UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
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OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

May 4, 2012

Keith Lannom, Forest Supervisor
Payette National Forest
800 West Lakeside Avenue
McCall, Idaho 83638

Re: Mill Creek – Council Mountain Landscape Restoration Project
(EPA Project Number 10-038-AFS).

Dear Mr. Lannom:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the above referenced project on the Payette National Forest in Idaho. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Clean Air Act § 309 require EPA to review and comment in writing on the environmental impacts associated with all major federal actions.

In our December 2011 comments on the draft EIS, we indicated support for the proposed management direction in Alternative 5. We continue to support Alternative 5 and are pleased to see it selected as the preferred alternative in the Final EIS. In our comments on the DEIS, we also identified concerns related to the direction in the EIS for riparian zones, and the analysis of road-related impacts. We appreciate the care taken by the Forest Service in responding to our comments. Specifically, we appreciate the inclusion of BOISED modeling assumptions in Appendix 5; the Riparian Conservation Area Thinning Guides in Appendix 6; the clarifications related to road work and mileage in sections 2.3 and 2.4 and Tables 2-7 and 3-47; and the detailed responses to comments in Appendix 10.

Our questions and concerns have been addressed and we are hopeful that this project will be fully funded. Alternative 5 is holistic in its approach and would reduce road-related impacts to water quality in a high priority watershed, in addition to delivering habitat and economic benefits.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the FEIS, and I encourage you to contact me at (206) 553-1601 or by electronic mail at reichgott.christine@epa.gov, or you may contact Teresa Kubo of my staff at (503) 326-2859 or by electronic mail at kubo.teresa@epa.gov with any questions about our comments.

Sincerely,

Christine B. Reichgott

Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit

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