



**File Code:** 1570; 1950  
**Date:** September 20, 2022

Nick Kunath  
Conservation Associate  
Idaho Rivers United  
3380 W Americana Terrace, Ste 140  
Boise, ID 83706

Dear Mr. Kunath,

This letter is in response to your objection filed on behalf of Idaho Rivers United (IRU), Idaho Conservation League (ICL), and American Rivers (AR) regarding the Colson Cobalt-Copper 3 Project (EA) and Draft Decision Notice released by the Salmon-Cobalt District Ranger, Salmon-Challis National Forest. I have read your objections and reviewed the project record. My review of your objections was conducted in accordance with the administrative review procedures found at 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCESS**

The regulations at 36 CFR 218.8 provide for a pre-decisional administrative review process in which the objector provides sufficient narrative description of the project, specific issues related to the project, and suggested remedies that would resolve the objections.

#### **RESPONSE TO OBJECTIONS**

As specified at 36 CFR 218.11(b), I am providing a written response to your objections; however, this response need not be point by point. You brought forward three specific objection points that were reviewed and later discussed with you at length in Objection Resolution meeting(s) conducted under the regulations at 36 CFR 218.11(a).

I appreciate the discussion and diligence that you and your team brought to the meeting and your consideration of our proposed actions to remedy your objection. I am pleased that we have arrived at a mutual agreement on resolution of your objection, wherein you have withdrawn your objection.

Pursuant to that agreement, I hereby direct the Salmon-Cobalt District Ranger to complete the following actions prior to issuing a final Decision Notice [36 CFR 212(b)].

1. Ensure that Drill Sites 13, 15, 17, and 18 that are within the Wild and Scenic River corridor are removed from the approved project area.
2. Ensure that Drill sites 16 and 20 are outside the viewshed of the Middle Fork Salmon Wild and Scenic River.
3. Provide additional support and analysis for the EA and in the decision rationale regarding bull trout and its critical habitat.
4. Make the Biological Assessment for bull trout publicly available with the decision.



## CONCLUSION

I sincerely appreciate your willingness to work with us to resolve issues.

My review constitutes the final administrative determination of the Department of Agriculture; no further review from any other Forest Service or Department of Agriculture official of my written response to your objection is available [36 CFR 218.11(b)(2)].

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles A. Mark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CHARLES A. MARK  
Forest Supervisor

cc: Josh Johnson (ICL), Zack Waterman (AR), Jennifer Purvine, Judd Sampson, Glenwood Brittain, Deanna Stever, Jeff Huntzman