



Idaho Roadless Rule Facts

- Sept. 12, 2008 Biological Assessment (BA) by Forest Service on the final Idaho Roadless Rule found it “is likely to adversely affect” all five animals and four of five fish listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. They are: Snake River Basin steelhead, sockeye salmon, spring/summer/fall Chinook salmon, bull trout, woodland caribou, grizzly bear, gray wolf, Canada lynx, and northern Idaho ground squirrel.
- The Idaho Rule places 153,300 acres within twelve roadless areas located in the Bear River Range on the Caribou National Forest into the General Forest or Backcountry Restoration category, increasing the threats to rare Bonneville cutthroat trout from management activities.
- Bonneville cutthroat trout and Yellowstone cutthroat trout “are at high risk from potential activities associated with discretionary mining” allowed under the Idaho Rule in Caribou-Targhee National Forest.
- The Idaho Roadless Rule takes precedence over Land Management Plans for each National Forest, which are authorized by the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Forest Management Act to override current plan protections and to prohibit additional plan protections. Protection for current recommended wilderness will be dropped on 13,000 acres.
- Timber harvest is projected on 15,000 acres and road construction is projected for 50 miles within 15 years in Idaho roadless areas.
- In the long term, road construction is conditionally allowed on 1.78 million acres of highly sensitive soils.
- Where phosphate mining was exempted from 2001 Roadless Rule protection on 7,200 acres, an additional 5,700 roadless acres will be opened to phosphate mining under the Idaho rule.
- Selenium contamination associated with phosphate mining already threatens two of Idaho’s largest Yellowstone cutthroat trout populations within their historic range, based on a recently published report by Idaho State University researchers. The Idaho Roadless Rule places these populations at even greater risk by opening roadless lands to increased phosphate mining.
- The Environmentally Preferred Alternative, which the Forest Service is required to identify, to best protect, preserve and enhance historic, cultural and natural resources is keeping the 2001 Roadless Conservation Rule.
- The majority of Idaho roadless lands will be put in the two least restrictive and the two lower quality classifications: Backcountry at 5.3 million acres and General Forest at 405,900 acres. Backcountry allows road construction and logging where “there is significant risk that a wildland fire event could adversely affect and at-risk community.” General Forest allows road construction and logging.