



Kinnikinnick Chapter of The Idaho Native Plant Society

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Nancy Kertis
Sandpoint Ranger District, IPNF
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Dear Nancy,

Thank you for supplying the information we requested on the Hope/Sagle land exchange between the USFS and Stimpson Lumber. We appreciate your help.

We feel that the piece to be acquired has value and is worthy of a land exchange. We have some questions about the parcels proposed for divestment.

The scoping letter says the Forest Service would trade away "up to 1,800 acres." What does "up to" mean? Is there a ranking system for the identified parcels? How are the values of the parcels of public land used in the trade determined? How is the value of the piece to be acquired determined? What other ranking criteria will be considered in determining which parcels are part of the final proposed exchange? We would appreciate an update regarding the details of the "Final" proposed deal when available and request a copy of the Feasibility Study.

Our greatest concern is with Area 5, with area 10 as a second area of concern. Trading the relatively large Area 5 will break up a reasonably substantial chunk of FS land, and remove the piece connecting two FS areas with each other and one piece of State land. Has the impact of losing a potential corridor for botanic migration and continuity been examined? At the IPNF Climate Change Symposium yesterday, connectivity was stressed as important in helping species adapt to anticipated climatic variability.

The botanic report notes that future logging activities in Area 5 can negatively impact the pond and wetland with wet forest guild habitat in this parcel. "A narrow forested edge influenced by this wetland has high potential for occurrence of sensitive moonworts (*Botrychium* spp.)," ... Two other deciduous riparian species could locate here if the habitat is maintained.

Area 10, by contrast, is much more isolated. However, the botanic report notes "suitable habitat for *Cypripedium fasciculatum* and small ponds with surrounding suitable habitat for *Botrychium* species (moonworts)." This habitat could be impacted by activities implemented after exchange.

We look forward to learning more about the ranking and valuation process and also whether Area 5 can be withdrawn from the proposed exchange.

Sincerely,

Molly O'Reilly
Chair, Conservation Committee