we work on the things we agree on.”

In 2009, a budget bill approved by Congress directed \$40 million a year for 10 years to fund projects that enable an array of interest groups to assist the Forest Service in developing timber management projects.

Three of the 23 collaboratives in 14 states that Congress funded are in Idaho. California and Oregon also each have three federally funded collaboratives. The groups are intended to reduce the considerable civic friction in timberland management programs.

In the last eight years, Idaho's collaboratives helped the Forest Service design and execute projects that restored big stretches of degraded forest, removed hundreds of old roads, and repaired miles of wild stream banks. Participants,

who meet regularly with Forest Service staffers, include county and state government officials, industry executives, Native Americans, environmentalists, recreational industry representatives, hunting and fishing groups, and off-road vehicle organizations.

Keith Lannom, supervisor of the 2.3-million-acre Payette National Forest, said collaboratives had helped cut the time needed to complete a forest restoration plan from four years to two, and increased the size of the forest projects from roughly 3,000 acres to as many as 80,000 acres.

“All the different groups that participate in a collaborative and reach agreement go a long way toward getting a project implemented,” Lannom said. “They’ve been very helpful.”

Federal law requires the Forest Service to carefully evaluate the ecological consequences of any major action to repair damaged timber land, cut trees, remove roads, and take other management measures on parcels of national forest. The collaboratives advance the process by removing features that are sure to invite challenges and delays — like proposing new roads in a roadless area.

An apt example of the groups’ work is how the Forest Service this month completed a 50,000-acre restoration plan for the Payette National Forest with the help of the Payette Forest Coalition, a collaborative formed in 2009. The land management plan, the third collaborative project developed on the Payette forest, calls for logging select areas, removing 76 miles of roads, applying prescribed fire techniques to 27,000 acres, and restoring the banks along 55 miles of streams.

Timber trucks dropping loads of 50-foot logs, and the screaming blades of the Idaho Forest Group’s state-of-the-art sawmill here on the banks of the Clearwater River, are more evidence of collaborative benefits. The number of board feet of timber cut from the Payette and Idaho’s other national forests has almost doubled to 178 million since collaboratives got started. The Idaho Forest Group’s executives participate in a number of collaboratives that encourage ecologically sensitive logging practices, which helped it grow into the nation’s eighth-largest timber company.

“If diverse points of view get together, there is very little in this world that we can’t solve,” said Rep. Mike Simpson (R-Idaho), a champion of public land safeguards.

Collaboration isn’t always successful. A congressional collaborative initiative started in 2010 by former Utah Sen. Bob Bennett to protect public land in southeast Utah fell apart after five years, prompting five Native American tribes to pursue safeguards for the 1.35-million-acre Bears Ears National Monument. President Trump, acting at the request of Utah’s congressional delegation, [removed 1.1 million acres from the monument](#) this month.

Idaho, one of the wildest states in the country, is an apt place for once-warring factions to reach a truce. Years of ferocious conflict in the 1980s and 1990s over endangered salmon and trout, old growth forests, wild stream protection, and building roads in roadless areas caused deep psychic scars.

From a peak of 809 million board feet of timber felled in Idaho’s national forests in 1990, timber cuts plummeted nearly 90% to 92 million board feet in 2006, according to Headwaters Economics, a Bozeman, Mont., research group. Sawmills closed. Environmental damage left the state’s public forests more vulnerable to insects, erosion and drought, which dried underbrush and fueled wildfires.

The Forest Service has determined that about a third of the 188.3 million acres it manages in 154 national forests across the country are severely degraded. Idaho Forest Group executives assert that improving the condition of national forests is closely linked to cutting more trees. Some 7 million acres of Idaho’s national forest are eligible for logging — especially where trees were affected by forest fires or are growing on land that has already been logged.

Idaho’s collaboratives support cutting more trees, which has helped Brinkmeyer build Idaho Forest Group into an industrial powerhouse with six mills and 1,000 employees. Roughly 20% of the logs needed to manufacture the 1.2 billion board feet of lumber that the Idaho Forest Group produced this year comes from federal forests, double the amount five years ago. Idaho Forest Group is one of the nation’s top five buyers of national forest timber.

“We have an Idaho timber company coming into its own,” said Rick Johnson of the Idaho Conservation League. “We have adult conversations about how to

move things forward that are good for Idaho’s economy and environment. It’s confusing for some people who are still locked into the old framework. Timber cutting bad. No logging good. People here have moved on. We found common ground.”

Follow [Keith Schneider](#), Western environment and public lands correspondent, on Twitter.

keith.schneider@latimes.com

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January 22, 2020

Nora Rasure
Regional Forester, Intermountain Region
324 25th St.
Ogden, UT 84401

Dear Nora,

On behalf of the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the West Central Idaho Initiative Collaborative Forest Restoration (CFLR) Tier 2 Application.

The IDL manages approximately 2.4 million acres of State endowment trust lands. These lands were granted to the State through various Territorial Acts and upon statehood by the federal government for the express purpose of maximizing returns to the trust beneficiaries - the largest trust beneficiary being K-12 public schools. Healthy, resilient forests are essential to accomplishing this mandate. Ninety-four percent (94%) of forested state endowment lands abut National Forest System (NFS) lands and we are responsible for fire management on over six million acres of forestlands across the state. We have been neighbors with the US Forest Service since 1919, a full century just this past year.

Our partnership has recently been elevated to an entirely new level through our ambitious 4-year-old Good Neighbor Authority program, and more recently, through the Shared Stewardship initiative. One year ago, Governor Little and Department of Agriculture Undersecretary Hubbard, yourself, Regional Forester Marten and IDL Director Miller signed the Idaho Shared Stewardship Agreement, committing to these four goals:

- Jointly work with other stakeholders - federal, state, tribal, non-governmental organizations, communities, and universities - to help identify land management priorities and desired outcomes, using all available authorities and active management tools.
- Collaborate on mutually agreed upon projects and other work within priority landscapes identified through federal and state planning documents, such as National Forests land management plans and Idaho State Forest Action Plan, that reduce fuels and wildfire risk to communities, create and sustain jobs, and improve forest health and resiliency. Such projects may be defined within separate agreements(s).
- The Forest Service and IDL will jointly identify a list of initial projects, with a target of two projects, one in northern Idaho and one in southern Idaho (by April 2019 - actually accomplished by July 1, 2019). The two projects will be at a meaningful landscape-scale and will be focused in areas where the Forest Service and IDL have active Good Neighbor Authority relationships and agreements underway.
- By 2025, the partners will work to double the annual acres treated through active management on National Forests and promote cross-boundary work on other lands within priority landscapes that reduce fuels and wildfire risk to communities, produce additional fiber, create and sustain jobs, and improve forest health and resiliency.

Together, at every scale, we have augmented communications and are diligently making good on these commitments.

The Boise and Payette National Forests, in cooperation with the Forest collaboratives, and with us, have developed a new CFLR Tier 2 application that is consistent with Idaho's interests as articulated in the Agreement. We have been actively engaged in the development of their West Central Idaho Initiative CFLR proposal for several months.

The CFLR proposal contains a primary focus on the federal lands within the Southern Idaho Shared Stewardship Priority Landscape and the Forests' scheduled program of work. This focused effort on NFS lands will increase resilience to insects and diseases, reduce hazardous fuels near our at-risk communities and will contribute needed fiber to our forest products markets.

See Attachment 1 for estimates of treatments on state, private-industrial and private non-industrial lands in the priority landscape. These estimates were provided to your staff through Region 1 as background to our request for 2020 national supplemental funds. We will be focusing our cross-boundary work in this immediate area, adjacent to and intermixed with NFS lands.

I have every confidence that the Boise and Payette National Forests will work jointly with the two Forest collaboratives and with us to achieve our mutual socio-economic and environmental goals identified in our Agreement. The IDL stands in solid support of this CFLR application.

Sincerely,



Craig Foss
Division Administrator and Acting State Forester
Idaho Department of Lands

CC:

Linda Jackson, Forest Supervisor, Payette National Forest (linda.l.jackson@usda.gov)
Jake Strohmeier, Acting Forest Supervisor, Boise NF (jake.strohmeier@usda.gov)
Tawnya Brummett Acting Forest Supervisor, Payette NF (tawnya.brummett@usda.gov)
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Amie Anderton, Payette NF (amie.anderton@usda.gov)

Shared Stewardship Estimated Annual Treatment Acres

(Attachment 1 from Idaho Department of Lands Letter of Support)

North Idaho Priority Landscape

<u>Total Acreage</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Treatment Type</u>	<u>Annual Acreage Treated</u>	<u>Funding</u>
144,400	State Endowment Lands	Commercial Forest Treatment	3,000	Endowments
		Precommercial Thinning	1,000	Endowments
248,350	Private Industrial	Commercial Forest Treatment	7,500	Private
		Precommercial Thinning	2,500	Private
796,750	Private Non-Industrial*	Hazard Fuel Treatments	1,000	\$750,000 of USFS grant funds would be used to conduct hazard fuel treatments on non-industrial private lands through partnerships with counties, NRCS and private landowners.

* Less than 50% of the Private Non-Industrial acreage is forested.

South Idaho Priority Landscape

<u>Total Acreage</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Treatment Type</u>	<u>Annual Acreage Treated</u>	<u>Funding</u>
169,100	State Endowment Lands	Commercial Forest Treatment	2,000	Endowments
		Precommercial Thinning	500	Endowments
137,537	Private Industrial	Commercial Forest Treatment	1,500	Private
		Precommercial Thinning	250	Private
667,063	Private Non-Industrial*	Hazard Fuel Treatments	500	\$750,000 of USFS grant funds would be used to conduct hazard fuel treatments on non-industrial private lands through partnerships with counties, NRCS and private landowners.

* Less than 50% of the Private Non-Industrial acreage is forested.

NOTE: \$2 million per year of USFS grant funds would include \$500,000 for capacity (staffing, travel, etc.) and \$1.5 million for treatments on private non-industrial lands through partnerships with counties, NRCS and private landowners.

ATTACHMENT F: West Central Idaho Initiative Funding Plan

Fiscal Year 1*	Funding Planned/Requested
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$200,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$100,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$2,700,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$1,800,000
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$4,800,000
CFLRP Funding Request	\$4,000,000
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$4,000,000
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	\$0

Fiscal Year 2	Funding Planned/Requested
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$200,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$100,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$2,200,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$2,800,000
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$5,300,000
CFLRP Funding Request	\$4,000,000
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$4,000,000
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	\$0

Fiscal Year 3	Funding Planned/Requested
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$200,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$100,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$2,100,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$3,000,000
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$5,400,000
CFLRP Funding Request	\$4,000,000
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$4,000,000
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	\$0

Fiscal Year 4	Funding Planned/Requested
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$200,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$100,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$2,900,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$3,300,000
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$6,500,000
CFLRP Funding Request	\$4,000,000
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$4,000,000
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$50,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$50,000
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	\$100,000

Assuming that SITPA, landowners, or state/county will provide resources or funds for cross-boundary work. Assuming that Shared Stewardship (e.g. SPFH) funding may be available for projects like Granite Meadows with cross boundary work.

Fiscal Years 5-10	Funding Planned/Requested
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$1,200,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$600,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$13,200,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$18,000,000
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$33,000,000
CFLRP Funding Request	\$24,000,000
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	\$24,000,000
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$300,000

Assuming that SITPA, landowners, or state/county will provide resources or funds for cross-boundary work.

USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands

Assuming that Shared Stewardship (e.g. SPFH) funding may be available for projects like Granite Meadows with cross boundary work.

	\$300,000
<i>Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands</i>	<i>\$600,000</i>

No additional funding is being requested for NEPA for this CFLR proposal. USFS appropriated funds (base funding, gap funds, and other special funding requests through the WO and RO) would go toward funding NEPA. No CFLN is planned to go toward NEPA. A rough estimate of funding to be utilized for NFMA/NEPA over the life of the WCII-CFLR would be approximately \$27 million to have shelf stock for watershed and vegetation restoration activities. Assumptions: Multi-resource large landscape scale restoration projects (e.g. Granite Meadows) typically cost somewhere from \$3-5 million each and CEs vary from \$200K to \$2 million. Assuming 3 large landscape scale restoration projects (at \$4 million each) and 10 CEs or EAs (at \$1.5 million each) will be needed for the life of the project (plus building shelf stock for post CFLR funding). In addition the Forests will continue to look for efficiencies to complete NEPA and reduce the costs invested in planning in order to put more funding toward implementation.



Forest Service
Payette National Forest

500 North Mission Street
McCall, ID 83638
208-634-0700

File Code: 4600

Date: **January 17, 2020**

FACA Committee,

The Boise and Payette National Forest Supervisors fully support this project proposal for the West Central Idaho Initiative (WCII). We believe that this project will help us realize our long-standing vision of restoring and sustaining our landscapes, supporting the economic health of our local communities, and reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfire. Over the last decade, both Forests have made significant progress in building capacity through partnerships and collaboration and we are ready to meet the challenge of increasing the pace and scale of our overall restoration program in order to make a lasting difference in the condition of the Forests and watersheds that we manage.

The Boise and Payette have a significant portion of the WCII area covered by completed, in progress, and planned NEPA projects and have a strategy in place to immediately start implementing the WCII if it is funded. We have strong relationships with partners and have worked very hard to build the social license necessary to accomplish this type of landscape scale work.

The Boise and Payette Forests share many of the same challenges and collaborate with many of the same stakeholders. We have a strong track record of success in completing projects that are designed with the participation of the Boise and Payette Forest Coalitions. Both these collaboratives stand ready to help us continue this success with the WCII-CFLRP. Additionally, both Forests have made great strides over the last several years in sharing resources to accomplish priority work and we plan to increase this coordination in the years to come. We want to ensure that the reviewing committee is aware of the slight overlap of this WCII-CFLRP proposal with the Weiser Little Salmon Headwaters (WLSH) CFLR project on the Payette National Forest, which was accepted into the CFLR program in 2012. Recent developments in Idaho's Shared Stewardship strategy have placed a renewed emphasis on working collaboratively with our partners in this area to continue to increase the pace and scale of restoration. Our rationale for this overlap is to ensure that out-year planning projects identified in the [Southern Idaho Shared Stewardship Priority Landscape](#) are included to aid in assuring our partners that the Forest Service's commitment, including financial resources, are available. The area being proposed for overlap is in areas where current and out-year planning efforts have been prioritized and implementation would not be possible during the WLSH timeframes.

We are particularly excited about this opportunity to receive funding for the WCII-CFLRP as it will help to achieve the goals set out by the Secretary and the Governor of Idaho under the Idaho Shared Stewardship Agreement. The WCII-CFLRP boundary encompasses much of the Southern Idaho Shared Stewardship Priority Area. The Forests have already been actively working with our State partners from the Idaho Department of Lands to set up lines of communication, a management structure, and are beginning to coordinate projects within the



priority area that will help to achieve the goals of the Shared Stewardship agreement. We designed the WCII-CFLRP proposal to compliment those goals and see the WCII as a unique opportunity to bring more resources to the table as we work with the state and many new and existing partners within the priority area.

Sincerely,



TAWNYA BRUMMETT
Acting Forest Supervisor, Payette National Forest



J. ERIC DAVIS JR.
Acting Forest Supervisor, Boise National Forest

cc: Amie Anderton, Paul Klasner, Jake Strohmeier