



Washington, DC Update

Appropriations. On December 19, the Senate voted 81-11 to pass a Fiscal Year 2020 Omnibus Appropriations bill to fund the government through September. The House already approved the measure by a vote of 230-138 and President Trump signed the bill into law on December 20. While late December is nearly three months into the fiscal year, the passage of a final appropriations bill came much sooner than in Fiscal Years 2019 (February 15), 2018 (March 23), and 2017 (May 5), which will allow federal agencies to allocate funds to the field earlier.

Overall, the Forest Service will receive a slight funding increase. The Forest Products account is funded at \$373 million (a \$7M increase), Hazardous Fuels Reduction activities are funded at \$445 million (a \$15M increase) and the Capital Improvement & Maintenance/Roads account is funded at \$455 million (a \$9M increase). The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program received flat-funding at \$40 million. While the funding increases for the Forest Products and Roads accounts are more modest than the levels requested by our industry, we appreciate Congress' support of these programs. Of course, these funding amounts are dwarfed by the \$1.95 billion provided for Forest Service wildfire suppression.

IN THIS ISSUE

- DC Update
- Legal Challenge to DNR Management Plans
- Hazard Tree Removal Project Upheld
- ESA Protections for Red Tree Vole Unwarranted
- Forestry Groups File U.S. Supreme Court Brief
- Coalition Support for New ESA Rules
- BLM Sales Generate High Volume, Value
- GNA, Shared Stewardship in Idaho, Montana
- Save the Date: AFRC 2020 Annual Meeting

One of the big winners within the Interior appropriations programs was the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which funds federal land acquisition and state grants and will receive \$495 million in Fiscal Year 2020. This is \$60 million more than the \$435 million provided through LWCF in Fiscal Year 2019 and the highest funding level since 2003. The Forest Service will receive \$80 million for land acquisition under the program. LWCF proponents continue pushing to have the program fully funded at its \$900 million authorized level.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) O&C lands account received \$111 million, a \$5 million increase. The additional funding should allow the BLM to increase its timber sale program in western Oregon, and it comes as DC District Court Judge Richard Leon considers potential remedies after determining the BLM failed to comply with the timber harvest mandate of the O&C Act. Interior

Secretary David Bernhardt and others in the Trump Administration have been pushing the BLM to ramp up timber sales.

Secure Rural Schools. The Omnibus appropriations bill also included another two-year extension of the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) “county payments” program, which last expired at the end of 2018. The reauthorization includes another 5% annual reduction in payment levels that has been included in several past reauthorizations of the program.

Since SRS was first enacted into law in 2000, the program has provided over \$7 billion in payments to more than 700 counties and 4,400 school districts across 40 states with federal forests managed by the Forest Service and BLM to offset reductions in timber sale receipt sharing, fund emergency preparedness activities, and fund certain projects selected by a Resource Advisory Committee (RAC).

The 2018 SRS payments to Forest Service counties nationwide totaled over \$225 million. The BLM provided just over \$30 million in 2018 SRS payments to the O&C Counties in western Oregon, although 15% of that funding is directed to Titles II (RAC projects) and III (emergency preparedness and rescue). Interestingly, we believe the payment level to counties under Title I of SRS is only modestly higher than the \$21.5 million the O&C Counties would receive from 50% of the BLM timber sale revenue in western Oregon.

Congress has allowed SRS to sunset numerous times before eventually reauthorizing the program as part of larger “must pass” legislation. This uncertainty and the continued reductions in payment levels have many counties urging Congress to adopt a more permanent program. Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Mike Crapo (R-ID) introduced [S. 1643](#) to create and capitalize a federal endowment fund as a long-term solution to provide payments to counties with Forest Service, BLM O&C, and US Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge lands. The proposal, which was first reported in the [December 2018 Newsletter](#), would require \$7 billion to capitalize an endowment fund that would be managed to provide payments to counties. A portion of the funds would be directed towards management projects on nearby federal forests to benefit local economies.

Wild Olympics. On December 5, on a party-line vote, the House Natural Resources Committee approved H.R. 2642, the Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River Act. The legislation would designate about 130,000 acres of Wilderness and “potential” Wilderness on the Olympic National Forest and add 564 miles along 19 rivers to list of Wild & Scenic Rivers. The ¼ mile buffers associated with the Wild & Scenic Rivers designations would add additional restrictions on about 60,000 acres of the Olympic National Forest outside of the areas proposed for Wilderness designations. The legislation is sponsored by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA).

Representative Bruce Westerman (R-AR) – a trained forester - unsuccessfully offered three amendments: 1) to remove Washington DNR lands from the Wild & Scenic designations; 2) to remove the approximately 5,300 acres of “potential Wilderness”; and 3) to add savings language to clarify that Forest Service vegetation management projects may continue within the 60,000 acres overlaid by the ¼ mile Wild & Scenic buffers. These proposed amendments tracked

closely with recommendations [outlined in a letter](#) AFRC sent to sponsors of the legislation as a follow up to a recent meeting with their offices.

ORE Act. On December 12, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee passed an amended version of S. 1262, the Oregon Recreation Enhancement (ORE) Act sponsored by Senator Ron Wyden to expand the Wild Rogue Wilderness area in southwest Oregon and create a new “recreation area” nearby and another near the Molalla River in northwest Oregon. The [substitute amendment](#) was negotiated by Senator Wyden’s office and Committee staff and includes several changes that were made in response to a [May 22 letter](#) AFRC sent outlining concerns with the legislation - including the folly of prohibiting fuels reduction and forest health activities on fire-prone forests in proximity to some of the most at-risk communities in Oregon.

The revised version would require the BLM to conduct a wildfire risk assessment within the proposed recreation area, the Wild Rogue Wilderness area, and adjacent federal lands, and then develop a mitigation plan prioritizing treatments on the areas outside of designated Wilderness. The BLM would be required to work with local and state fire agencies to develop evacuation plans for adjacent, at-risk communities. The amendment also removes BLM lands identified as Harvest Land Base acres under the 2016 Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for western Oregon, but does not remove or replace O&C lands that were placed in reserves under the RMPs. A federal judge recently found that the BLM violated the O&C Act when it set aside 80% of the O&C lands from sustainable timber management.

AFRC remains concerned about further restricting forest management and forest health activities in western Oregon, but views these amendments as a positive step forward towards reinforcing these fundamental concerns. Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities has also worked to organize local opposition to the proposal through advertising, mailers, and letters from elected officials.

NEPA Reforms? On January 1, President Trump marked the 50th anniversary of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) with a Presidential [message](#) outlining the Administration’s efforts to streamline federal environmental review and decision-making for federal projects. The message also noted that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), which oversees NEPA, has “conducted a thorough review of its NEPA implementing regulations and will soon issue a proposal to update those regulations.” In 2018, CEQ published an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to solicit public comments on potential changes to CEQ’s NEPA regulations. AFRC submitted [comments](#) that outlined 46 recommendations for consideration.

Meanwhile the Forest Service is finalizing its own proposed NEPA regulations, which we expect the agency to adopt this summer. The [August 2019 Newsletter](#) included a summary of the proposed regulations and AFRC’s [comments](#). /Heath Heikkila

AFRC Joins Firefighters, Schools, and Counties in Legal Challenge to Washington DNR Management Plans

AFRC has joined four Washington counties and a coalition of school and fire districts in filing a legal challenge to two management plans for state trust lands adopted by the Washington Board of Natural Resources (BNR) in December.

The lawsuit alleges the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and BNR violated the state constitution and state laws in developing and adopting a Sustainable Harvest Calculation (SHC) and a Long Term Conservation Strategy (LTCS) for the Marbled Murrelet that unlawfully reduces annual timber harvest levels on state trust lands.

The plans would reduce the annual expected timber harvest levels on DNR trust lands by 85 million board feet over the next several years—a 15% decrease across the board. BNR’s decisions are expected to cause an annual loss of nearly \$30 million in potential revenues that support a variety of public services.

The [complaint](#), filed in Skagit County Superior Court, alleges the SHC and LTCS conflict with DNR’s fiduciary duty to manage state trust lands to harvest timber at sustainable levels for trust beneficiaries, which include counties, public schools, fire departments, libraries, hospitals and other public entities.

For example, the Concrete School District depends on timber harvests from local trust lands to provide a quality learning environment for its students. Yet this year the school district has only received \$67.92 in revenue from DNR trust lands. Facing yet another funding reduction, Superintendent Wayne Barrett says the new management plans represent a breach of DNR’s fiduciary duty to manage these lands.

“The recent decision by the Board to adopt the long-term management plan has a significant impact on the Concrete School District with a sustainable harvest reduction from 36 million board feet to 16 million in our area. This reduction, coupled with the highest reduction of any other entity because of the Marbled Murrelet management plan, will impact our ability to make needed upgrades to facilities and infrastructure.”

Counties and junior taxing districts rely on timber revenues to provide a full range of public services in their jurisdictions. For rural counties such as Wahkiakum, Pacific, and Skamania, timber revenues may make up over 20% of a county’s entire operating budget. Any reduction in DNR timber harvests and trust land revenues will result in layoffs and reductions in basic public services such as road maintenance, after-school programs, and emergency response.

[In a press release announcing the complaint](#), AFRC President Travis Joseph said DNR’s failure to manage state trust lands consistent with the trust mandate will result in a ripple effect of negative socio-economic consequences throughout rural western Washington, including the losses of public services, family-wage jobs and economic opportunities, and the further erosion of struggling Washington communities.

With the adoption of the LTCS and the SHC plans, AFRC and the beneficiaries say DNR has wrongfully chosen to set aside a majority of state trust lands in western Washington, meaning over half of all forested state lands will no longer be managed to support rural economies and generate revenue for trust land beneficiaries as required by law. The lawsuit brought by the beneficiaries and AFRC asks the court to invalidate both plans. */Nick Smith*

Injunction Denied Against Hazard Tree Removal Project

On December 3, U.S. District Court Judge Edward Chen issued a [favorable decision](#) denying a request for a preliminary injunction to halt the removal of hazard trees along roads within the Mendocino National Forest in response to the 2018 Ranch Fire.

The Ranch Fire Roadside Hazard Tree Projects would remove hazard trees on approximately 180 miles of road that were impacted by the Ranch Fire, totaling 4,700 acres of treatment. The Forest Service authorized the projects under the road repair and maintenance categorical exclusion (CE) authorizing expedited environmental analysis under NEPA as long as “extraordinary circumstances” are not present. The projects allow for the removal of dead, dying, and structurally unsound trees from within 200 feet of each side of at-risk roads.

AFRC moved to intervene on behalf of AFRC member Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI), the purchaser of the M5 timber sale. Yet our intervention was denied because, in the court’s view, the government “adequately represented SPI’s interests.” Instead, AFRC submitted an amicus brief opposing the motion for preliminary injunction. The Environmental Protection Information Center previously argued this issue in the Bull Run case stating that the Forest Service must prepare an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement because commercial timber harvest doesn’t fall within the scope of the road repair and maintenance CE, and because the commercial logging authorized by the Forest Service exceeded the 250-acre limitation under the timber salvage CE. ([August 2019](#) and [July 2018](#) Newsletters).

The district court determined the plaintiff was unlikely to succeed on the merits concluding that hazard tree removal falls within the limited scope of the road repair and maintenance CE, which does not have an acreage limitation. The district court also followed recent district court decisions upholding the Forest Service’s use of the road repair maintenance CE in this manner. Currently, there is a split in the district courts on whether the Forest Service may rely on the road repair and maintenance CE to remove hazard trees along roads. This issue was presented before the Ninth Circuit in the Bull Run case but was dismissed on mootness grounds.

Environmental Protection Information Center appealed Judge Chen’s decision to the Ninth Circuit and concurrently filed a motion for an injunction pending appeal. AFRC moved to intervene on appeal on behalf of SPI and also appealed the district court’s denial of our motion to intervene. Stay tuned. /Sara Ghafouri

FWS Determines Oregon’s Red Tree Vole Doesn’t Warrant ESA Protections

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) [has determined](#) the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of the red tree vole, a small, mouse-sized rodent that lives in conifer forests, does not warrant listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

In 2007, FWS received a petition from the Center for Biological Diversity, Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club, Audubon Society of Portland, Cascadia Wildlands Project, and Oregon Wild to list the North Oregon Coast DPS of the red tree vole as endangered or threatened. In 2011, FWS issued a 12-month finding that suggested listing the North Oregon Coast DPS was warranted primarily due to habitat loss. However, listing was later precluded, and the North Oregon Coast

DPS was added to the candidate species lists. From 2012 to 2016, FWS addressed the status of the North Oregon Coast DPS annually in its candidate notice of review, with the determination that listing was “warranted but precluded.”

After assessing the best scientific and commercial data regarding the threats to the red tree vole, FWS found that despite some impacts from these stressors and some observed decline in abundance, the red tree vole in this area has maintained resilient populations over time, primarily in two large habitat clusters under federal management. Those two large habitat clusters will continue to maintain resiliency and provide redundancy across a large portion of the DPS for the red tree vole. For that reason, FWS concluded that the stressors to the red tree vole do not, alone or in combination, rise to a level that causes the North Oregon Coast DPS to meet the definition of an endangered or threatened species.

In addition, FWS also rejected petitions to extend ESA protections to four other species: the Ozark chub (fish), purple-disk honeycombhead (plant), sand verbena moth (insect) and the skiff milkvetch (wildflower). /Sara Ghafouri

Forestry Associations Urge Supreme Court to Avoid Forest Management Disruptions

On December 6, AFRC and 16 other forestry associations filed an [amicus brief](#) in the Supreme Court in two [cases](#) concerning the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline. The cases concern the Forest Service’s issuance of a special use permit for the pipeline to cross the Appalachian Trail. AFRC and partners previously urged the Supreme Court to take the case with a [brief](#) in July. The Court [granted certiorari](#), accepting the case on October 4.

The question before the Supreme Court is whether the Forest Service has the authority to grant rights-of-way under the Mineral Leasing Act through lands traversed by the Appalachian Trail within national forests. In their opening briefs, the [Forest Service](#) and [Atlantic Coast Pipeline](#), focused on the narrow statutory interpretation question.

Although that question is narrow, the forestry groups’ brief added a broader perspective. As we pointed out to the Court, the implications of the case on forest management and forest health are potentially very broad. This is because the Fourth Circuit [ruled](#) that the designation of the Secretary of the Interior as the administrator of the Appalachian Trail meant that the Trail is “lands within the National Park System.” The court essentially removed the Trail footprint from the George Washington National Forest and transferred it to the National Park Service. This precluded the Forest Service’s issuance of the permit under the Mineral Leasing Act.

There are about 60 National Forest System Units that are potentially affected by the case since they are transected by trails administered by the Secretary of the Interior. Thus, our brief pointed out that the effect of the ruling is not limited to this pipeline, or any pipeline, or this trail. It threatens to impede the ability of land-management agencies to issue rights-of-way for other purposes and to disrupt the process for forest management that is already complex—too complex, if one takes recent Congressional enactments at their word. These include roads to access forest management project areas throughout the 193-million-acre National Forest System.

At a time when active management is broadly recognized to restore forest health and reduce risk of severe fire, an adverse decision could have grave consequences.

Our brief told the Court of the industry's strong interest in maintaining the ability of the Forest Service to conduct active management without judicial imposition of undue constraints. The effect of the decision below is not limited to pipelines. The brief urges the Court to avoid disruption to forest planning processes in light of the settled expectations of those who rely on lands designated for timber production under the relevant Forest Plan. [News coverage](#) noted the point that the case's impact is "not limited to pipelines."

Other *amicus* briefs were filed by a number of organizations and groups, including an industry/commercial [coalition](#) led by the National Association of Manufacturers; [labor groups](#) working on the pipeline; the [Mountain Valley Pipeline](#) company; [West Virginia and 17 other states](#) including Montana and Idaho; and [62 members of Congress](#), led by Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-SC) and including Reps. Greg Gianforte (MT-At Large), Doug LaMalfa (R-CA), Dan Newhouse (R-WA), and Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA). The Appalachian Trail Conservancy filed a [neutral amicus brief](#) focusing on preservation of the trail. Briefs of pipeline opponent groups will be filed in mid-January, with reply briefs in early February. Oral argument is scheduled for February 24, with a decision expected by the end of June. AFRC appreciates the support of our industry partners in this effort. */Lawson Fite*

Nationwide Coalition Supports New ESA Rules in Court

The National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Services) issued [new rules](#) under the ESA in August, all of which became effective by the end of October. ([August 2019](#) Newsletter). The new rules adjust implementation of Sections 4, 7, and 9 of the ESA, which deal respectively with listing/designation, consultation, and take. The rules are heavily procedural and seek to make technical improvements in the day-to-day workings of the ESA. An overview of the [new rules can be found here](#).

As AFRC stated in [our regulatory comments](#), we welcomed the proposed changes to the ESA to streamline a cumbersome and bureaucratic permitting process by allowing the Services to spend more time on species preservation, rather than creating unnecessary red tape.

Nonetheless, several lawsuits have been filed against the new regulations, accompanied by heated rhetoric about "attacks" on the ESA. There are now three main lawsuits: one [filed](#) by a number of environmental groups, a [second](#) brought by the California Attorney General on behalf of 17 states (including Washington & Oregon), the District of Columbia, and New York City; and a [third](#) brought by animal-rights groups.

AFRC has joined with the Federal Forest Resource Coalition, the American Farm Bureau Federation, American Petroleum Institute, National Alliance of Forest Owners, National Association of Home Builders, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and Public Lands Council to intervene in all three lawsuits.

The motion to intervene discusses how the new rules promote efficient and effective conservation, increase regulatory transparency, and reduce unnecessary regulatory costs. The

new regulations will provide greater clarity to FWS’s and NMFS’s listing and critical habitat designation criteria; provide FWS with the means to better tailor prohibitions to the unique needs of each threatened species; and streamline the interagency consultation process. The motion also discusses how timber sales have been suspended, slowed, or cancelled because of overbroad critical habitat designations, and how overbroad critical habitat designations impede forest management projects and forest health.

In addition to the industry coalition, a group of 13 states has moved to intervene as defendants, led by Alabama and including Idaho and Montana, as well as a smaller resource-user group including the Washington Cattlemen’s Association and a Kansas bison rancher. A hearing on the motions to intervene, and the government’s pending motions to dismiss, is scheduled for February 26. */Lawson Fite*

BLM Sales Generate High Volume and Value

The Cascades Field Office of the Northwest BLM District sold their first timber sale of Fiscal Year 2020, the Gallon House sale which sold for \$4,605,183. The sale included 8.9 million board feet (MMBF) of timber for an average price of **\$517/MBF**. The previous timber sale offered by the Cascades Field Office in September, Sweet Pea, generated **\$436/MBF**. Those familiar with BLM timber sale trends in western Oregon over the past 10 years will note that these numbers are above average. In fact, the other four sales offered by the Field Office in Fiscal Year 2019 averaged **\$338/MBF**. Although initially surprising to us, these results make perfect sense after a harder look at the substance of the timber sales in question.

Stumpage value for standing timber is directly correlated to production rates associated with delivering that timber to a mill. Also directly correlated are timber volume per acre and production rates; this results in decreased operating costs and ultimately, more valuable timber. And the final direct correlation, for obvious reasons, is between timber age and timber volume. The table below contains sale-specific attributes including volume per acre, value per acre, and average stand age for the last six timber sales sold by the Cascades Field Office. Timber age and stumpage value for the two most recent sales both increased by about 40% over the previous four sales. Timber volume per acre increased by 60%.

Sale	Volume (MBF)	Acres	Average Age	Volume (MBF)/acre	Value	Value/volume (MBF)
Voodoo Child Groovy Tunes	5,500	178	66	31	\$1,808,477	\$329
Purple Hazen Watchtower	13,600	330	68	41	\$3,826,622	\$281
	10,900	238	58	46	\$4,081,040	\$374
	9,600	247	63	39	\$3,534,560	\$368
Average	9,900	248	64	39	\$3,312,675	\$338
Gallon House	8,900	155	87	57	\$4,605,183	\$517
Sweet Pea	1,700	25	87	68	\$740,430	\$436
Average	5,300	90	87	63	\$2,672,807	\$476

The implications illustrated here are simple. The most straightforward path for the BLM to increase timber volume outputs is to focus their management, particularly regeneration harvest,

on older stands of timber; obviously, this path will also lead to higher levels of revenue generated. Fortunately, the vegetation models used to calculate BLM’s sustained yield levels in the 2016 RMPs for the Northwest District direct the BLM to regenerate more acres of stands over 80 years old than stands under 80 years old. Unfortunately, the BLM has taken the opposite approach. Of the 3,073 acres of regeneration harvest sold by the Northwest District since 2017, only 16%, or 499 acres, has been in stands over 80 years old. The remaining 2,574 acres have all been younger stands in the stem-exclusion stage of development.

These two recent timber sales offer a glimpse of what the BLM is currently capable of producing. /*Andy Geissler*

GNA and Shared Stewardship Gaining Momentum in Idaho and Montana

In 2019, Idaho and Montana took the lead in implementing and bolstering Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) programs and Shared Stewardship agreements to help increase the pace and scale of management on national forests.

GNA Programs

In Idaho, Jon Songster is the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) GNA Bureau Chief. There are currently 10 full-time employees with two vacancies and they expect six to eight seasonal employees to return next spring. IDL has requested four additional fulltime foresters to support GNA and Shared Stewardship by Fiscal Year 2021. A portion of these positions may be funded by state general funds, but that is still unclear. In Fiscal Year 2019, IDL sold seven GNA contracts totaling 27.5 MMBF. For Fiscal Year 2020, IDL is planning to sell six timber sales totaling 17.2 MMBF. Below is a chart showing all GNA timber sales sold to date including sales from Fiscal Year 2018.

Timber sales sold to date	12
Timber sale volume sold to date (million board feet)	51.4
Total treatment acres to date	4,748
Sale revenues receipted to date (\$M)	2.8

In addition to timber sales, IDL plans to increase involvement in road work in 2020. Some road repair has just been completed using Program Revenues from the Hard Rock sale on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest. IDL has also awarded a contract to replace a bridge on Emerald Creek on the St. Joe Ranger District near Clarkia, Idaho that will be completed this summer. This bridge, while on Forest Service lands, will also provide access to IDL lands, Potlatch lands, and non-industrial private lands thus bolstering both GNA and Shared Stewardship.

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Forest Service Northern Region, and BLM are working in close partnership with other agencies, industry, and conservation groups to increase the amount of forest restoration on federal lands through the GNA program. Neil Simpson is the DNRC Good Neighbor Program Manager and Greg Archie is the new GNA Bureau Chief. They currently have four permanent field foresters, several part-time service foresters, and some part-time seasonal employees. The initial GNA investment

came from a diverse array of sources: \$150,000/year for three years from the Montana timber industry, \$170,000 from business and conservation partners, \$554,000 from the Forest Service, and \$100,000 from the BLM. Currently, Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020 aim to treat 5,370 acres and produce 40 MMBF. In Fiscal Year 2019 DNRC sold three timber sales totaling 8.3 MMBF.

Besides direct timber sales, the DNRC is funding the botany portion of the NEPA for the Buckhorn project on the Bitterroot National Forest and the Rancho Deluxe project on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. They plan to be involved with the NEPA on the Westside Bypass project on the Lolo National Forest and also helped develop the proposed actions on the Sawmill Petty, Grant Creek fuels, Kozy Korner, and Blackfoot GNA projects on the Lolo, and Rancho Deluxe project.

Shared Stewardship

On October 13, Idaho Gov. Brad Little appointed a 13 member group to advise the implementation of Shared Stewardship, an initiative that aims to reduce wildfire risk, improve forest health and support jobs through additional coordinated active land management projects. Peg Polichio, IDL Shared Stewardship Facilitator and Jeff Lau, acting Forest Service Shared Stewardship Coordinator will help implement the program in northern Idaho.

In Montana, Gov. Steve Bullock put together a Forest Action Advisory Council co-chaired by Regional Forester Leanne Marten and Montana State Forester Sonya Germann. The Council is a 29 member committee charged with updating Montana's Forest Action Plan. The Forest Action Plan and Forests in Focus 2.0 is Montana's answer to the Forest Service's Shared Stewardship initiative and will examine current forest conditions and identify priority areas for treatment.

AFRC offers kudos to both states for taking leadership roles in both of these national programs. With the help of these and other tools, Region 1 hopes to increase their timber sale program from the current 420 MMBF in Fiscal Year 2020 to 500 MMBF by Fiscal Year 2023. /Tom Partin

Save the Date! Join us at Skamania Lodge in April to Celebrate 20 Years of Advocacy

