



Comment Letter on Roadless Rule Issue

Sept 19,2025

To the Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
Washington D.C.

We are writing in submit comments on the proposal to rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. We agree that there is a need to review the Roadless Rule and find ways to improve it. We would prefer to see an amendment to the Roadless rule rather than a recission.

Process

Rescinding the rule would represent a major change to public lands management, so we feel the proposal deserves more consideration and public involvement than the administration has planned.

We recommend that any process that advances changes to the Roadless Rule involve a robust and transparent public process over the next two months, including public meetings, ample comment periods, and stakeholder engagement.

An Emphasis on Local Collaborative Consensus

This collaborative consensus has been remarkably successful in reducing conflict and gridlock in public lands management over the past couple of decades, by supporting a balanced and common- sense approach, and defusing influence from radical minority voices. This consensus is generally based on increasing active management and timber harvesting on the majority of public forest lands and retaining protections for priority wild country.

Any changes to the Roadless rule should empower local collaborations to be part of the process of determining forest management options for roadless as well as other areas.

Opportunities for Active Management

We are open to amendments to the existing rule, which would provide some opportunities to build roads for timber harvest and fuels treatments on lands that collaboratives may identify as having high timber values and relatively low values for protected wildlife habitat, and other roadless benefits to the public.

There is widespread support throughout the West for projects to reduce fire risk on public lands, especially near our communities. We encourage development of an amendment that would allow roads and active management in selected roadless areas, to support these efforts.

Road access would normally be via temporary roads, but in some limited cases, permanent road construction could be allowed.

The Kootenai Forest Stakeholders Collaborative was founded in 2006. Our mission is to help craft solutions for public lands management by representing diverse values and providing a venue for productive, inclusive conversations between the Forest Service and the community. Our stakeholders' collaborative is comprised of a diverse community of forest users, hunters, hikers, loggers, timber industry representatives, conservationists, business owners, local governments, educators, and citizens at large.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Tim Dougherty, Co-chair

Doug Ferrell, Co-chair

Visit our website at <https://www.kootenaifuture.org/>