

# ***FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET***

**Meeting Date:** June 19, 2019

**Agenda Item:** FAS Forest Management Projects (R1 and R2)

**Division:** Fisheries

**Action Needed:** Endorsement

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 5 minutes

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## **Background**

FWP operates and manages 338 Fishing Access Sites to provide public access to water bodies for angling and other recreation where appropriate. In addition to developed recreational facilities such as parking areas, boat launches, latrines, campsites and picnic facilities, these sites often include large areas of undeveloped land which is often forested. Left un-managed, these forest stands can become susceptible to insects, disease, and increased wildfire fire risk in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Dead and dying trees can pose a threat to public safety in and around developed recreation areas.

FAS Managers in Regions 1 and 2 have worked with FWP's Forester to identify six sites in need of forest management projects. The sites include Woods Bay and Horseshoe Lake near Bigfork in R1; and K. Ross Toole, Johnsrud Park, Corrick's River Bend, and River Junction on the Blackfoot River in R2. While each site is unique, the overall purpose of these proposed projects would be to enhance overall forest health, increase wildfire resiliency, and remove hazard trees near developed recreation areas.

## **Public Involvement Process & Results**

FWP is seeking commission endorsement to move forward with analysis and planning of the proposed projects. Minimal public involvement has occurred up to this point. If endorsed, FWP staff will initiate Environmental Analysis documents and solicit public comment. FWP would then bring the proposed projects back to the commission for final approval.

## **Alternatives and Analysis**

Two alternatives would be analyzed and considered in the EAs: 1) Preferred Alternative: implement proposed forest management projects at FASs to promote overall forest health, improve wildfire resiliency in the WUI and mitigate public safety concerns from hazard trees. 2) No Action Alternative: FWP would not implement the proposed forest management project and forest stands would continue to suffer from insects and disease, increased wildfire risk and public safety concerns from hazard trees.

## **Agency Recommendation & Rationale**

FWP recommends the commission endorse the department's proposal which would allow FWP to develop an environmental analysis and public involvement of forest management projects at two FASs in R1 and 4 FASs in R2.

## **Proposed Motion**

I move the Commission endorse this proposal for further analysis and public comment of these forest management projects in Region 1 and Region 2.