**INFORMATION MEMORANDUM**

**FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY – POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET**

THROUGH: Tommy P. Beaudreau

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Land and Minerals Management

FROM: Mike Pool, Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management

SUBJECT: Proposed Withdrawal, Settler’s Grove of Ancient Cedars Botanical and Recreation Area, Idaho

DATE: November 19, 2012

I. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the United States Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is requesting that the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget approve a Public Land Order (PLO) that would withdraw 183.46 acres of National Forest System land from location and entry under the United States mining laws, but not from leasing under the mineral leasing laws, for a period of 20 years to protect one of the few remaining stands of old-growth western red cedar trees in the Settler’s Grove of Ancient Cedars Botanical and Recreation Area within the Idaho Panhandle National Forest. The land will remain open to such other forms of disposition as may by law be made of National Forest System land and to mineral leasing.

II. BACKGROUND

PLO No. 6658 originally withdrew the Settler’s Grove of Ancient Cedars Botanical and Recreation Area which expired on September 29, 2007, due to an administrative oversight on the part of the USFS. This new proposed withdrawal will encumber the same land originally withdrawn on behalf of the USFS under PLO No. 6658.

The Settler’s Grove of Ancient Cedars Recreation Area is one of the few remaining areas of the Coeur d’Alene Valley containing a stand of old growth timber in pristine condition. The proposed withdrawal area is in the same condition now as the rest of the Coeur d’Alene Valley was at the time of settlement in the 1880s. This withdrawal will preserve the site as a botanical and recreation area, allowing the public continued access for hiking, picnicking, sight-seeing, photography, and fishing.

III. POSITION OF INTERESTED PARTIES

The BLM published a notice of proposed withdrawal in the *Federal Register* and the USFS published the same notice in the *Coeur d’Alene Press* newspaper. The USFS notified all appropriate Federal, tribal, State, and county government agencies, landowners, non‑governmental organizations, and other interested groups and individuals of the proposed withdrawal. The BLM and the USFS received only supportive comments and no opposition to the proposed withdrawal.

IV. LEGAL STATUS

There is no litigation associated with this proposed withdrawal.

**NOTE: The temporary segregation on the pending withdrawal application will expire on February 16, 2013, and the lands will automatically open to mineral entry.**