



**Idaho Forest Owners Association**  
**P.O. Box 1257**  
**Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816-1257**  
**[info@idahoforestowners.org](mailto:info@idahoforestowners.org)**  
**[www.idahoforestowners.org](http://www.idahoforestowners.org)**

**June 25, 2013**

**Ara Andrea**  
**Regulatory Program Manager**  
**Idaho Department of Lands**  
**3284 W. Industrial Loop**  
**Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-6021**

**RE: Comments on Revised Rule for Class 1 Stream Protection Zones**

**Dear Ms. Andrea,**

**Idaho Forest Owners Association (IFOA), representing forest landowners with ownerships of only a few acres or up to thousands of acres in Idaho (an aggregate of millions of acres), have been informed by Idaho Forest Practices Act Advisory Committee (IFPAAC) representatives that, in addition to the required minimum “Relative Stocking” (RS) of 60 in the first 25’ of a Class I Stream Protection Zone (SPZ) followed by a RS of 30 in the outer 26’-75’ of the SPZ, another option of a minimum RS 60 in the first 50’ of SPZ and RS 10 in the outer 25’ has been proposed. Having a choice is good, and this additional option may be a good solution for an “industrial” owner’s silvicultural model.**

**IFOA understands that the existing “shade rule” has been problematic for enforcement to maintain target shade levels on fish bearing streams. IFOA agrees with the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) desire to develop a rule that is measurable, more easily administered, and defensible in court.**

**The IFOA Directors & members still have the following concerns regarding the latest proposal:**

- 1. Landowners want to maintain the ability to manage all of their land, including the SPZ’s on Class 1 streams. Family forest owners are motivated by a strong stewardship ethic and do not desire to inflict deleterious impacts to any of their ownership, particularly the streams. Forestland owners desire the ability to manage their SPZ’s, especially if insect, disease, fire, or storm problems occur in this zone. It appears that the proposed rule would potentially allow some management if the RS exceeds 60. IFOA also understands that landowner implementation of an additional “Riparian Management Plan,” that will meet or exceed the long-term intent of the rule, is available. We sincerely desire that adequate assistance from a full complement of local IDL Private Forestry Specialists (PFS) will be available for**

this requirement. IFOA feels it is *very* important for landowners to have active and adaptive management opportunities to keep their forests healthy and productive.

2. Another concern is that a landowner be able to correctly understand and apply the rule themselves, or have assistance available through the IDL from a PFS. If a landowner marks timber within the SPZ for removal, they need assurance that upon request, a PFS will review the SPZ on the ground *prior* to harvest to avoid a violation. Family forest landowners *want* to “do the right thing”. We understand that field testing of this methodology has been problematic for IDL, but we would like to see substantive progress toward a guidance document that provides the layman a simple and clear explanation of the work required.
3. Since this comment letter is directed through you to the IFPAAC, we would appreciate it if IFPAAC’s agenda included advising the State Forester, and thus the Idaho Board of Land Commissioners, of the inadequacy of requiring *only* timberland owners to bear the responsibility for cooling streams to temperatures said to be necessary for healthier fish populations. If this shade rule is mandated for good habitat, where is the requirement for *all* ownerships along fish-bearing streams – and not just Category 6 or 7 land uses – to contribute to the attainment of this public good? Should not 25’ or 75’ on all Class I stream-sides be providing shade? Economic disincentives to forestland management drive the unintended consequences of conversion out of that use, to the detriment of Idaho’s forest industry and natural resource habitats. We feel it is appropriate and would appreciate this concern being communicated to the Land Commissioners through IFPAAC, as well as our citizen efforts in that regard.

IFOA understands that this proposal will be discussed at an IFPAAC meeting in summer 2013. Assuming this 60/30-60/10 proposal is accepted by IFPAAC, IFOA feels this may represent a workable solution, if the concerns outlined above are eventually adequately addressed.

Sincerely,



Paul Buckland  
President  
Idaho Forest Owners Association