



Forest Service News Release

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Bitterroot Forest Plan Amendment Proposal

Hamilton, MT, July 13 — The Bitterroot National Forest is inviting the public to identify relevant scientific information and issues for the Forest to consider in amending its 1987 Forest Plan components for old growth, course woody debris, and snags.

The Forest is conducting the evaluation to consider using more recent scientific literature and updated metrics for old growth, course woody debris, and snags than was available 35-years ago when the Forest Plan was adopted.

In 2019, the Forest conducted a similar study in coordination with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) to consider updating its Forest Plan Elk Habitat Objectives.

The purpose of the latest proposed amendment is to update current plan direction for old growth, course woody debris, and snags based on current scientific information regarding the management of these characteristics to habitat diversity. The amendment would also align the Bitterroot Plan with the definition and standards for old growth used by the Forest Service across the Northern Region and nationally.

Forest Plan amendments may be broad or narrow, depending on the need for change, and are used to help Forests adapt to new information or changing conditions. Once approved, the amendments will apply to all future projects implemented under the 1987 Forest Plan.

To learn more about the Forest Plan amendment proposal visit
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57302>

Public comments specific to this review are valuable in helping the Forest Service identify concerns, develop alternatives, and refine the analysis to focus on issues. Comments are due by August 12, 2022.

Electronic comments must be submitted by going to the project webpage --
<https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public//CommentInput?Project=57302>.

If you wish to comment in writing, please address your comments to: Bitterroot National Forest, Attn: Forest Plan Amendment, 1801 N. 1st Street, Hamilton, MT 59840. Comments can also be hand-delivered to the Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor's Office in Hamilton or faxed to: (406) 363-7159. Be sure to indicate on the fax cover page that these are comments for the Forest Plan Amendment.

Individuals and organizations who submit substantive comments during these opportunities will be eligible to object to the draft decision or participate as an interested person in any resolution meeting that may be held.

For additional information visit the Bitterroot National Forest Project webpage <https://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/bitterroot/landmanagement/projects> or contact Kimberly Smolt, Special Projects Manager at kimberly.smolt@usda.gov.

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