

Pend Oreille County Public Works, along with County Parks & Recreation Department, would like to inform the public regarding three forest restoration projects on Pend Oreille County (POC) lands for 2022. POC will be taking an active approach on forest management to facilitate and encompass a healthy forest making it resilient to natural and human disturbance and creating biological diversity able to provide sustained habitat for vegetation, wildlife, and humans.

First project, beginning in March/April and continuing into first week of June 2022, northern POC will have an active timber sale involving selection harvest on two locations. First location, Goat Launch wildlife viewing area, located off Boundary Road, and second location POC Park Sweet Creek Rest Area located north of Lone, Washington, off Hwy 31. This timber sale is part of an ongoing forest restoration program throughout all POC lands to promote forest health. One of the primary forest health problems in the Inland Northwest forests is over-stocking (too many trees per acre). Over-stocking causes tree stress because neighboring trees must compete intensively for light, water, and nutrients. Over-stocking is a concern within portions of both locations particularly in the understory cohort throughout Sweet Creek. A series of stand treatments are prescribed within the timber sale contract to meet stocking concerns and other management objectives.

Second project, beginning mid-summer to late fall 2022, Habitat Enhancement noncommercial forest thinning; POC will possibly be working with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation conducting a noncommercial forest thin on 325.11 acres located off LeClerc road. Treatment objective is to enhance forest health and mitigate wildfire risk, while also improving conditions for native wildlife. By removing selected tree species and providing adequate spacing for more desirable native tree species, the soil seed bank will be exposed to an increase amount of sunlight and water infiltration. This treatment on the landscape will allow the latent seed bank to regenerate and provide adequate native year around forage for ungulates such as elk and deer, while also promoting tree growth.

Third project, beginning mid fall to early winter, POC Park and Rustler's Gulch Timber Sale 2022. Treatment objective is to include silviculture prescriptions such as selection harvest and group selections within timber sale contract to improve overall forest health. Primary forest health concerns to date involve areas of widespread presence of root disease, excessive seedling density, high proportions of shade tolerant species, and susceptibility to wildfire. POC aims to improve long term forest health and forest resiliency with hands on management.

POC lands provide an excellent source of educational outreach, recreation, and income to help facilitate the cost with ongoing maintenance of roads, trails, campsites, and facilities all while also maintaining forest health for all future generations to enjoy. While visiting POC lands you may come across some active forest management on the landscape so, please be considerate, responsible, and safe while you recreate.

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