

NORTH FORK



COEUR D'ALENE RIVER

Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District
2502 East Sherman Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

March 26, 2012

RE: Moose Drool Watershed Restoration Project

Dear NEPA Comments Coordinator:

The North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) supports the proposed action alternative for the Moose Drool Restoration Project. We believe the project will likely provide important water quality improvements in headwaters of the Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene River.

The North Fork Coeur d'Alene River WAG is a diverse group of stakeholders interested in water quality management within the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Subbasin. Members of the WAG represent the interests and industries affected by resource management in the watershed and include representatives from agriculture, environmental interests, forest products, livestock, local government, mining, resource management agencies, and water-based recreation. Representatives from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) have been very valuable members of the WAG.

The primary responsibility of the WAG is to advise the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) during the development and implementation of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for water quality improvement. The North Fork Coeur d'Alene WAG meets regularly to review and implement existing sediment TMDLs, to update a subbasin assessment, to develop draft temperature TMDLs, and to advise DEQ on a range of water quality issues. Implementation of water quality improvement projects to meet TMDL goals is an important role for the WAG.

**North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group c/o Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
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Streams in the upper Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene River project area are considered water quality impaired due to sediment, temperature, flow alteration and habitat alteration. Sediment TMDLs have been established with load reductions needed to restore full support of cold water aquatic life.

Temperature TMDLs are in development. This project should accomplish important reductions in sediment and temperature loading. As part of the project, the USFS proposes to decommission 172 miles of road and remove 164 associated crossings, place 92 miles of road with 27 crossings in storage, and perform 3.3 miles of stream restoration. If the goals in the Environmental Assessment are achieved, there should be a significant improvement in water quality. An estimate of the sediment load reductions predicted from this project using the sediment TMDL modeling approach would help us understand the extent of restoration and evaluate progress toward meeting sediment TMDL targets in these watersheds. The WAG would support field collection of sediment and other data to validate model assumptions. WAG members including DEQ are willing to help secure resources needed for monitoring.

The Moose Drool Restoration Project is sponsored by a WAG member agency and the project's potential water quality effects fit within the interests of the WAG. Similar projects completed by the USFS in the Yellowdog Creek and Tepee Creek watersheds have been evaluated by the WAG and found to have reduced nonpoint source pollution and restore full support of beneficial uses. These success stories illustrate how impaired waters can be restored by projects like these and we encourage the funding of this and similar projects, particularly in water quality impaired watersheds.

The North Fork Coeur d'Alene River WAG also recommends that you monitor the project before and after completion. Monitoring conducted before and after the project should be used to evaluate success and the data collected that could be used for future integrated reports, allowing for a determination if the streams are recovering from past impacts and moving toward meeting beneficial uses.

Sincerely,

Kajsa Strömberg
for North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Active Membership Roster March 2012

Name	Representing	Stakeholder Category
Roy Faler	Livestock/Hay Farmer	Agriculture
Fred Brackebusch	New Jersey Mining Company	Mining
Bill Rust	Mining, Panhandle Basin Advisory Group	
Sandy Schlepp	Independent Logger	Forestry
Jon Cantamessa Larry Yergler Vince Rinaldi	Shoshone County Commissioners	Local Government
Bob Clark Bob Bevins	North Idaho Fly Casters	Water-Based Recreation
Mike Mihelich	Kootenai Environmental Alliance	Environmental Interests
Ashley McFarland	University of Idaho Extension	Universities/Education
Joe Peak	Enaville Resort (Snakepit)	Private Landowners/ Concerned Citizens
Carol Lapan	Private Landowner, Beaver Cr	
Ingrid Madsen	Private Landowner, Beaver Cr	
George Hemphill	Private Landowner, Beaver Cr	
Larry Runkle	Private Landowner, Beaver Cr	
Brice Shoemaker	Private Landowner	
John Pickard	Private Landowner, Cataldo	
Dan Guy	Private Landowner	
Ed Lider	Concerned Citizen	
Chris James Claire Pitner	Idaho Panhandle National Forests (USFS)	Resource Management Agencies
Bob Burke	Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)	
Mike Stevenson	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	
Mary Terra-Berns	Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG)	
Sherry Klaus	Benewah Soil and Water Conservation District (BSWCD)	
Don Martin	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Non-Voting EPA Representative
Kajsa Stromberg	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	Non-Voting DEQ Watershed Coordinator