

## **Idaho Cobalt Project History**

Formation Capital Corporation U.S. (FCC) submitted a proposed Plan of Operations for the Idaho Cobalt Project (Project) to the Salmon-Challis National Forest (Forest) on January 22, 2001. The Forest Supervisor subsequently determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be required to assure Forest compliance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regarding Project approval decisions to be made by the Forest.

The Forest held an initial public meeting to provide information on the Idaho Cobalt Project on July 20, 2001, at the City Center in Salmon, Idaho. The Forest issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS for the proposed mining project in the Federal Register on September 10, 2001. The NOI invited comments on FCC's proposed Plan of Operations and the Forest's environmental analysis process for the proposed Project. The Forest held public scoping meetings on October 10, 2001, in Challis, Idaho and October 11, 2001 in Salmon, Idaho.

In spring of 2001 the Forest Interdisciplinary Team (ID team) developed Plans of Study required to provide a science based evaluation of the FCC's proposed Plan of Operations. Baseline data collection started in 2001 and continued through 2004. FCC is continuing data collection for some disciplines such as water quality in 2005. In 2002 FCC notified the Forest that the proposed Project planning was being placed in an interim status to review issues, collect supplemental environmental baseline information, prepare a Modified Plan of Operations and obtain adequate funding to carry the project forward.

In 2004 FCC reinitiated active work on the project including additional environmental data collection and analysis. FCC's technical consultants prepared final Technical Reports and evaluations in support of a Modified Plan of Operations. A Modified Plan of Operations was submitted to and accepted as complete by the Forest in February 2005. From March 2005 to the present, the Forest Service ID team, the EIS contractor and participating agencies have been involved with review of FCC Plan of Operations and supporting documents, analysis of effects, development of alternatives and preparation of the Draft EIS. The Forest Service is targeting to have a Draft EIS ready to release to the public in the fall of 2005 and to be able to issue a Record of Decision in the spring of 2006.