



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

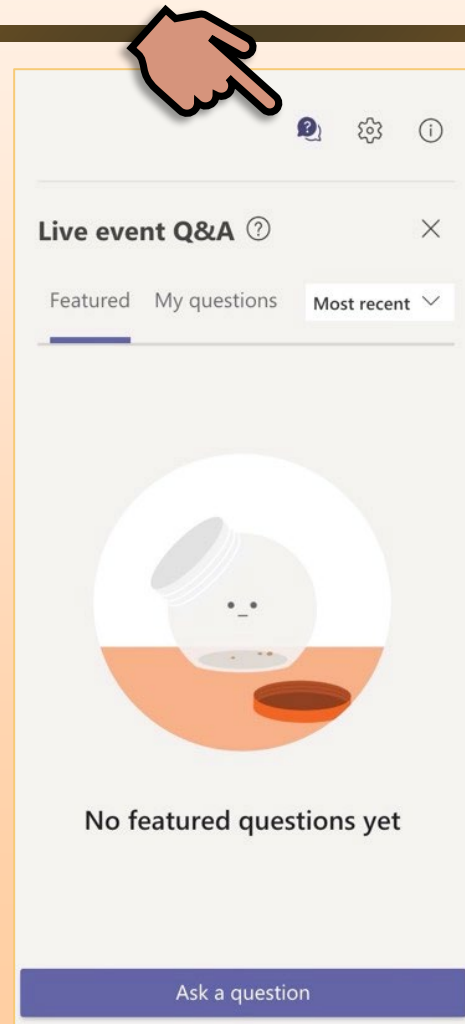
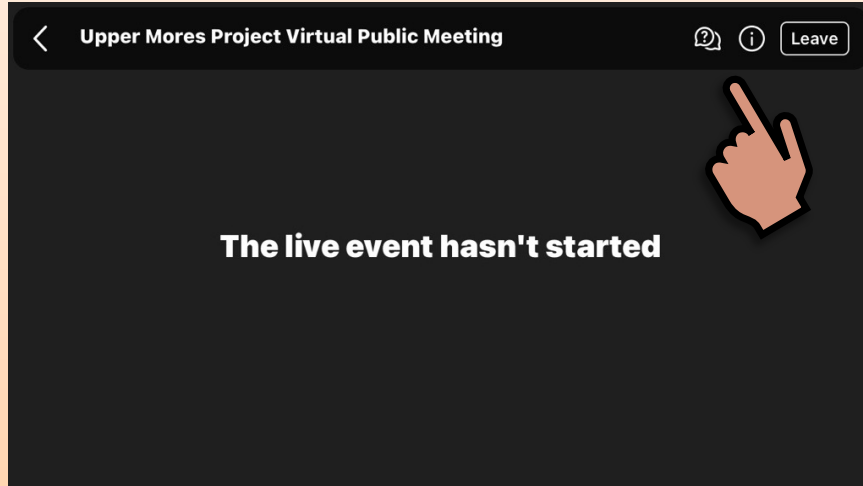
Upper Mores Project Virtual Community Meeting

Boise National Forest

Idaho City Ranger District

August 3, 2023

Useful Tidbits



- Q&A Feature Enabled. Organizers and panelists can see all questions.
- Project-Specific questions, relevant to resource concerns
- Questions that pose a cause-effect relationship are most helpful
- Not all questions may be answered today
- This meeting will be recorded

Useful Tidbits

Different users may experience Teams Live Events differently, depending on

- Internet speed
- Computer / smartphone capabilities

This may cause delays. Our team will stay on at least ten extra minutes to answer questions.



AGENDA

- Introductions & Meeting Objectives with District Ranger Josh Newman
- Introduction to the Upper Moors Project, Overview of Purpose and Need & Preliminary Management Activities – Brian Lawatch, Project Team Leader
- NEPA and Public Involvement – Brian Lawatch, Environmental Coordinator
- Q&A – interdisciplinary team members, as needed



Today's Objectives

- Develop a better understanding as to the level of interest in the project and future public engagement opportunities
- Provide an overview of the project area and treatment needs to ensure you (the public) have a better understanding as to how you can help inform the development of the proposed action
- Ask questions of the interdisciplinary team



Upper Mores Project

There is a need to retain and improve important habitat components for the threatened whitebark pine. The species is under threat from non-native white pine blister rust, native mountain pine beetle epidemics, a changing climate, and altered fire regimes.

Purpose 4 – Road Management and Sustainable Recreation

Provide for a safe and efficient transportation network for all users and address road and recreation-related negative effects to resources.

Need

There is a need to reduce road-related degrading effects to resources. Roads may be needed and/or not needed for land and resource management; appropriate roads should be evaluated for decommissioning.

There is a need to reduce impacts to resources through trail re-routes and to provide safe trailhead locations to proposed trails and the pre-existing trail system.

Additionally, there is a need to minimize illegal activities in the project area through decommissioning of unauthorized routes in areas causing user conflict and resource damage.

Sacajawea's bitterroot (LESA) exists along prominent ridgetops and shoulder slopes in the project area. These geographic features coincide with existing unauthorized off-road vehicular use. There is a need to reduce impacts to this plant by decommissioning unauthorized routes where feasible.

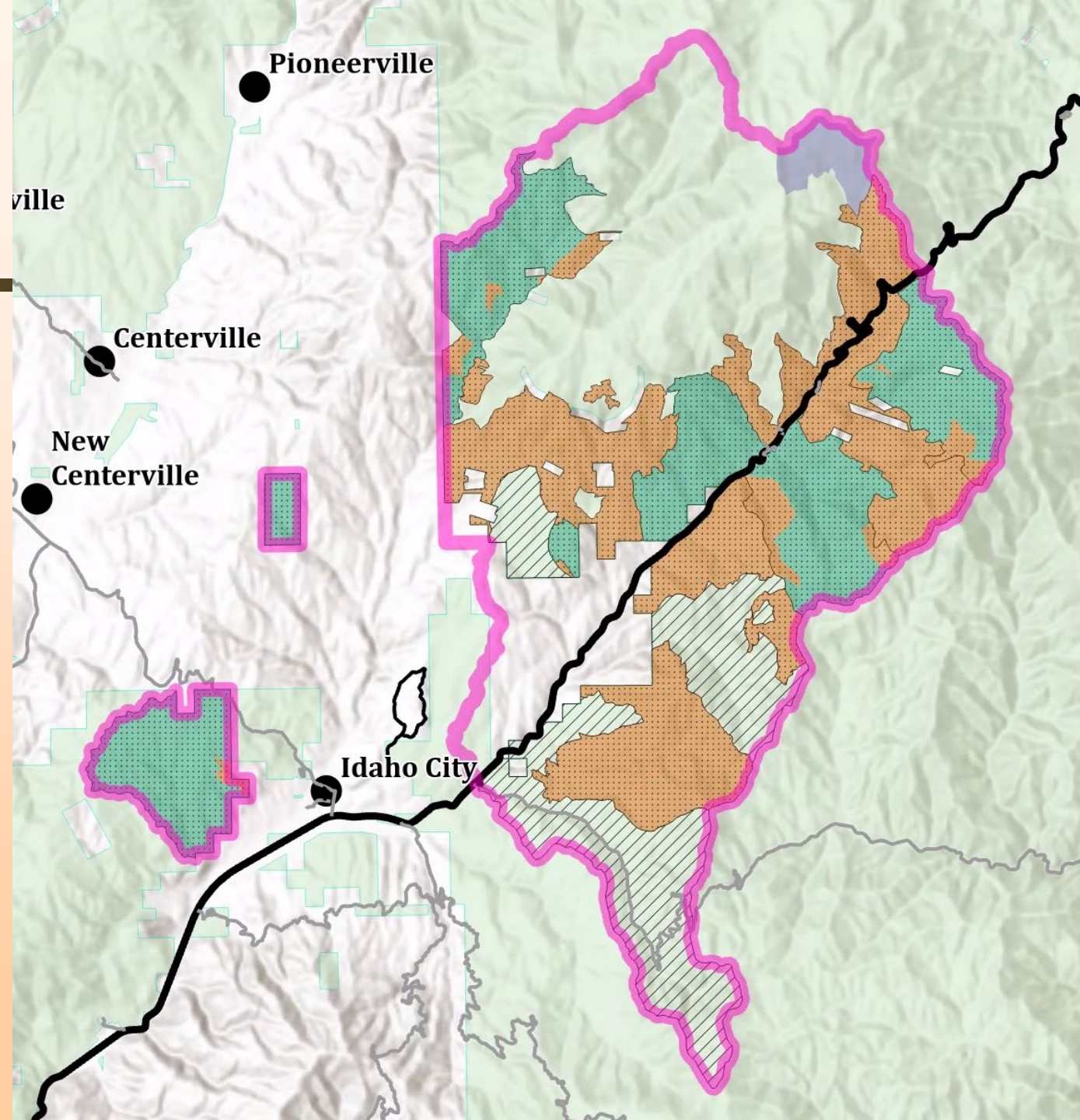
Figure 4. On the left is a photo of Sacajawea's bitterroot, most visible during the two-week blooming period in June. On the right, tire tracks from illegal offroad use have damaged rare LESA habitat in the Upper Mores project area.



Figure 3. Unauthorized motorized use adjacent to NFS Road 327. This use is causing erosion and exposing tree roots, eventually killing the trees and creating hazards to recreators. This degradation is also adding excess sedimentation into nearby Granite Creek.

Where is the Project?

- Idaho City Ranger District, Boise County
- 37,000 acres of Forest Service lands
- Borders 2016 Pioneer Fire to the north/east and treated lands to the west/southwest

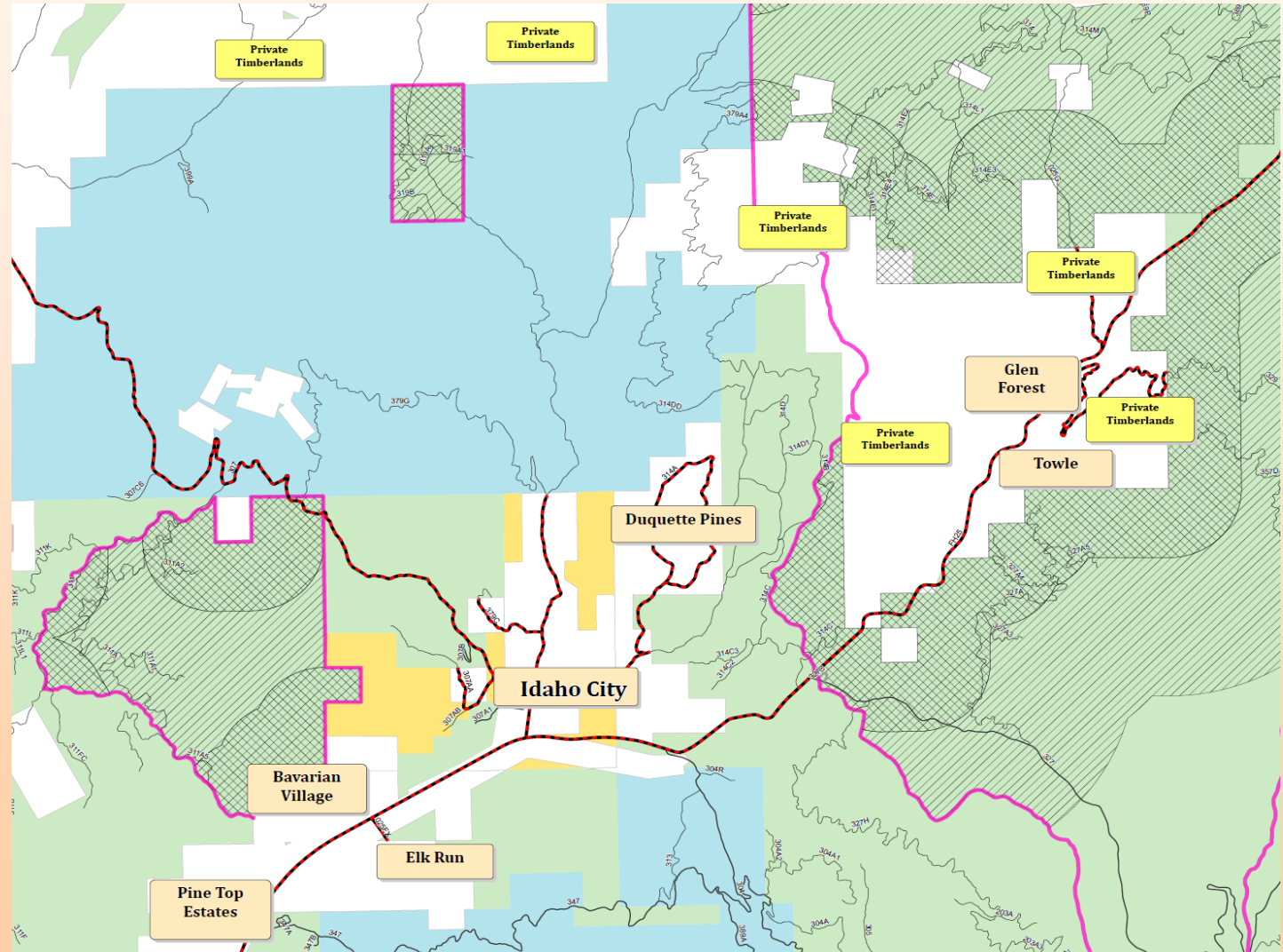


Communities At-Risk

Potential for large-scale wildfire event with a threat to human life or properties.

Preliminary risk assessment completed, outlining hazards to communities and nearby timberlands.

WUI Zones identified – many of the Forest Service lands in the project area identified as WUI.



Wildfire Crisis Strategy

Southwest Idaho Landscape

- Decrease Wildfire Risk to Communities
- Improve watershed health
- Sustain industry
- Protect recreation opportunities
- Improve forest resilience



Emergency Authorities

- Emergency Authorities to Accelerate planning in high-risk fire sheds.
- Critical to mitigate threats to natural resources on Forest Service and adjacent lands
- Address this emergency NOW, not later
- Upper Mores activities authorized under an Emergency Authority include hazardous tree and hazardous fuels removal.

Why is this project being proposed? (purpose & need)

*Reduce the risk of
uncharacteristic
wildfire and improve
watershed health to
achieve desired
vegetation conditions*



Reduce Hazardous Fuels in the WUI

Low-elevation stands with high stand densities and fuel loadings

Insect and Disease activity have increased due to lack of disturbance, climate change, drought

There is a need for prescribed fire.



Use commercial and non-commercial treatments to promote early seral species and reduce the risk or extent of, or increase resilience to, insect or disease infestation.

There is a need for targeted treatments to increase landscape diversity, which lowers the risk for uncharacteristic disturbances from insects and disease. Balsam woolly adelgid has already caused uncharacteristic mortality within the project area.



Improve watershed and habitat conditions

- Impaired watersheds – active restoration needed
- Need to minimize road-related impacts
- Need to restore landscape conditions to support federally-listed and sensitive species
- Need to retain older trees and snags

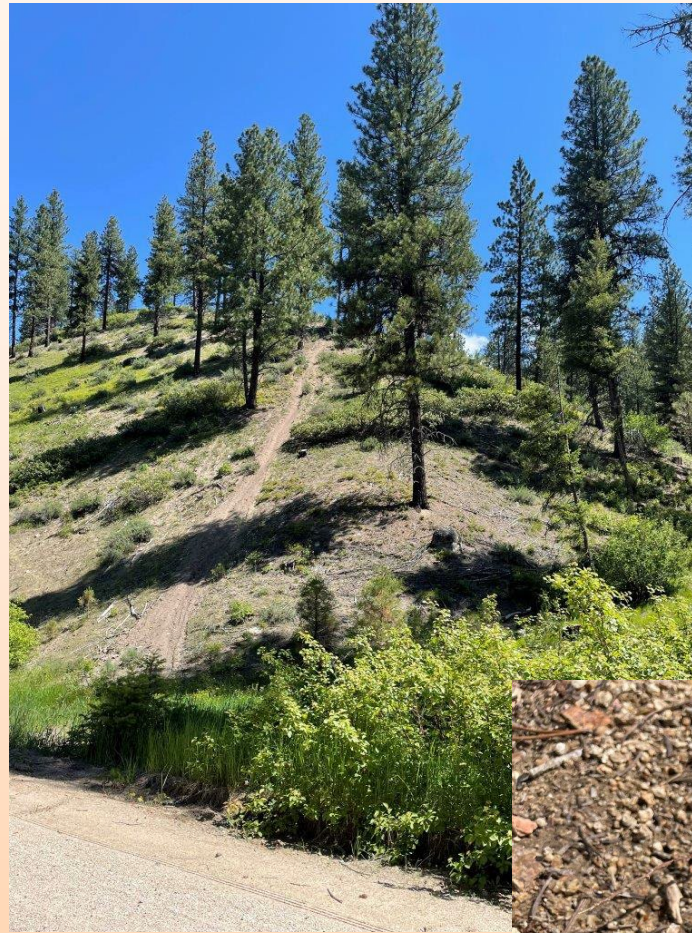


Safe and Efficient Transportation Network and address road/recreation impacts

Need to reduce impacts to resources caused by transportation and recreation related use.

Need to minimize illegal activities

Need to reduce impacts to Sacajawea's bitterroot and Whitebark Pine



Preliminary Proposed Actions

Address the purpose and need through vegetation treatments, prescribed fire, habitat restoration, and transportation management.

Proposed Actions – Vegetation Management



- Commercial Harvest
 - Intermediate Treatments
 - Regeneration Harvest
- Non-Commercial Treatments
 - Non-Commercial Thin
 - Whitebark Pine Treatments
 - Aspen Management
 - Meadow Encroachment

Proposed Actions – Vegetation Management



Harvest Systems

- Ground Based Logging (Tractor)
- Cable Harvesting (Jammer)
- Tethered Logging (Ground based system utilizing cables)

Proposed Actions – Prescribed Fire

- Pile burning
- Jackpot burning
- Broadcast burning
- Multiple entries
- Mastication



Proposed Actions – Watershed Restoration

- Meadow Restoration
- Aquatic Organism Passage Installation and Repair
- Culvert Removal

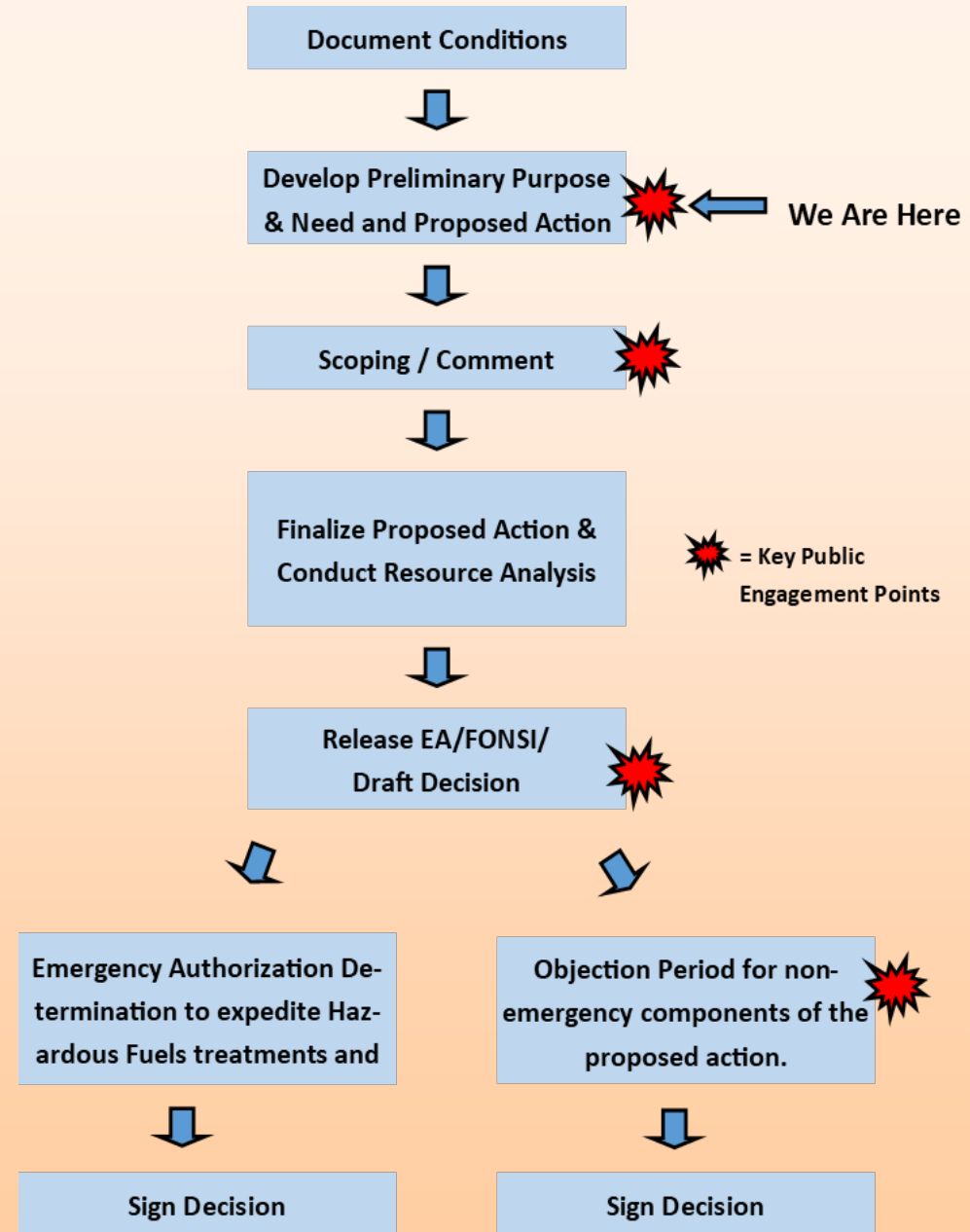


Proposed Actions – Transportation/Recreation

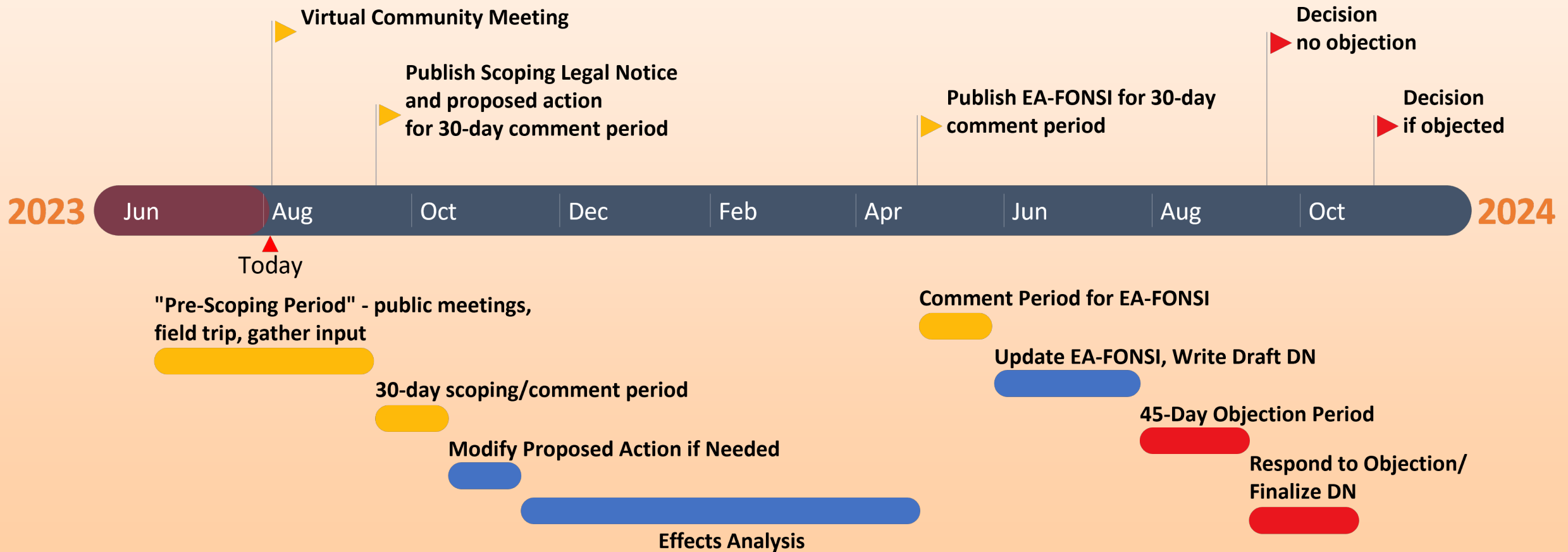


- Road work to support vegetation management and prescribed burning
- Road restoration and road reconstruction actions
- Decommissioning unauthorized routes and rehabilitating dispersed recreation use areas
- Trailhead improvements
- Designation of authorized trails

Public Engagement Opportunities



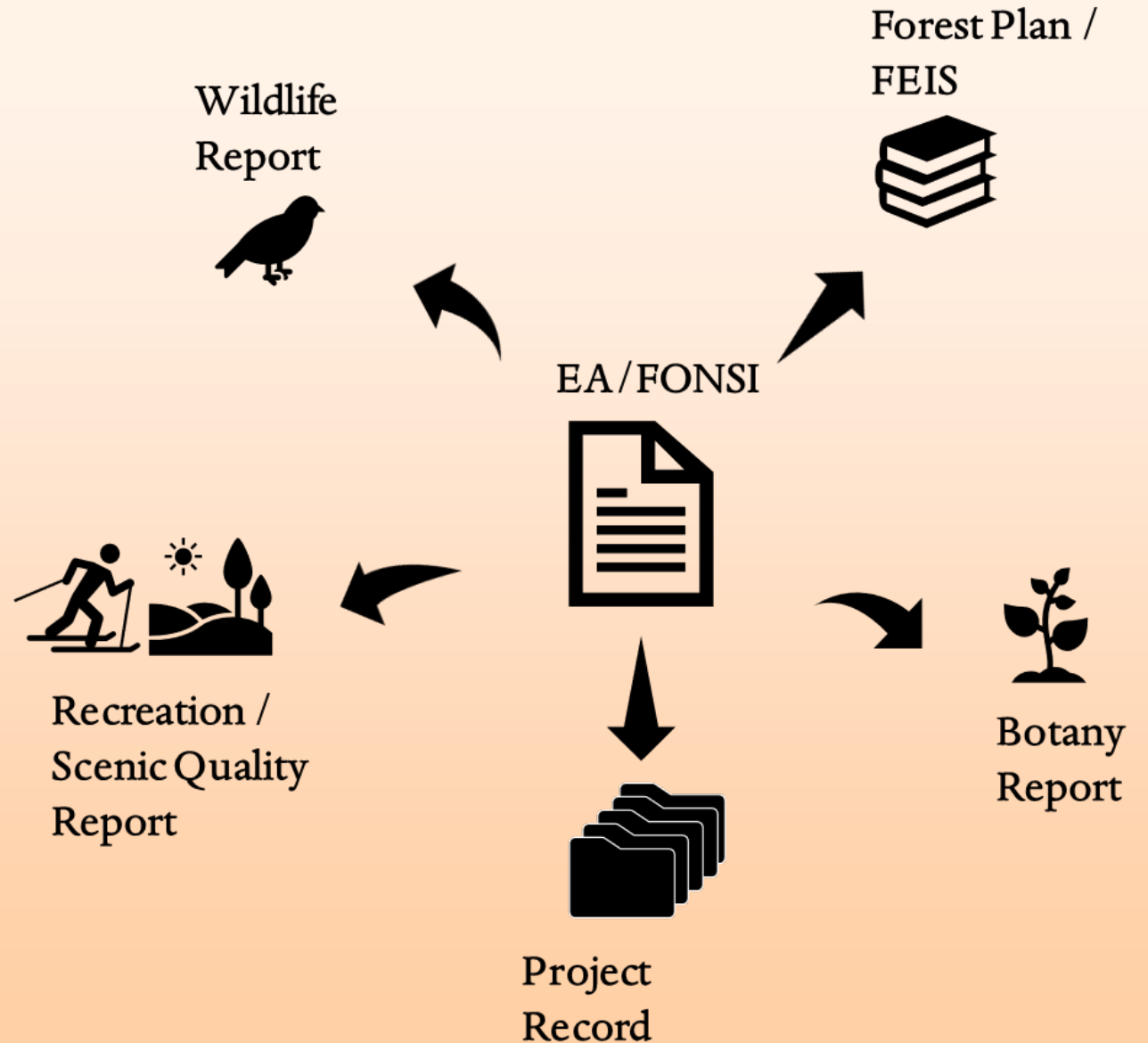
NEPA Timeline



NEPA Documentation

Why an Environmental Assessment?

- Not a categorically excluded action.
- Will determine if a finding of no significant impact is appropriate or if an environmental impact statement is needed.



How to Stay Informed

- Subscribe to Email Updates

Upper Mores Project

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The Boise National Forest is developing a proposal to implement a variety of vegetation management activities, including timber harvest, non-commercial thinning, prescribed fire, mastication, and reforestation to address hazardous fuels within the wildland-urban interface, promote forest resiliency, and respond to insect and disease outbreaks. The forest is also proposing transportation and recreation management activities focused on reducing impacts to watersheds and providing sustainable recreation opportunities.

Location Summary

The project is in the Upper Mores watershed near Idaho City in Boise County.

District: Idaho City Ranger District

Project Documents

Use the widget below to browse documents associated with this project. Cookies must be **enabled** to use this tool.

If you are using a mobile device, the setting for "Allow cross-website tracking" must also be **enabled** to view the documents. You do not need to sign up or login to Box to view documents, but if you have difficulty accessing the documents on a mobile device, you may choose to sign up for a free account, download the app to your device and log in to ensure that you can open the documents.



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Thank You

Brian Lawatch

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Q&A?

