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Representative Jason Monks
Representative Charlie Shepherd
Representative Dale Hawkins
Representative Chris Mathias

Senator Van Burtenshaw, Cochair
Senator Todd Lakey
Senator Mark Harris
Senator Cindy Carlson
Senator James Ruchti

Idaho Legislature
Committee on Federalism

September 28, 2026

Secretary Brooke Rollins:

Cc: U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Schultz and Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Mike Boren.

The following letter is in regard to the Payette National Forest Plan Amendment relating to sheep and goat rangeland that was adopted in 2010. The letter has been approved by and signed on behalf of the Idaho Senators and Representatives serving on the Idaho Legislature's Committee on Federalism.

By amending the Payette National Forest Plan in 2010 and closing 15 grazing allotment units and portions of four other units, the federal government severely and wrongly harmed Idahoans and contradicted an agreement it signed in 1997. Moreover, the scientific basis for which the decision to amend the Forest Plan rests is inaccurate. Therefore, the Committee on Federalism respectfully requests that the 2010 Forest Plan Amendment be rescinded and that the following grazing allotments be re-opened to sheep and goat grazing operations: Curren Hill; Boulder Creek; Surdam; Smith Mountain; Price Valley; Shorts Bar; Grassy Mountain; Vance Creek; Hershey Lava; Little French Creek; French Creek; Josephine; Bear Pete; Marshall Mountain; Victor-loon; North Fork Lick Creek; Lake Fork; Twenty Mile; and Jug Handle.

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) requires the Payette Forest Plan and its amendment be revised. NFMA, under which the Payette National Forest Plan was created, requires that forest plans be revised "from time to time when the Secretary finds conditions in a [forest] unit have significantly changed, but at least every fifteen years." 16 U.S.C. § 1604(f). When revising a plan, the Secretary must use the best available science.

Conditions have significantly changed and more than 15 years have passed since the Payette Forest Plan was revised. The 2003 Payette Forest Plan was amended in 2010. Since the Amendment, conditions have significantly changed by way of multiple studies conducted by the United States Forest Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, among others, indicating that the potential disease transmission between domestic and wild herds is not as dire a threat as once believed.

Given that conditions have significantly changed, more than 15 years have passed, *and* the best available science no longer supports the 2010 Amendment's drastic measures, the Committee respectfully asks the Secretary to act in accordance with NFMA and revise the 2003 Payette National Forest Plan by rescinding the 2010 Amendment. Should the Secretary determine further revision to the Payette Forest Plan revision is necessary after rescinding the amendment, the Committee requests that the Secretary recognize and honor the 1997 Agreement and Idaho law.

Sincerely,

The Committee on Federalism

Representative Judy Boyle, Cochair

Senator Van Burtenshaw, Cochair