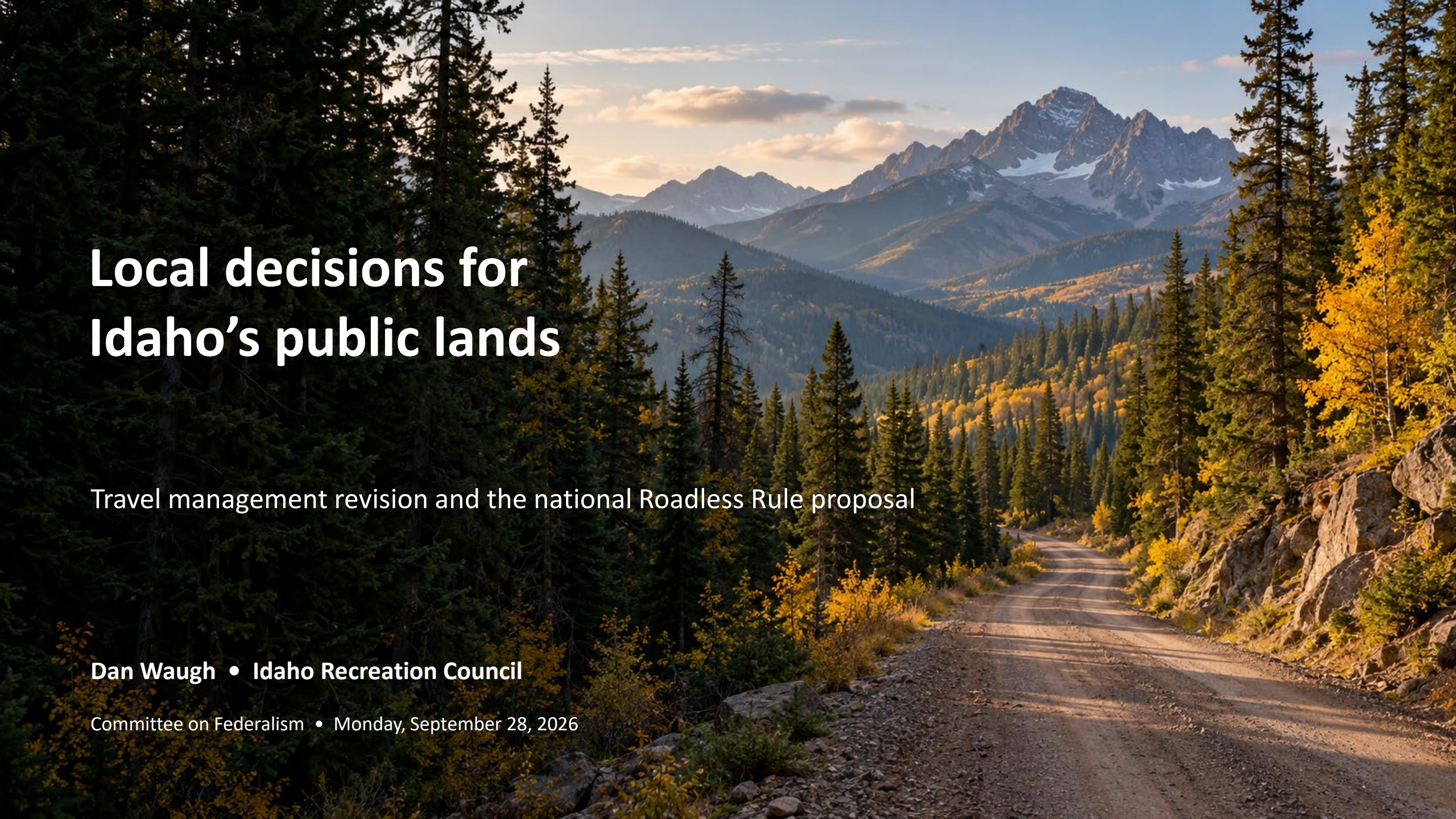


A scenic landscape photograph of a mountain range. In the foreground, a dirt road with tire tracks leads into the distance. The road is flanked by evergreen trees and some yellow-tinged foliage. In the midground, there are more layers of forested mountains. In the background, a prominent mountain peak with patches of snow is visible under a blue sky with some clouds. The overall scene is a beautiful representation of Idaho's public lands.

Local decisions for Idaho's public lands

Travel management revision and the national Roadless Rule proposal

Dan Waugh • Idaho Recreation Council

Committee on Federalism • Monday, September 28, 2026

Our position

Revise the Travel Rule to balance adequate access with resource protection.

Support repeal of the national 2001 Roadless Rule.

Keep resource protection, public input and responsible use in every local decision.

Travel management today

The 2005 rule governs motor vehicle designations on national forests.

Forest units publish Motor Vehicle Use Maps showing legal routes and seasons.

Existing designations and maps remain in force during the rulemaking.

What USDA is considering

A national presumption favoring appropriate access to existing routes

Documented local reasons for closures or restrictions

A simpler path for minor designation changes and updated digital maps

Proposal stage • no automatic opening of currently closed routes

From minimization to sufficiency

Assess whether roads and trails provide adequate access.

Balance access with resource, safety and maintenance needs.

Match public process to the scale of each proposed change.

Connection to the EXPLORE Act

Section 127 calls for public, GIS-compatible motor vehicle use maps.

Section 127(d) seeks additional motorized and nonmotorized opportunities.

Title II advances access for people with disabilities.

New opportunities remain subject to existing law.

National Roadless Rule proposal

USDA proposes to rescind the 2001 nationwide rule.

The proposal would return decisions to forest planning under other laws.

IRC supports room for responsible, place-specific management.

Public comments are due October 6, 2026

Idaho's roadless exemption

The 2026 proposal targets the national 2001 rule.

Idaho's separate 2008 Roadless Rule remains in place.

Idaho's Roadless Commission continues to review proposed projects.

A national repeal does not repeal Idaho's separate rule.

Practical tools before a closure

Consider conversion of a road to a trail where use is compatible.

Give partners notice and a chance to propose a feasible remedy.

Document emergency needs, impacts and the final map decision.

Recreation and rural communities

Visitor demand can strain housing, roads, sanitation and emergency response.

Measure local spending and public costs before choosing a response.

Plan summer, winter and accessible opportunities for actual conditions.

What we ask of the committee

Support adequate access, local discretion and public maps.

Recognize Idaho's separate roadless framework in the federal discussion.

Convene counties, land managers and recreation groups around solutions.

Questions

10 minutes

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