



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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JUN 12 2007

William A. Wood
Forest Supervisor
Salmon Challis National Forest
1206 South Challis Street
Salmon, Idaho 83467

Subject: Status of Canada Lynx on the Salmon Challis National Forest
File #114.0000 2007-FA-0073

Dear Mr. Wood:

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) appreciates having been invited to participate in a May 24, 2007 meeting with your staff and others regarding Canada lynx and the Salmon Challis National Forest (Forest). Bruce Smith of your staff organized and led a productive meeting and field trip for staff from the Service, Forest, and representatives of the Forest Service's Regional Offices in Missoula and Ogden. This letter follows up on that meeting.

In May 2006, our agencies signed an amendment to our Canada Lynx Consultation Agreement that clarified the definition of occupied lynx habitat. Based on that definition, while the Salmon Challis Forest contains historic and suitable habitat, it is presently not considered to be "occupied" by lynx. The species, therefore, no longer appears on the species lists the Service provides you quarterly. As such, you are not required to consult under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for effects to lynx from actions proposed by the Forest.


According to internal Service guidance for implementing the 2006 amendment to the lynx agreement, if new information indicates lynx may be present, the Lynx Steering Committee will determine if currently unoccupied habitat should be considered occupied (August 31, 2006 memorandum from Assistant Regional Directors from Service Regions 1 and 6 to Ecological Services Project Leaders). If the Forest decides to undertake surveys for presence of lynx, or if you receive information about potential lynx occurrence on the Salmon Challis, please let us know and we will be happy to assist you.

It is our understanding that release of the Forest Service's decision to amend Forest Land and Resource Management Plans to incorporate conservation measures for lynx is imminent. The Northern Rockies Canada Lynx Strategy includes recommendations for

management of suitable but unoccupied habitat. We encourage you to consider implementing those recommendations so that the Forest might support potential future expansion of lynx into their historic areas, as well as for the benefit of other wildlife dependent on that habitat. At the May 24 meeting, we discussed the need to review and update lynx habitat mapping for the Forest. Doing so would help the Forest's program managers to focus on areas of greatest importance and prioritize their efforts to conserve lynx habitat. The Service can provide technical assistance and support of these efforts as well.

Doug Laye continues to be your staff's Level 1 contact, and Damien Miller our Level 2 for the Forest. I encourage you to continue working directly with them on matters related to Canada lynx. Feel free to call me directly if you have questions or comments.

Sincerely,

for 
Jeffery L. Foss, Field Supervisor
Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office

cc: FWS-EIFO, Chubbuck (Doug Laye)
FWS, Spokane (Bryon Holt)
FWS, Denver (Bridget Fahey)
FWS-RO, Portland (Larry Salata)
FS-R1, Missoula (Jim Claar)
FS-R4, Ogden (Lee Jacobson)