



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

MAY - 5 2005

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne  
Governor  
State of Idaho  
Office of the Governor  
Boise, Idaho 83720

Dear Governor Kempthorne:

Today the Department of Agriculture announced the adoption of a final rule to replace the January 12, 2001, roadless rule with a petitioning process providing Governors the opportunity to seek individual rulemakings for managing and conserving inventoried roadless areas in their States. The Department also announced the establishment of a national advisory committee to assist in the implementation of this rule.

This opportunity for States to offer petitions is available for 18 months following the effective date of this final rule. Following the Department's review and acceptance of a petition, the Forest Service would initiate a State-specific rulemaking that addresses the provisions put forth in the petition in collaboration with the State.

State governments are important partners with the Department in the management of National Forest System lands. This final rule offers a unique opportunity for us to work together in a constructive way to develop sound forest policy. It also invites collaboration with local communities, Tribes, and a broad range of interested parties as States review the existing management situation for inventoried roadless areas and consider crafting a petition.

We look forward to working with you as we move forward together to ensure that roadless area conservation measures are sensitive to State and local concerns, and that your unique situations and circumstances are recognized and addressed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Johanns".

Mike Johanns  
Secretary