



David H. Bieter

Mayor

City Council

President

Elaine Clegg

Council Pro Tem

Lauren McLean

Maryanne Jordan

Scott Ludwig

Ben Quintana

TJ Thomson

Boise City Hall

Third Floor

150 N. Capitol Boulevard

Mailing Address

P. O. Box 500

Boise, Idaho 83701-0500

Phone

208/384-4422

Fax

208/384-4420

TDD/TTY

800/377-3529

Web

www.cityofboise.org/mayor

Office of the Mayor

May 20, 2016

Kent Goldthorpe, President
Ada County Highway District
3775 Adams Street
Garden City, ID 83714

Re: USFS Bogus Basin Forest Health Project

Dear President Goldthorpe:

The United States Forest Service (USFS) Mountain Home Ranger District is proposing to conduct forest management activities within the Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area (BBMRA). The project will improve forest resiliency, retain snow cover, and address public safety concerns related to uncharacteristic insect, disease and wildfire disturbance.

The project would include hazard tree felling, commercial and noncommercial logging treatments of diseased and dead trees, and restoration efforts to improve forest health. The approximately 3,000-acre project area was defined, in part, in collaboration with individuals, local governments, and the Boise Forest Coalition, of which the City of Boise is a member.

The City of Boise supports this proposed project as it will be critical to improving overall forest health and is anticipated to improve the safety of those who recreate in and around BBMRA. The City strongly supports the USFS's efforts to enhance native habitat and recreational experiences within Boise's back yard.

To make this important project feasible, a large portion of the harvested timber from the project must be transported using roadways under the jurisdiction the Ada County Highway District. We ask for the Commission's endorsement of the use of ACHD roadways by the USFS and its contractors for this project.

The City of Boise understands that timber harvested through the project's commercial timber operations will be transported to nearby mills via logging truck and that there will be up to 740 loaded log trucks coming from the BBMRA project area during the 4 to 6-month harvest operation.

The USFS indicated the loaded logging trucks are required to meet current height, length and weight restrictions for commercial vehicles currently allowed on ACHD roads. In addition, log trucks have operational

characteristics that allow them to be as maneuverable, if not more so, than other commercial tractor-trailer combination trucks. Turning radius, acceleration and breaking ability should be similar to other commercial vehicles currently allowed on ACHD roads. Logging truck drivers must obey all traffic laws and vehicles must be properly registered, similar to other commercial vehicles currently allowed on ACHD roads. The City concludes that logging trucks on local ACHD roads pose no greater hazard to the public than other commercial vehicles currently allowed on local roads and that logging trucks should not unnecessarily be restricted.

The USFS has indicated approximately 15% of the timber to be harvested (i.e. 110 truckloads) originates within the eastern portion of the project and will be transported from the BBMRA project site using the existing route that leads to Highway 21 in Boise County. Alternatively, the other 85% of the timber to be harvested is located within the western portion of the BBMRA project area (i.e. approximately 630 truckloads). Transport of this timber from the west side will require trucks to traverse one of two haul routes: one leads to Highway 55 in Horseshoe Bend, the other utilizes Bogus Basin Road to access the local ACHD road network within the City of Boise.

The former option, via roads to Horseshoe Bend, would require significant investment by the USFS in making the roads passible for the trucks. Funding for that work would be required to come from the proceeds of the project's timber sales – money currently earmarked for forest restoration phase of the project. This makes the use of this route unfeasible.

Under the latter option, the most feasible option for the project, the USFS would use Cartwright Road, Hill Road and/or Harrison Boulevard to access state highways or the Interstate. Assuming all 630 trucks coming from the western portion of the BBMRA project area use Bogus Basin Road, the average number of trucks travelling on ACHD roads within the City of Boise would average 5 to 8 trucks per day, each weekday. The City of Boise believes that this is a reasonable number of additional commercial truck trips to be temporarily added to streets within the City for the 4 to 6-month duration of the BBMRA project.

Of the proposed haul routes on local roads through the City of Boise, the City suggests that logging trucks from the USFS project area utilize Cartwright Road to the maximum extent practicable. The City believes this route is the most conducive to commercial truck traffic due to minimal development on adjacent land and low existing traffic volumes. Hill Road and Harrison Boulevard also appear to be viable secondary haul route options, but present additional complexities and congestion for large commercial vehicles. We ask that these routes only be used if Cartwright Road is not available during the proposed harvest operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. This is an important project to the City of Boise as it benefits the forest health and, in turn, benefits the public.

Regards,



Mayor David H. Bieter

cc – Stephaney Kerley, USDA Forest Service Mountain Home District Ranger (via email)