



File Code: 2400; 1560
Date: April 3, 2015

Governor Steve Bullock
Office of the Governor
PO Box 200801
Helena, TM 59620-0801

Dear Governor Bullock,

Thank you for selecting the Kootenai National Forest to receive a Forests in Focus grant. It will be used to help support the Young Growth NEPA analysis which will in turn produce a ten-year consistent supply of commercial and non-saw timber products. The funding will be used specifically for field validation, environmental analysis, field trips, and increasing collaborative involvement and outreach.

The benefits of this project, which will analyze close to 250,000 acres of previously harvested forest, include improving the resiliency of the timber stands to insects and disease, improving wildlife habitats, addressing impacts from climate change, and decreasing risk of stand-replacing wildfire. Managing these stands is important in order to reach a healthier stocking rate and to increase overall growth and vigor of the stand by reducing competition and stress on remaining conifers. Management of these stands will also increase quantities of grasses, forbs, and shrubs that many wildlife species utilize in the early stage of forest development. The project will allow for adaptive management over the next ten years in order to best respond to changing forest and economic conditions.

The NEPA analysis will begin in early 2015 and the Forest expects to have a signed decision by May 2016. The overall development of the project will be conducted through a collaborative process with interested parties, including the Kootenai Forest Stakeholders Coalition, Lincoln County, Sanders County, and the Montana timber industry. This grant provides the Kootenai with the opportunity to complete a significant project that benefits the forest and surrounding community. Thank you again for selecting us to participate in your Forests in Focus program.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER S SAVAGE

Forest Supervisor

cc: Maureen Bookwalter, Christine Dawe, Dave Schmid

