



Clearwater Basin Collaborative

*finding solutions*

## **AGREEMENT and WORK PLAN**

*“Collaboration breaks barriers.  
Collaboration brings people together to find  
common solutions. I salute the hard work of  
the Forest Service and members of the  
Collaborative work group that have  
brought us to the point we are today.”*

*--Senator Mike Crapo*

*As Amended May 22, 2013*



# CLEARWATER BASIN COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT and WORK PLAN

## Preamble

*CBC is committed to working on the issues, challenges and plans described in this strategic Agreement and Work Plan (A&WP) recognizing its dynamic and evolving nature. This A&WP contains challenges that standing alone may be difficult for some members to accept yet our intent is to find balance on issues as an entire package. CBC is committed to consideration of member interests and signatures to this A&WP represent agreement to work towards those interests in a focused manner. On an annual basis or at the recommendation of a subcommittee(s) it will be reviewed and evaluated for relevance and progress.*

**Summary:** Since May of 2008, the Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC) has worked together to meet the needs of once disparate interests. This document provides a brief history of the CBC, summarizes our key successes to date, and lays out a course for the future that meets the intent of our mission.

This Agreement and Work Plan (A&WP) is a **milestone** in charting a new path for land management within the Clearwater Basin of Idaho and serves as our long-term work plan for achieving success in the future which includes legislation necessary to implement the A&WP's intent. The signatures accompanying this document represent each CBC Working Groups Member's commitment to enhancement and protection of the ecological and economic health of forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin and the long-term work plan as described.

It is important to note that the response (*White Paper*) to Senator Crapo's request to the Forest Service dated June 2012 could potentially have implications on the strategies used by CBC to address issues outlined in this Agreement and Work Plan. Upon its receipt, CBC members will need to reconsider the A&WP language and strategies and assess any appropriate modifications needed in light of this new information from the Senator's office.

**Background:** Convened in 2008 by Senator Mike Crapo, with the support of Forest Service Chiefs Dale Bosworth, Gail Kimball and ultimately Tom Tidwell along with the Idaho Delegation, the Clearwater Basin Collaborative is a diverse group of stakeholders including the tribal, environmental, timber, motorized recreation, and county government interests working together to enhance and protect the



ecological and economic health of forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin by working across a diversity of interests.

Since 2008, the CBC has worked to resolve conflicts within the Clearwater Basin of the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest by working together to solve problems and create a shared vision for land management and economic health within the Clearwater Basin.

*“Collaboration is the solution.”-- U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell*

Early in its history, the CBC identified areas of agreement which members believe should be the basis for future management of the Clearwater Basin. All of these issues are equally important and include:

- **Ecological Values.** Members unanimously agree on the value of anadromous fisheries and aquatic habitat, elk, and backcountry in the Clearwater Basin. Protecting these resources for the ecological, social and economic health of the Clearwater Basin is a foundation of the CBC’s work.
- **Economies.** There is a need to maintain existing economic opportunities and to diversify into new ones. The CBC recognizes that the Clearwater Basin’s natural resources are fundamental to these activities, but must also be conserved for the future.
- **Restoration and Economic Development.** Landscape restoration and workforce training to carry it out will be encouraged to support ecological and economic viability.
- **Timber Industry.** A secure timber industry is critical to the economy of the Basin, and is needed for restoring the landscape.
- **Treaty Rights.** The CBC recognizes the importance of the Nez Perce Tribe’s treaty rights within the Clearwater Basin, and is committed to protection and enhancement of cultural values. Sacred sites use patterns, subsistence values and relationships between people are essential to progress within the Basin.
- **Backcountry Values.** Protection of unspoiled landscapes is crucial to the long term health of the Basin. The Clearwater Basin has nearly a million acres of pristine inventoried roadless lands, and the CBC is committed to protecting the backcountry values that make these areas unique.



- **Recreation.** The Clearwater Basin has enormous recreation value locally, regionally, and nationally. The CBC is committed to protecting the values and enhancing the experiences of all recreational users, and recognizes that recreation is vitally important to the Clearwater Basin's economic future.
- **County Infrastructures.** Local counties serve the nation by providing infrastructure services that support public uses of national forests within their boundaries. CBC members believe counties should receive financial support for these services above what the federal government currently legislates. New solutions for county infrastructures are needed.

*"Four years of meetings and work are starting to produce tangible results for the members of the Clearwater Basin Collaborative and their U.S. Forest Service partners."  
--Idaho Statesman, "Mutual Trust Leads to Tangible Results", May 2012*

**Clearwater Basin Collaborative Members:** The CBC includes representatives from timber, environmental, recreation, and tribal interests, as well as state and local governments and members of the public at large. CBC members include:

- **Wood Products:** Idaho Forest Group, Idaho Association of Logging Contractors, Empire Lumber
- **Motorized Recreation:** Lewiston Off-Highway Vehicle Club; Public Lands Access Year-round
- **Business Development:** Framing Our Community; Local Business
- **Tribal Government:** Nez Perce Tribe
- **Sportsmen and Women:** Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Idaho Outfitters and Guides
- **County Government:** Clearwater County commissioner; Idaho County commissioner
- **State Government:** Idaho Department of Commerce; Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- **Conservation:** Idaho Conservation League; Idaho Rivers United; Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; The Great Burn Study Group; The Nature Conservancy; The Wilderness Society; Trout Unlimited
- **Citizens at Large**



**Successes:** Since its formation in 2008, through working collaboratively, the CBC has created lasting and important successes that have helped to protect the ecological and economic health of forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin. Copies of these reports, analyses, lists, Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), Briefings and correspondence are attached as Appendices to the A&WP. Accomplishments to date include:

- **Selway-Middle Fork Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project**  
In 2010, the Clearwater Basin was selected as one of only ten national projects designed to restore national forest lands and provide benefits to local communities. The project, which was the direct result of CBC collaboration, has already brought \$19.0 million into Clearwater and Idaho counties, and will bring in a total of over \$80 million. The project has and will continue to result in hundreds of jobs and restore thousands of acres of forest lands.
- **Timber Industry** - The annual harvest level from the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest is expected to increase by 50%. The Selway-Middle Fork project is expected to provide 390 jobs in the forest products industry in Idaho and Clearwater counties over the next decade and the project is anticipated to produce over 120 million board feet of saw-timber and biomass. The Interface Fuels Project, which is a component of the Selway-Middle Fork project initiated by the CBC, will provide eight million board feet of trees to the Blue North Forest Products mill in Kamiah.
- **Forest Restoration** - The Selway-Middle Fork project aims to restore the health of over 1.4 million acres of forest lands within the Clearwater Basin. Through the Interface Fuels, Clear Creek, Iron Mountain, Selway Brush, Fenn Face, O'Hara Forest Health and other projects, thousands of acres of forest lands have been restored through harvest and prescribed fire.
- **Economies** - The Selway-Middle Fork project is expected to provide 390 jobs in Idaho and Clearwater counties over the next decade. These jobs provide important economic benefits to the counties.
- **Ecological Values** - Through the Selway-Middle Fork project, dozens of miles of unneeded roads will be stabilized, and needed roads will be upgraded, reducing sedimentation and restoring important habitat for anadromous fish. Noxious weeds will be treated throughout the Clearwater Basin.

- **Collaboration with the United States Forest Service** - In 2010, the CBC and Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** (MOU) that expands collaboration between the Forest Service, the CBC, and the public; and encourages dialogue to build community support for forest restoration management and protection activities. This cooperative work will help achieve shared community, economic, ecological and forest restoration goals.
- **NEPA Project List** - CBC has agreed to a list of 17 projects on public lands of the Nez Perce / Clearwater NF that members will specifically review, participate in and provide input to throughout the NEPA process.
- **Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative** - CBC members unanimously agreed on the value of the fish and wildlife resources across the Clearwater Basin. Protection of these resources for ecological, social and economic health in the Basin is a foundational principal and led to the Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative. This effort is exploring strategies to restore habitat essential for sustainable wildlife populations.
- **Internal Agreements** - The CBC has established consensus-based principles relating to the ecological and economic health of forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin. These principles form the basis for the agreement.
- **Letter to Senator Crapo requesting assistance on the 12 CBC Issues** - In January of 2012, CBC communicated to Senator Crapo the status of consensus on each of the 12 issues described in the Issue Briefing 2011 (see Appendix) and requested assistance from the Senator and his staff as to how to proceed with implementation of action on each issue.
- **USFS White Paper - Response to CBC Issues** - With receipt of the CBC letter of January 2012 referred to above, Senator Crapo requested input from the Forest Service at the Washington level. Specifically, he asked the Chief of the Forest Service to consider each of the 12 issues and provide creative thought and input as to how each issue could be addressed. While we have not yet seen the final result of this analysis by the Forest Service - we anticipate specific suggestions; both administrative and legislative that will help us move forward to meet our goals and recognize this cooperative and collaborative dialogue between the Administration and a member of Congress is unprecedented and significant.



- **CBC Issues Briefing (December 2011)** – In preparation for briefings in Washington DC members of the CBC assembled a series of briefing papers on the 12 issues of primary focus for the collaborative.
- **Secure Rural Schools (SRS)** - CBC understands how important SRS has been to the stability of our rural counties and believes that a long-term solution needs to be found. That includes support for the reauthorization of SRS or its replacement with another formula that would have permanent authorization. In an effort to help find a solution CBC has proposed a “Single County Payment Proposal” that combines SRS, revenue sharing, and Payments in Lieu of Taxes. This single payment approach has three goals: providing fair and predictable payments to counties, targeting payments to by economic performance and economic opportunity, and reducing the need for federal appropriations over time.

## Clearwater Basin Collaborative Agreement & Work Plan

This Agreement & Work Plan represents more than five years of work to advance the principles agreed to within the CBC in a manner that addresses the interests of CBC members. This document serves as our agreement. We submit this to Senator Crapo and the Idaho delegation as a blueprint for initiating legislation while outlining the non-legislative items that must be accomplished in order for us to achieve success.

The CBC has developed a package of agreements that represent the diversity of interests within the group, which includes:

**I. Forest Management:** There is a large amount of land within the Clearwater Basin that has been actively managed in the past. It is important that these lands continue to provide wood products and jobs, as well as providing quality habitat for wildlife and fish populations. The CBC will work administratively to provide a more predictable, long-term supply of timber as well as restoring lands and rivers where needed.

Through the actions listed below, the CBC agrees to support and implement a long term science-based restoration program in the Clearwater Basin to enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve forest health, and provide wood products for local communities.

### A. Active Timber Management

1. The CBC agrees to work administratively to significantly increase the amount of timber being harvested within the Clearwater Basin in order to create a long term, predictable, and consistent supply of timber by working to implement all the items listed below.
2. The Clearwater Basin Collaborative supports the active management of the roaded front to meet ecological and economic objectives through mechanical treatment and prescribed fire. The roaded front includes all areas within the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest not designated as Inventoried Roadless or Wilderness and is where the majority of timber harvest in the basin is expected to occur into the future. The CBC recommends that these lands be managed to meet ecological desired conditions with significant harvest of wood products as a by-product of management action. Conversely, we recommend that these lands will be managed for significant sustained-yield timber harvest with



desired forest structure conditions as a by-product of this active forest management. The two objectives are held in equal regard on this portion of the landscape consistent with all environmental laws. The CBC supports the use of wildfire suppression in the roaded front to protect nearby communities and timber resources along with the use of prescribed fire to accomplish ecological objectives.

3. The CBC will continue to explore legislative opportunities to support the successful implementation of the administrative approach outlined herein.

#### **B. Clearwater Basin Collaborative Management Principles**

1. The CBC agrees to define desired conditions, management objectives, vegetation management principles, and restoration goals for the Clearwater Basin, and will make recommendations to the Forest Service on:
  - a. Temporary and permanent road use strategy that provides access for future management opportunities and protects watershed health;
  - b. Classification and logging for old growth timber;
  - c. Appropriate silvicultural prescriptions; and
  - d. Restoration principles.

#### **C. Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP):**

1. The CBC will work with the Forest Service over the life of the Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP project to ensure the objectives of the project are met as laid out in the CFLRP proposal submitted by the CBC.
2. The CBC will work annually to advocate for full funding for the CFLRP program throughout the life of the project.
3. The CBC will continue to work to achieve the monitoring work as described in the Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP proposal for the life of the project.
4. The CBC will support the development of more CFLR-like, integrated, landscape-scale USFS projects across the Clearwater Basin and will participate to the extent possible given capacity and funding.

**D. Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)  
Between the Forest Service and the CBC for Projects**

1. The CBC will continue collaboration on a selected number of USFS projects to accomplish the following: facilitate expanded communication between the CBC and USFS; help build community support for forest restoration management and protection activities within the Clearwater Basin; help the CBC develop a common set of “principles” as described in section B; and to achieve shared community, economic, ecological and forest restoration objectives across the Clearwater Basin.

**E. Landscape Assessment**

1. The CBC will develop an ecological assessment that provides an overview of current conditions and restoration needs for forest and aquatic ecosystems across the Clearwater Basin. When complete, the Landscape Assessment will provide the following information:
  - a. Identify the degree to which lands across the roaded front and Inventoried Roadless and Wilderness areas of the Clearwater Basin have departed from historic vegetation conditions.
  - b. Estimates of the number of acres that could be modified through fire or mechanical treatments for improving forest health and resilience.
  - c. Estimates of forested lands within the roaded front country that have additional limitation to mechanical treatment.
  - d. Characterization of aquatic conditions and prioritization of sub watersheds for aquatic restoration and protection

**F. Stewardship Contracting Reauthorization Public Law** granted the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Forest Service ten-year authority to enter into stewardship contracts or agreements to achieve agency land management objectives and meet community needs.

1. The CBC will engage in the national effort to reauthorize stewardship contracting prior to its expiration in FY 2013.
2. The CBC recognizes the value of stewardship contracts as a tool, but also believes that improvements should be considered.

**II. Rural Economic Needs and County Funding:** Important county services such as schools, roads and search and rescue are difficult to fund in rural counties with large percentages of public lands. In order to provide for more equitable and stable payments to Idaho and Clearwater Counties, legislation proposes a new federal payment system.

**A. Reauthorization or Replacement of Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and Payment in Lieu of Taxes PILT**

The CBC agrees to help provide solutions for a revised county funding formula that could replace the current payments received through SRS and PILT.

**B. Equipment Operator School**

The CBC agrees to support funding for an equipment operators school to be located in the Clearwater Basin.

1. Start-up costs of \$535,000 to pay for facilities, staff and operating expenses.

**C. Alternative Energy and Biofuels**

The CBC agrees to support funding for biomass or alternative energy/biofuels plants or facilities constructed within the Clearwater Basin, either through appropriated dollars or through existing funding channels.

**D. Traditional Skills School**

The CBC agrees to support:

1. Funding for historic restoration of the Dixie work center.
2. Funding for the establishment of a program to implement a traditional skills center at the center.

**III. Honoring Tribal Sacred and Special Places (Cultural Resources):**

There are places in the Clearwater Basin that are important and sacred to the Nez Perce Tribe. Members of the CBC have come to honor these places of importance to the Nez Perce Tribe's history and pre-history and have agreed to work collaboratively for their protection. Legislation can ensure long-term protection of cultural resources.

**A. Pilot Knob**

1. The CBC supports legislation that requires the development of a feasibility study within 1 year after passage of a bill to identify options for removal of communication towers off Pilot Knob that

simultaneously meets the communication needs of affected local communities. The feasibility study will include the following items:

- a. The cost associated with each option;
  - b. A preferred recommendation.
2. The CBC supports legislation that designates Pilot Knob as a Cultural Resource Protection Area (CRPA) to protect its unique cultural resources. The designation will have the following components:
- a. The area is to be managed to protect the cultural values of the site.
  - b. The designation will not have any immediate impacts on existing communication towers.
  - c. As new technology becomes available, the Forest Service and other affected and interested parties will look for new locations to move communications towers off Pilot Knob and on to other suitable locations.

#### **IV. Wilderness, Wild & Scenic Rivers, and Special Management Designations:**

There is a large amount of wilderness quality land within the Clearwater Basin. Legislation will designate some areas within the Clearwater Basin as Wilderness, as well as designating certain rivers under the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. Legislation will also establish special management designations.

##### **A. West Meadow Creek Special Management Area**

1. The West Meadow Creek Special Management Area (SMA) will include the entire portion of West Meadow Creek IRA, using the 505 Anderson Butte ATV trail as the western boundary. The 505 trail is to remain out of the SMA.
2. The guiding management direction for the SMA is “to protect the ecological integrity of the watershed.”
3. Recreational motor vehicle use is not allowed within the SMA.
4. The SMA will not preclude the use of mechanized equipment for trail maintenance.
5. Mining is limited to valid existing claims.
6. The Indian Hill Trail (603) is to be located inside of the SMA.

7. Idaho Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, Counties and law enforcement personnel are allowed to use motorized or mechanized equipment to manage for fish and wildlife and conduct search and rescue efforts.

## **B. Cayuse Creek Special Management Area**

1. The Cayuse Creek Special Management Area (SMA) will include inventoried roadless land within the Cayuse Creek watershed, excluding the portion inside of the Great Burn.
2. The guiding management direction/purpose is to maintain and protect water quality, native fisheries habitat, wildlife connectivity and the ecological integrity of the Cayuse Watershed.
3. Motorized use is allowed consistent with the existing Travel Management Plan.
4. Vegetation management is allowed for public safety and administrative purposes.
5. Management actions must maintain or improve fish and wildlife connectivity.
6. Management actions must maintain or enhance water quality.
7. Mining is limited to current, valid claims.

## **C. Wilderness Designation**

1. The CBC supports designation of the following areas as wilderness:
  - a. **The Great Burn/Hoodoo IRA**—The entire portion of the Great Burn Study area contained within the Wild Lands Recreation theme boundaries as recommended in 1987 Forest Plan. Language about the boundary will be negotiated.
  - b. **Selway-Bitterroot Additions**—The Forest Service recommended wilderness portions of the Sneakfoot Meadows and White Sands Creek IRAs along the northern border of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.
  - c. **Mallard-Larkins IRA**—The Clearwater County portion of the Mallard-Larkins IRA that is included as Recommended Wilderness in the 1987 Forest Plan, with the 5371 Road serving as the southeast boundary. The Minnesaka Creek

drainage on the southwest shall also be included, using the creek as the southwestern boundary.

- d. **East Meadow Creek IRA**—The entire East Meadow Creek IRA.
2. No currently existing and maintained roads will be closed by wilderness designation.
  3. The Fish Lake ATV trail in the Great Burn IRA is to stay out of wilderness.
  4. Legislation will include language making it clear that there is no buffer zone around newly designate wilderness that would preclude any activity from occurring outside of wilderness boundaries.
  5. The attached maps show the boundaries of the areas to be designated as wilderness.

#### **D. River Conservation Designations**

1. The CBC supports designating the following Wild and Scenic Rivers:
  - a. **Fish Creek**— including the entire eligible river segment from the headwaters to the confluence with the Lochsa River.
  - b. **Hungry Creek**—including the entire eligible river segment from the headwaters to the confluence with Fish Creek.
  - c. **Johns Creek**—including the entire eligible river segment from the headwaters to the confluence with the South Fork of the Clearwater.
  - d. **Meadow Creek**—including the entire eligible river segment from the headwaters to the confluence with the Selway River.
  - e. **Kelly Creek**—including the entire eligible river segment from the bridge near the Junction with Moose Creek (Old Kelly Fork Work Center) upstream, including the North, Middle and South Forks of Kelly Creek.
  - f. **Cayuse Creek**—including the entire eligible river segment from the headwaters to the confluence with Kelly Creek.

- g. **Little North Fork Clearwater**—including the entire eligible river segment on public land.
2. Unless otherwise noted, the classification for each river (Wild, Scenic, or Recreation) should follow the Forest Service’s recommendation for each river.
3. The CBC recommends removing the North Fork of the Clearwater River from eligibility of any new mining claims and suctioning dredge mining from where it enters Dworshak Reservoir upstream to its headwaters.

**V. Outfitters and Guides:** Outfitters and guides provide an important public service on public lands within the Clearwater Basin. We want to ensure outfitters can continue to operate a profitable business, and are not going to be subject to new and unduly restrictive rules in areas that become protected as a result of legislation. Legislation will include language that protects the interests of outfitters, their permits and camps.

**A. Trail Maintenance**

1. Legislation will provide language requiring the Forest Service to maintain trails in newly designated wilderness areas.
2. Legislation will provide the Forest Service with the ability to compensate outfitters, through cost share or other agreements, for trail work done to Forest Service standards on trails agreed to by both the Forest Service and the outfitter(s). Payment to the permit holder can be in the form of a credit toward annual permit fees, or direct compensation, depending on what both parties agree to.

**B. Outfitter Camps and Structures**

1. Legislation will guarantee all currently approved and existing structures and camps that fall within newly designated wilderness Areas are allowed to remain for the life of the current permit holder.
  - a. Camps and structures can be moved or changed if both the Outfitter and the Forest Service agree to the changes.

**C. Needs Assessment**

1. For outfitters that operate in newly designated wilderness areas, where outfitting currently exists satisfies the Forest Service’s requirement to do a needs assessment.

**VI. Wildlife Management:** CBC has been unanimous in their desire to recover populations of ungulates, particularly elk, in the Basin as well as wildlife species diversity in general. While the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) is responsible for managing Idaho's game and non-game species the management of habitat falls to the Forest Service on public lands. Restoration of the ecosystem to its former productive capacity is the key to habitat restoration and there is no legislative mandate currently.

#### **Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative**

1. The CBC will work with the IDFG, Forest Service, Nez Perce Tribe, other landowners and wildlife experts to develop habitat restoration strategies. The objective to recover the habitat to a level that sustains native species; recognizing elk population's serious decline as a specifically critical focus area.
2. Legislation that establishes ecosystem conservation as an objective of national forest management could be helpful.

#### **B. Idaho Fish and Game Wilderness Language**

1. Legislation that designates new wilderness areas will have language that ensures Idaho Department of Fish and Game is able to manage for fish and wildlife populations.

**VII. Recreation:** In order to provide enhanced and expanded motorized recreation opportunities, a legislated motorized trail will be created that spans the length of the Clearwater Basin. Legislation will also seek funding to purchase easements where the North-South Route traverses private ground, as well as provide funding for facilities, trailheads and signage.

#### **A. Motorized Recreation - North South Route**

1. The CBC will work with the Forest Service, Idaho Parks and recreation, private land owners and other interested parties to develop an MOU to designate and manage the North-South Route (formerly referred to as "Trail") from Elk City to Avery for motorized recreation.
  - a. The CBC will work with the Forest Service to designate the federal land portion of the route as the official North-South Route.
2. Legislation will provide federal dollars to pay for an appraisal of private land easements where the trail passes through private land.





3. Upon completion of the appraisal, legislation will provide funding to pay for easements on private land for willing private land owners.
4. The CBC will also seek federal, state and private dollars to pay for trail signage, lavatories and trailhead facilities along the North-South Route.

**B. Non-Motorized Recreation** - The CBC wants to work to promote non-motorized recreation opportunities within the Basin.



*This Agreement and Work Plan is a milestone in charting a new path for land management within the Clearwater Basin of Idaho and lays out an agreement that will serve as our long-term work plan for achieving success in the future, which includes legislation necessary to implement the A&WP's intent.*

*The signatures below represent each CBC Working Group Member's commitment to enhancement and protection of the ecological and economic health of forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin and the long-term work plan as described. These signatures represent CBC member's individual interests and not necessarily those of any organization or agency.*

**The Clearwater Basin Collaborative Working Group approved this Agreement & Work Plan on May 22, 2013.**