



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Kootenai/Idaho Panhandle Plan Revision (KIPZ)
Forest Supervisor's Office
31374 US Highway 2
Libby, MT 59923

Forest Supervisor's Office
3815 Schreiber Way
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

File Code: 1920
Date: January 3, 2012

Dear Interested Party:

We have just completed the Draft Environmental Impact Statements (DEIS) and Draft Revised Land Management Plans for the Kootenai National Forest and the Idaho Panhandle National Forests. The documents are now posted to our web site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/kipz>. Additional information, including maps, supporting documents, and how to comment, can also be found on our web site.

Public input is an important step in the process of revising our management direction. In developing these draft documents, we have incorporated many ideas we heard in community meetings, and from groups and individuals. We have identified Alternative B as the Agency Preferred Alternative based on what we have heard from people, analysis of the alternatives, and a reasonable resolution of issues.

Now we need your help in reviewing and commenting. Here are a few tips that may help:

- Start by looking at the summary of the DEIS in the front of that document.
- Look over parts of the DEIS. Chapter 1 describes why we are updating management direction, Chapter 2 describes the alternatives, and Chapter 3 describes environmental consequences of implementing each of the alternatives. A good way to become familiar with the alternatives is to compare how they vary in terms of land allocations (management area descriptions and maps).
- The Draft Land Management Plan describes management direction for the preferred alternative in detail.
- The DEIS Appendices contain further detail on analysis that was conducted in developing the DEIS. It includes additional detail on specific topics, including Wilderness Evaluation and Wild and Scenic Rivers.
- Specific comments on how to improve the preferred alternative, what you prefer in other alternatives, or important things that you think were missed in alternatives are very helpful.
- We can better respond to your comments if you are as specific as possible and if you cite the location(s) that you are commenting on.
- If you reference document(s) in your comments, please attach a complete copy of the document(s). If complete copies are not available, please provide the cover page and applicable pages from the document.

A 90 day public comment period starts on January 6, 2012 (with publication of the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*). Comments will be accepted through April 5.



Please submit your comments to the appropriate forest. Comments on the Kootenai Draft Plan and DEIS need to be sent to the Kootenai, while comments on the Idaho Panhandle Draft Plan and DEIS need to be sent to the Idaho Panhandle. Please submit comments using one of the methods below (listed in order of preference for ease of processing and cost to the taxpayer in the content analysis process):

- **Email:** KNFplanrevision@fs.fed.us (for Kootenai comments) or IPNFplanrevision@fs.fed.us (for Idaho Panhandle comments) using one of the following formats – directly in the body of the email, word document-preferred format (.doc or .docx), portable document format (.pdf), rich text format (.rtf), text (.txt), and hypertext markup language (.html). The sender should receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. Only the first email from each sender will receive an email confirmation. If the sender does not receive this confirmation on the first email, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means.

- **Postal mail** (written comments):

For Kootenai comments-

Kootenai National Forest
Forest Plan Revision
31374 US Highway 2
Libby, MT 59923

For Idaho Panhandle comments-

Idaho Panhandle National Forest
Forest Plan Revision
3815 Schreiber Way
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

- **Fax:**

Kootenai - 406-283-7709
Idaho Panhandle – 208-765-7307

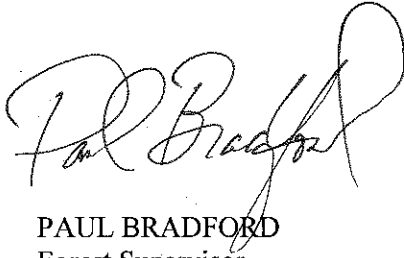
Comments received, including names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record, and will be available for public inspection.

During the comment period, we will host open houses at several locations around the Forest to provide information on the plan revision process and how to comment. The schedule is listed below.

Once the comment period is over, we will review and analyze the comments and prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement and Final Forest Plan. We expect to have these documents completed in the winter of 2012.

If you have questions, please contact Linda Clark (Idaho Panhandle National Forests) at 208-765-7417, Ellen Frament (Kootenai National Forest) at 406-283-7660 or Janette Turk (Kootenai National Forest) at 406-283-7764. Thank you for your thoughtful review and input.

Sincerely,



PAUL BRADFORD
Forest Supervisor



MARY FARNSWORTH
Forest Supervisor

Open House Schedule

Kootenai National Forest

January 24, 4:00 – 7:00 pm: Libby, MT – Ponderosa Room

January 26, 4:00 – 7:00 pm: Eureka, MT – High School

January 31, 4:00 – 7:00 pm: Troy, MT – Senior Center

February 2, 4:00 – 7:00 pm; Trout Creek, MT – Lakeside Motel Conference Room (2955 Hwy 200)

Idaho Panhandle National Forest

January 10, 5:00 – 7:00 pm; Coeur d'Alene, ID – Fernan Ranger District Office

January 11, 5:00 – 7:00 pm; St. Maries, ID – St. Joe Ranger District Office

January 12, 5:00 – 7:00 pm; Smelterville, ID – Silver Valley District Office

January 17, 5:00 – 7:00 pm; Bonners Ferry, ID – Bonners Ferry Ranger District Office

January 19, 5:00 – 7:00 pm; Priest Lake, ID – Priest Lake Ranger District Office

January 23, 5:00 – 7:00 pm; Sandpoint, ID – Sandpoint Ranger District Office