



File Code: 2400 (8097358)

Date: MAR - 6 2013

The Honorable C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor
State of Idaho
700 West Jefferson
Boise, ID 83702

Dear Governor Otter:

I am writing to update you of corrections to your request for designation of 50 treatment areas across seven National Forests in Idaho as put forth under Section 8204 of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

At the State's request the Forest Service conducted a second review. This review found the differences between the State's request and the agency's original designation were a result of the Forest Service proclamation boundary layer used for the designations. The review also found one treatment area in its entirety on the Nez Perce Clearwater National Forest and portions of two other treatment areas on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest were excluded from designation due to the Forest Service boundary layer. These areas did meet the criteria for designation and were within National Forest Systems (NFS) lands.

Proclamation forest boundaries are Congressionally designated areas representing NFS lands and are not frequently updated to reflect boundary line changes, land sales, land exchanges, etc. because proclamation boundaries require an Act of Congress to change. As such, the Forest Service also maintains an administrative boundary layer, which is updated more routinely, and reflects all NFS lands that are administered by a unit. There may be Administrative Forest lands that fall outside of Proclaimed Forest boundaries and vice-versa, which was the case in Idaho.

The Forest Service conducted another review of these areas using the administrative boundary layer. We determined these areas do in fact meet the criteria for designation and should be designated to be consistent with the State's request and provide for continuity of the treatment areas.

Two additional adjustments were made to the original designation that has the support from the Idaho Department of Lands and other partners. The first adjustment includes the Bottom Canyon project on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest that was developed with the Panhandle Forest Collaborative group. The boundary was adjusted to include 5,313 acres immediately adjacent to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan that were inadvertently excluded in the original designation.

With support from the Idaho Department of lands, we also adjusted the boundary on the Nez-Perce Clearwater National Forest to include 195 acres of proposed treatments that are adjacent to, but outside, the Selway-Middle Fork designated insect and disease area. Conditions in these acres are consistent with those found inside the currently designated insect and disease area: forest health is declining due to insects and disease, predicted mortality is expected to increase



and fuel accumulations pose a risk to the community of Lowell. These corrections will result in an additional 46,690 acres being designated, for a total of 1,749,810 acres.

We look forward to continuing to work with the State of Idaho as we begin to evaluate and implement specific insect and disease projects within your Nation Forests to address forest health threats.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas L. Tidwell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

THOMAS L. TIDWELL
Chief

Enclosure