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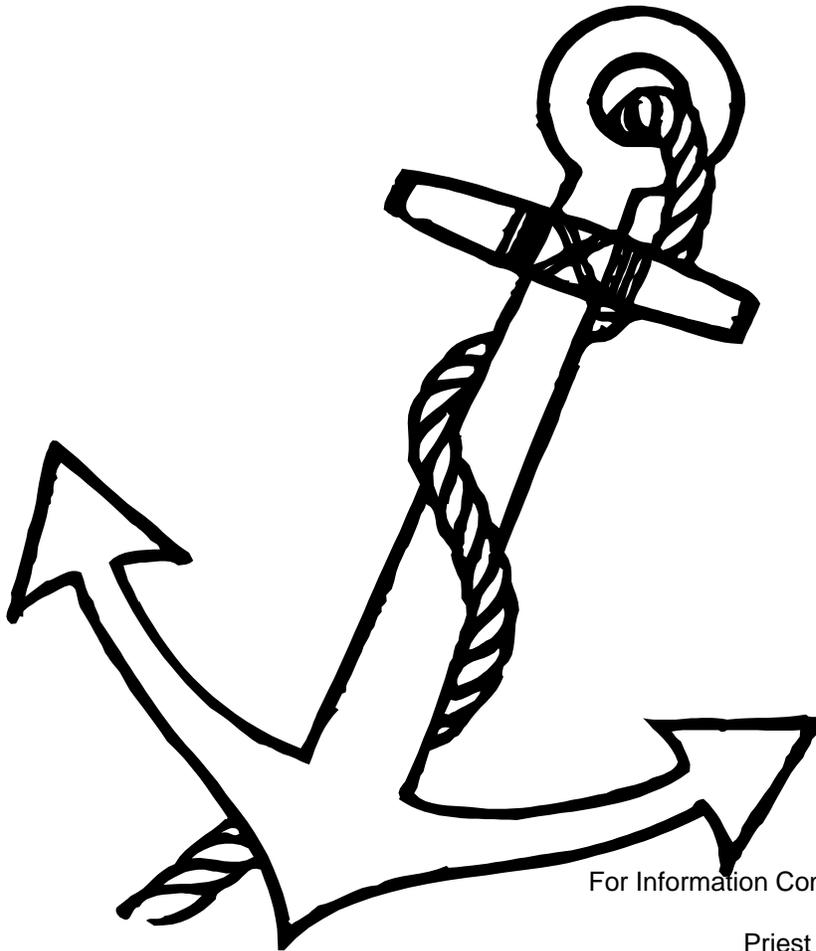


# Environmental Assessment

## Priest Lake Marina

Priest Lake Ranger District, Idaho Panhandle National Forests  
Bonner County, Idaho

T. 60 N., R. 5 W., Section 12, Boise Meridian



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## SUMMARY

The Idaho Panhandle National Forests proposes to issue a new term special use permit for the continued operation of the Priest Lake Marina. The permit would authorize the marina operations within the existing 6-acre permit area on National Forest System lands, along with permitting a location for parking of overflow boat trailers. The project area is located in Kalispell Bay, T. 60 N, R. 5 W, Section 12 and lies within the Priest Lake Ranger District, Idaho Panhandle National Forests, Bonner County, Idaho. The proposed action will authorize the existing permit facilities and operations to continue. Along with the existing permitted facilities and the overflow boat trailer parking, several additional features would be analyzed at this time. The proposed action will authorize the existing facilities, along with the additional features for another 30 years.

This action is needed to provide marina associated services and operations to the public in cooperation with the permit holder.

Based upon the effects of the alternatives, the responsible official will decide how long of a term to authorize the permit for, and what additional features will be authorized.

## Document Structure

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The Forest Service has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This Environmental Assessment discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from operating the marina services on the current location for the next 30 years. The document is organized into four parts:

- *Introduction:* The section includes information on the history of the project proposal, the purpose of and need for the project, and the agency's proposal for achieving that purpose and need. This section also details how the Forest Service informed the public of the proposal and how the public responded.
- *Comparison of Alternatives, including the Proposed Action:* This section provides a more detailed description of the agency's proposed action as well as alternative methods for achieving the stated purpose. These alternatives were developed on the Forest Service's obligation to meet the law and authorities governing the management of special use permits. This discussion also includes possible mitigation measures.
- *Environmental Consequences:* This section describes the environmental effects of implementing the proposed action and other alternatives. This analysis is organized by alternatives.
- *Agencies and Persons Consulted:* This section provides a list of preparers and agencies consulted during the development of the environmental assessment.

Additional documentation, including more detailed analyses of project-area resources, may be found in the project planning record located at the Priest Lake Ranger District Office.

## Background

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### Marina History:

The Priest Lake Marina is located in the resort community of Priest Lake, 31 miles north of the town of Priest River, Idaho. The legal description of the location is Section 12 of T. 60 N., R. 5 W., Boise Meridian.

The Priest Lake Marina has operated under permit on National Forest System lands since the 1940's. The permitted marina operations consist of maintaining and operating public services for winter storage of boats, repair of boats and marine motors, the sale of boats, boating supplies and over snow machines, boat slip rental, boat launching services, boat rentals, selling marine gas and oil, rental of car and boat trailer space. They are also permitted to operate a café, grocery store and Recreational Vehicle (RV) park. They provide 24-hour restroom and shower services, along with laundry facilities.

Over the years, the permit holders have improved and expanded the existing facilities as allowed under the current permit and other regulatory agencies in order to provide services to the community and visitors and keep up with the demand for this type of facility at Priest Lake. The Priest Lake Marina is the only full service marina on Priest Lake at this time.

### Permit History:

The most recent term permit was issued on July 16, 1990, with a termination date of December 31, 2004.

## Purpose and Need for Action

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The purpose of this initiative is to meet the Agency's responsibility to provide commercial recreation opportunities on National Forest System lands. This action is needed because a special use permit is the instrument used to authorize private or commercial use of National Forest System lands.

A resort permit is authorized under the following two acts:

- a) The Organic Administration Act of June 4, 1897 (30 Stat. 35; 16 U.S.C. 477-482, 551). This act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to issue rules and regulations for the occupancy and use of the National Forests. This is the basic authority for authorizing use of National Forest System lands for other than rights-of-way.
- b) The Act of March 4, 1915, as amended July 28, 1956 (38 Stat. 1101; 16 U.S.C. 497). This act authorizes term permits for structures or facilities on National Forest System land, and sets maximum limits of 80 acres and 30 years.

This action responds to the goals and objectives outlined in the Idaho Panhandle Forest Plan, signed in 1987, which allows for a variety of private uses to occur on public lands

to provide recreation opportunities that will increase the overall benefit to the public, and helps move the project area towards desired conditions described in that plan.

While the Forest Service manages the activities authorized by the permit on land, there are different agencies that are responsible for managing some of the other facilities and uses in the Priest Lake area. Listed below are several of these agencies, however, this list does not include all responsible agencies.

- The Idaho State Department of Lands is the lead agency for managing the facilities that occur on the lake, such as docks and marina facilities.
- Bonner County is responsible for managing water uses such as boating rules and regulations, and type of over-the-water craft that are allowable.
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game is responsible for managing lake fish habitat and fishing regulations.
- Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for monitoring fuel storage and boat repair service facilities for marine services.

The actions to be authorized through the decision associated with this EA are limited to those solely within the authority of the Forest Service. These include the use and occupancy of the National Forest System lands. However, the effects analysis disclosed in this EA assume the marina will be operated consistent with the requirements of the authorities listed above, or other agencies as applicable.

## Proposed Action

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The action proposed by the Forest Service to meet the purpose and need is to issue a new 30-year term special use permit for the operation of the marina. The permit would include the current operations and improvements within the 6-acre permit area on National Forest System lands. The boundary of the permit area is north of Reynolds Creek to the south end of the Forest Service maintenance area and workboat launch area. The west boundary of the Marina is the Lower Lakeshore Road, which is just east of the West lakeshore Road.

An off-site area for overflow boat trailer storage would become part of the permit. A portion of the rehabilitated lagoon site where the Kalispell Sewer District used to maintain their sewage lagoons would be permitted for this purpose. This site is adjacent to the Kalispell Sewer District maintenance building, just north of the Kalispell Bay Road. Approximately 2 acres would be permitted for this use.

Other features of the proposed action include the following facilities:

- a) Indoor Boat Repair Services - A 50-to 80-foot addition on the south side of the existing boat storage building that would allow for moving the boat repair services inside the addition, along with some additional space for winter storage of boats. This service facility would accommodate larger boats, therefore eliminating the need to repair boats in front of the current repair building. The ground-disturbing activities associated with this addition include rerouting the sewer lines at the time of construction of the building. The permit holder would

work with the Kalispell Sewer District to accomplish this work. Excavation for placement of the building foundation would be required.

- b) Overnight Lodging - The existing shop/boat parts/display area would eventually be replaced with a new building. The new building would provide overnight lodging accommodations. This building would be located on basically the same “footprint” of the existing building. With the addition of overnight lodging, the RV Park would be removed.
- c) Proposed Beach Area Renovations:
  - 1) Covered picnic pavilion – this would consist of a wood-fired grill and be equipped with power and water, which is already available near the proposed site. A roof would cover the pavilion.
  - 2) Restroom – a new restroom/changing room/shower building would be constructed near the beach. The building would be approximately 25 feet X 30 feet and would consist of 2 female and 2 male units.

As part of the marina permit, the following design features would be required for species and resource protection. As with all requests for construction, changes or modifications to permitted facilities or operations, prior approval must be obtained from the Forest Service:

- 1) *Wildlife – Threatened & Endangered Species Conservation Measures:*
  - a. If any endangered, threatened, or sensitive species were located within areas where they are affected by the permit activities, management activities would be altered, as necessary, in order for proper protection measures to be taken.
  - b. The permit holder will be required within a reasonable amount of time to convert, remove, or make inaccessible to bears or replace with approved bear resistant containers, all dumpsters and trashcans utilized by the resort and insure the regular collection of garbage.
  - c. The permit holder will educate all employees and guests on the proper handling, storage and disposal of food and garbage.
  - d. Any known or potential bald eagle roost site or perch trees within 100 feet of the shoreline of Priest Lake would not be removed unless it presents a safety hazard to the public.
- 2) *Wildlife – Sensitive Species:*
  - a. Information on common loon identification and management will be displayed at the boat launch site within the permit area.
- 3) *Fisheries – Conservation Requirements:*
  - a. Threatened and endangered fish species would be protected.
  - b. Inland Native Fish Strategy (INFS): INFS requirements for recreation uses would be followed.

- c. No waste or by-products shall be discharged if it contains substances in concentrations, which will result in substantial harm to fish or to human water supplies.
- d. Storage facilities for materials capable of causing water pollution, if accidentally discharged, shall be located so as to prevent any spillage into waters, or channels leading into water that would result in substantial harm to fish or to human water supplies.

4) *Watershed and Soils Concerns:*

- a. The permit holder would be required to produce a storm water management plan for control of storm water discharges from the resort facilities and activities. This plan needs to be completed by September 30, 2005. The plan will need to be developed by an environmental engineer, and stamped plans are required. An implementation date will be determined once the plan is accepted.

5) *Cultural Resources:*

- a. An Archeologist or paraprofessional archeologist will monitor all ground disturbing activities within the permit area.

6) *Sensitive Plant Species:*

- a. There is no suitable habitat for any threatened or proposed threatened plant species in or near the permit area, or in the proposed overflow boat trailer parking area (old sewage lagoon site).

7) *Noxious Weeds:*

- a. The permit holder would be responsible for noxious weed treatment within the permit area. This includes the overflow boat trailer parking area.

## REASONABLE FORESEEABLE ACTIONS

**Lakeface-Lamb Fuel Reduction:** The Lakeface-Lamb Fuel Reduction stewardship project includes several units in close proximity to the Priest Lake Marina that have not been harvested or treated yet. It is anticipated that the Lakeface Lamb project will continue for at least another five years. The Lakeface-Lamb project was analyzed under an Environmental Impact Statement. Implementation of this project began in 2002.

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## Decision Framework

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Given the purpose and need, the deciding official (Regional Forester, Northern Region) reviews the proposed action in order to make the following decision:

Whether to allow the operation of the Priest Lake Marina for another 30 years and what terms and conditions are placed on that operation to protect public resources.

## Public Involvement

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The proposal was listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) starting on January 21, 2003. The proposal was provided to the public and other agencies for comment through the SOPA, along with a scoping notice being mailed to 628 individuals, agencies and organizations. Responses were received from 58 people. In addition, as part of the public involvement process, the agency conducted a content analysis of the comments. The results of this content analysis are summarized in this document. A complete record of the content analysis is contained in the project file.

Using the comments from the public and other agencies, (see *Issues* section), the interdisciplinary team developed a list of issues to address.

## Issues

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Issues can be defined as discussions, debates, or disputes about the effects that actions would have upon the environment. The list of concerns expressed by the public was utilized by the Interdisciplinary Team to identify issues relevant to the proposed action.

Normally, The Forest Service separates the issues into two groups: significant and non-significant issues. Significant issues are defined as those directly or indirectly caused by implementing the proposed action. For this EA, no significant issues were determined, however an important issue is storm water management. Storm water is discussed below as an important issue.

Non-significant issues were identified as those: 1) outside the scope of the proposed action; 2) already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; 3) irrelevant to the decision to be made; or 4) conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence.

For discussion purposes, the issues have been divided into 3 categories 1) Permit Administration 2) Environmental and 3) Social/Outside of the Scope of the Proposal. Following is a discussion of the comments, questions and issues brought up during scoping, and how they will be addressed during the permit reissue process:

### 1) PERMIT ADMINISTRATION

- a) *Fees* – There was a question on what is the fee the marina pays to the Forest Service.

This is not an issue that relates to the decision contained in the EA.

The fees that the Priest Lake Marina pays are considered proprietary information and cannot be made available to the public through the Forest Service.

- b) *Free use for public use of the beach/pavilion* – It is reasonable for the permit holder to charge a reasonable amount for parking or use of a site to allow for repair and maintenance of the parking or other facilities. Any rate proposed would be reviewed and approved by the Forest Service.
- c) *Permit Term* – Several comments were received on the length of the permit term. The Term Permit Act allows for commercial facilities to be permitted for a minimum of a 20-year term and a maximum 30-year term when the investment in the facilities is over 1 million dollars.
- d) *Preference for continued use of the existing site for overflow boat trailer parking:* Although this location has been used since 1994 for the parking of the overflow boat trailers, the Forest Service continues to need this site for storage and disposal of excess items. Because of the mixed use between Forest Service and the Priest Lake Marina, it is difficult to share in the treatment of noxious weeds and the security of the site.

## 2) ENVIRONMENTAL

- a) *Storm Water Management* – Several comments were received on managing the storm water runoff associated with the permitted operations, along with the issue being brought up during internal scoping. There is the potential for storm water runoff to adversely affect aquatic resources and water quality. These effects should be reduced to acceptable levels. The permit holder will be required to develop a storm water mitigation plan that will address this issue. The plan will be required by September 30, 2005. An implementation date will be determined once the plan is reviewed. The permit holder is only responsible for mitigating the storm water runoff associated with their permitted facilities and operations.

The permit holder would be required to file a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit application through the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). This permit regulates storm water discharges from industrial facilities. The permit holder would need to obtain this permit prior to issuance of a new term permit if it is determined by the DEQ that a permit is required.

With the boat repair facilities moved indoors, there will be less chance of contaminants released into Priest Lake. The indoor facilities would allow hazardous waste by-products to be collected properly through an approved system.

- b) *Parking associated with construction of overnight lodging/capacity* – prior to construction of an overnight lodging facility, a conceptual plan would be required for Forest Service review. This would include a parking plan. Once the Forest Service has reviewed and approved the conceptual plan, a detailed engineered stamped plan would be required before construction could begin.

Parking would only be allowed within the permit area, or at the existing overflow parking located west of the marina. Kalispell Boat Launch and the Priest Lake Marina visitors currently use this parking area.

With the construction of a limited unit overnight lodging facility, the RV Park would be removed. Most of the parking would be balanced out by this change in use.

Parking capacity would need to comply with any Bonner County ordinances.

- c) *Concern with potential effects to fish & wildlife species* – the permit holder would be required to convert their garbage dumpster to a bear resistant model to minimize the potential of bears coming to the facilities. Information on bears, loons and bald eagles will be provided to the marina to assist with educating guests on how to avoid conflicts with wildlife. Fish habitat will be protected through development of a storm water management plan that will limit the amount of sediment delivered to the lake.
- d) *Sensitive Plant Species* – There is no suitable habitat for any threatened or proposed threatened plant species within the permit area, or in the proposed overflow boat trailer parking area (old sewage lagoon site).
- e) *Noxious Weed Control* – Control of noxious weeds within the permit area is the responsibility of the permit holder. A noxious weed clause will be incorporated into the new term permit.
- f) *Protection of Reynolds Creek riparian area* – The permit holder would be required to protect the riparian area by planting the stream banks with native vegetation behind the boulders that are placed along the creek that act as a barrier wall. Trees that may fall into the creek will remain in the creek.

### 3) SOCIAL/OUTSIDE OF THE SCOPE

Several comments were received that are overall social issues regarding increased use at Priest Lake. These issues are outside of the scope of issuing a new permit for the continued operation of the Priest Lake Marina. The new term permit will be for the existing permitted operations and facilities, and those proposed changes that are approved through this analysis process. The comments that are outside of the scope of this proposal are addressed as follows:

- a) *Opposition to the conversion of the marina to a resort*: The marina already provides overnight lodging with the RV Park. By construction of overnight lodging and removal of the RV Park, the marina would basically be trading these uses so there would be little change in the amount of people, the increase in traffic and parking. The overnight lodging would be limited in units and height of the building. A parking plan would be required as part of the planning for any new facilities within the 6-acre permit area.

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- b) *Increased use on the West Lakeshore Road:* Only a portion of the traffic on the West Lakeshore Road is attributed to use from the Priest Lake Marina. Over the years, because of more private property development, campground improvements, and general discovery of the Priest Lake area for its recreational value, more people have started visiting and recreating at Priest Lake. It is natural for visitors to use the West Lakeshore Road to access public land.
  - c) *Increased noise from vehicles on the roads and lake:* As with increased use in any area, there is bound to be an increase in sounds associated with land or over-the-water vehicles. These vehicles are entering the road systems and Priest Lake through many access points.
  - d) *Airport expansion/development of the Priest Lake Basin:* Any proposal for airstrip expansion or improvements would be covered in a separate analysis. Private property development of the Priest Lake Basin is outside of the Forest Service jurisdiction.
  - e) *Increased use of trails:* Increased use to an area is expected to increase the use of existing trails. Use of the Beach Trail, along with other existing trails in the area, will continue to receive some amount of increased use as more visitors come to the Priest Lake area.
  - f) *Increased boat and personal watercraft use/ban Jet Ski rental and 2 cycle engines:* The Forest Service has no jurisdiction over the number, size and type of boats and watercraft that are allowed on Priest Lake.
  - g) *Capacity Study/Bonner County Comprehensive Plan:* This planning process is for the private lands located in Bonner County and does not supersede regulations and policies on National Forest System lands.
  - h) *Open up new areas for resort construction:* Building new resort facilities at other locations on national Forest System lands are outside of the scope of the proposal.
  - i) *Sewer cost increase to the public:* The Priest Lake Marina is hooked up to Kalispell Sewer District. Any new facilities at the marina would be required to connect to sewer as well and comply with sewer district requirements for equivalent residence quotas. The marina would pay Kalispell Sewer the appropriate rate, as determined by the sewer district. The rate structure charged by the utility companies is outside of the scope of the proposal to issue a new permit for marina operations.
  - j) *Electrical:* The permit holder would be responsible for paying for additional electrical hook-ups and monthly charges. The Priest Lake Marina is already hooked up to Northern Lights, Inc., who is the area provider for electrical service. The rate structure charged by the utility companies is outside of the scope of the proposal to issue a new marina permit.
  - k) *Comments on the concern of the increase in numbers of people coming to the Priest Lake area:* As the Priest Lake area is discovered for its recreational values, it is natural for an increase to occur in the area.

- 1) *An individual requested review of the plans for the proposed new buildings:* Although the plans will not be mailed out for review, information could be provided upon request as to the dimensions, colors and materials of the proposed buildings.

## **ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION**

This chapter describes the alternatives considered for issuing a new permit for the continued operation of the Priest Lake Marina. It includes a description of each alternative considered.

### **Alternatives**

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#### **Alternative 1**

##### ***No Action***

Under the No Action alternative, a new permit would not be issued for the continued operations of marina facilities. This alternative would not meet the Forest Plan goal of providing complimentary private recreation facilities and services, provided long-term public interest is protected.

If through the analysis it was determined that a new permit would not be issued, the removal of the existing facilities would be required, including a rehabilitation plan describing how the site would be returned to a condition acceptable to the Forest Service.

#### **Alternative 2**

##### ***The Proposed Action***

The Forest Service would issue a 30-year term special use permit for the continued operation of marina facilities, including the proposed new improvements. The permit would include current operations and improvements within the existing 6-acre permit area on National Forest System lands.

An off-site area for overflow boat trailer storage would become part of the permit. The proposed site is the rehabilitated area where the Kalispell Sewer District used to maintain their sewage lagoons. This site is adjacent to the Kalispell Sewer District maintenance building, just north of the Kalispell Bay Road. The site is a level, highly disturbed gravel site with no sensitive resource issues. Approximately 2 acres would be permitted for this use.

Other features of this alternative include the following facilities:

- a) A 50-to 80-foot addition on the south side of the existing boat storage building that would allow for moving the boat repair services inside the addition, along with more storage for boats during the winter. This service facility would accommodate large boats, therefore eliminating the need to repair boats in front of

the current repair building. The ground-disturbing activities associated with this addition include rerouting the sewer lines at the time of construction of the building. The permit holder would work with the Kalispell Sewer District to accomplish this work. Excavation for placement of the building foundation would be required.

This would eliminate a safety and environmental issue by removing the boat repair from a public thoroughfare and elimination of the potential for contamination to Priest Lake by having boat repairs completed inside with a hazardous waste collection system in place.

- b) The existing shop/boat parts/display area would eventually be replaced with a new building. The new building would provide overnight lodging accommodations. This building would be located on basically the same “footprint” as the existing building. With the addition of overnight lodging, the RV Park would be removed and the sites rehabilitated.
- c) Proposed Beach Area Renovations:
  - a. Covered picnic pavilion – this would consist of a wood-fired grill and be equipped with power and water, which is already available near the proposed site. A roof would cover the pavilion.
  - b. Restroom – a new restroom/changing room/showers would be constructed near the beach. The building would be approximately 25 feet X 30 feet and would consist of 2 female and 2 male units.

### Alternative 3

The Forest Service would issue a 20-year term special use permit for the continued operation of a marina facility, including the proposed new improvements. The permit would include current operations and improvements within the existing 6-acre permit area on National Forest System lands.

An off-site area for overflow boat trailer storage would become part of the permit. The proposed site is the rehabilitated area where the Kalispell Sewer District used to maintain their sewage lagoons. This site is adjacent to the Kalispell Sewer District maintenance building, just north of the Kalispell Bay Road. The site is a level, highly disturbed gravel site with no sensitive resource issues. Approximately 2 acres would be permitted for this use.

Other features of this alternative include the following facilities:

- a) A 50-to 80-foot addition on the south side of the existing boat storage building that would allow for moving the boat repair services inside the addition, along with more room for winter storage of boats. This service facility would accommodate large boats, therefore eliminating the need to repair boats in front of the current repair building. The ground-disturbing activities associated with this addition include rerouting the sewer lines at the time of construction of the building. The permit holder would work with the Kalispell Sewer District to accomplish this work. Excavation for placement of the building foundation would be required.

This would eliminate a safety and environmental issue by removing the boat repair from a public thoroughfare and elimination of the potential for contamination to Priest Lake by having boat repairs completed inside with a hazardous waste collection system in place.

- b) The existing shop/boat parts/display area would eventually be replaced with a new building. The new building would provide overnight lodging accommodations. This building would be located on the same “footprint” of the existing building. With the addition of overnight lodging, the RV Park would be removed.
- c) Proposed Beach Area Renovations:
  - a. Covered picnic pavilion – this would consist of a wood-fired grill and be equipped with power and water, which is already available near the proposed site. A roof would cover the pavilion.
  - b. Restroom – a new restroom/changing room/showers would be constructed near the beach. The building would be approximately 25 feet X 30 feet and would consist of 2 female and 2 male units.

## Alternative 4

The Forest Service would issue a 30-year term special use permit for the continued operation of a marina facility. The permit would include the current operations and improvements within the existing 6-acre permit area on National Forest System lands.

An off-site area for overflow boat trailer storage would become part of the permit. The proposed site is the rehabilitated area where the Kalispell Sewer District used to maintain their sewage lagoons. This site is adjacent to the Kalispell Sewer District maintenance building, just north of the Kalispell Bay Road. The site is a level, highly disturbed gravel site with no sensitive resource issues. Approximately 2 acres would be permitted for this use.

Other features of this alternative include the following facilities:

A 50-to 80-foot addition on the south side of the existing boat storage building that would allow for moving the boat repair services inside the addition, along with providing more winter storage of boats. This service facility would accommodate large boats, therefore eliminating the need to repair boats in front of the current repair building. The ground-disturbing activities associated with this addition include rerouting the sewer lines at the time of construction of the building. The permit holder would work with the Kalispell Sewer District to accomplish this work. Excavation for placement of the building foundation would be required.

This would eliminate a safety and environmental issue by removing the boat repair from a public thoroughfare and elimination of the potential for contamination to Priest Lake by having boat repairs completed inside with a hazardous waste collection system in place.

## **Alternative 5**

The Forest Service would issue a 20-year term special use permit for the continued operation of a marina facility. The permit would include the current operations and improvements within the existing 6-acre permit area on National Forest System lands.

An off-site area for overflow boat trailer storage would become part of the permit. The proposed site is the rehabilitated area where the Kalispell Sewer District used to maintain their sewage lagoons. This site is adjacent to the Kalispell Sewer District maintenance building, just north of the Kalispell Bay Road. The site is a level, highly disturbed gravel site with no sensitive resource issues. Approximately 2 acres would be permitted for this use.

Other features of this alternative include the following facilities:

A 50-to 80-foot addition on the south side of the existing boat storage building that would allow for more winter storage of boats along with moving the boat repair services inside the addition. This service facility would accommodate large boats, therefore eliminating the need to repair boats in front of the current repair building. The ground-disturbing activities associated with this addition include rerouting the sewer lines at the time of construction of the building. The permit holder would work with the Kalispell Sewer District to accomplish this work. Excavation for placement of the building foundation would be required.

This would eliminate a safety and environmental issue by removing the boat repair from a public thoroughfare and elimination of the potential for contamination to Priest Lake by having boat repairs completed inside with a hazardous waste system in place.

The design criteria listed for Alternative 2 (the proposed action) would apply to all action alternatives.

## **Alternatives considered but not analyzed in detail**

None

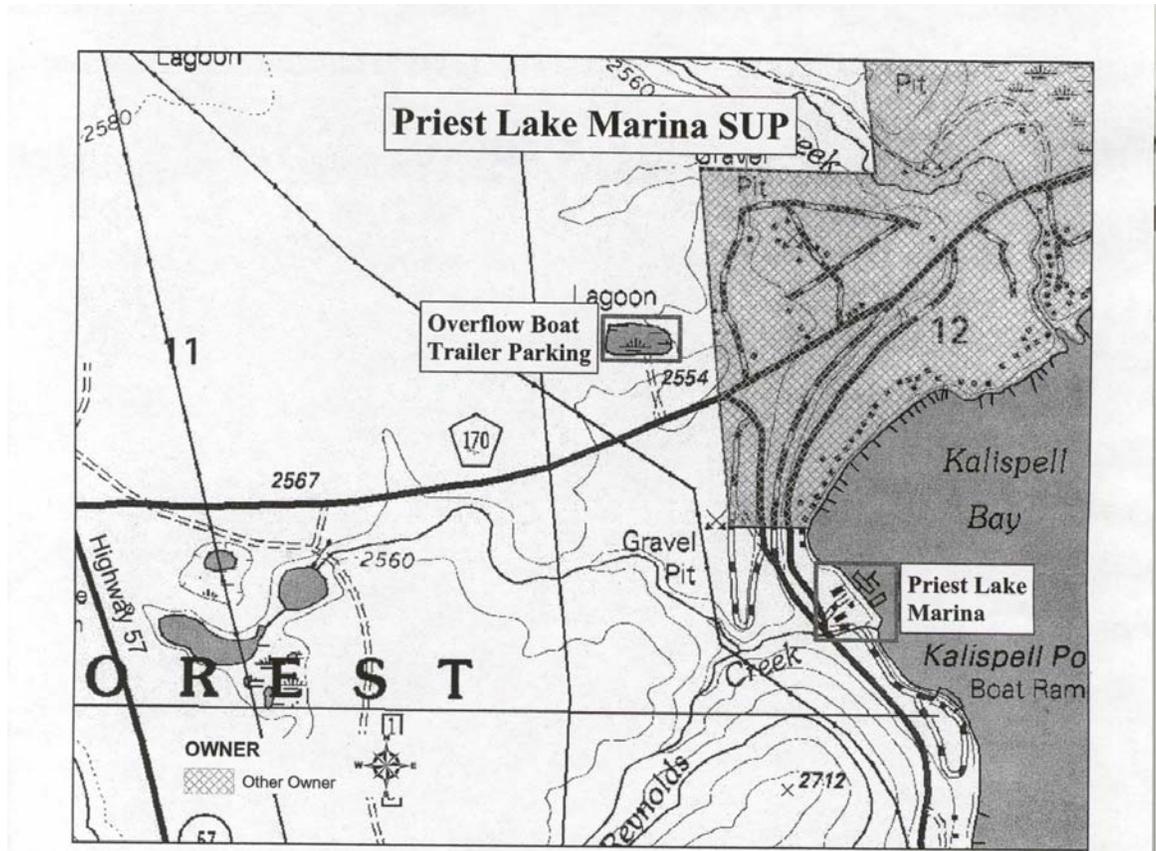


Figure 1. Priest Lake Marina

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## Mitigation Common to All Alternatives

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In response to IDT recommendations and public comments on the proposal, mitigation measures were developed to ease some of the potential impacts the permitted operations and activities may cause.

- 1) Sensitive Plants: There is no suitable habitat for any threatened or proposed threatened plant species in or near the permit area.
- 2) Cultural Resources: Site-specific cultural resource site monitoring would be conducted at the time of any ground-disturbing activities. Extensive monitoring was conducted in 2003 prior to sidewalk and path installation, and replacement of a deteriorated deck located on the restaurant building.
- 3) Noxious Weeds: Noxious weed control measures would be incorporated into the permit as per direction in the Priest Lake Noxious Weed Control EIS. Any pesticide or herbicide use requires prior approval from the Forest Service.
- 4) Hazard Tree Removal: Hazard tree removal would be permissible with Forest Officer approval.
- 5) Vegetation Changes: Tree removal or changes in vegetation would require Forest Service approval and/or a vegetation management plan prior to changes.
- 6) Visual Analysis: Visual analysis would be required for changes in color schemes on buildings, or proposed vegetation changes.
- 7) Construction Plans: Any major construction would require engineered, stamped plans prior to approval.
- 8) Threatened and Endangered Species: Threatened and endangered species protection would be incorporated into the permit. (Refer to page 4, design criteria).
- 9) Revegetation: Ground disturbances would be revegetated as directed by the Forest Service.
- 10) Inland Native Fish Strategy (INFS): INFS requirements for recreation uses would be followed. (Refer to page 4, design criteria).
- 11) Beach Fires: Containerized fire pans would be required for beach fires.
- 12) Design Work: All design work for any of the improvements, including buildings, erosion control, landscape plans, etc. located within the permit area is the responsibility of the permit holder. The Forest Service is responsible to provide information and legal direction, review and approval of the plans.
- 13) Signs: The Forest Service must approve all sign design and placement.
- 14) ADA: All improvements and programs would meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- 15) Laws: The permit would incorporate all applicable federal, state and local laws and ordinances.

- 16) Hazardous Materials: Hazardous material storage and control measures are the responsibility of the permit holder and are incorporated into the permit by a required clause.
- 17) Permit Term: During the term of the permit, any changes to laws, policies and regulations regarding the management of National Forest System lands would be amended to the permit.

## Comparison of Alternatives

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## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section summarizes the physical, biological, social and economic environments of the affected project area and the potential changes to those environments due to implementation of the alternatives

### **Alternative 1, The “No Action” Alternative: Not issue a new term permit and require removal of existing facilities**

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This would not meet the intent of the Forest Plan for providing commercial recreation facilities on National Forest System lands to assist with providing a variety of services, settings and facilities to the public.

With implementation of Alternative A, a removal and rehabilitation plan would be required. The marina facilities would need to be removed from the site within a specified time, and as laid out in the rehabilitation plan. The permitted area would be returned to a condition acceptable to the Forest Service. This would result in a loss of marina services on Priest Lake, along with all of the associated services, employment and benefits to the community and visitors that are currently provided.

Implementation of this alternative would reduce noise and traffic to the Kalispell Bay area, however, it would be anticipated that an alternate form of public use would be proposed for the current permit area.

This alternative does not meet the goal of the Forest Plan.

### **Alternative 2, Issue a 30-year term permit, the proposed action**

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With the issue of a new 30-year term permit, the facilities that are currently within the permit area would continue to be maintained. This would include the usual upkeep of buildings and grounds with items such as; painting, staining, roof replacements and removal of hazard trees, along with other maintenance items that need to occur on an annual or day-to-day basis. The marina would continue to provide the same services they

currently offer. Other marina related operations would continue such as boat repair, sales and boat launching.

The visual integrity of the marina would be maintained. The current facilities are stained a medium blue, which blends in as seen from lake, roads and nearby trails and ties in with a water-based theme. When the addition to the boat storage building is constructed, this building will be painted blue at that time. Changes to the landscape would be seen over time as more trees at the marina die, and removal is necessary. New landscaping may be necessary to replace lost trees and other vegetation. As construction occurs, there may be a slight temporary increase in noise, dust and vehicle traffic, as mitigations such as the storm water structures are implemented. Construction of the new buildings may be visible temporarily until siding and stain/paint is applied. With construction of any project, there is a potential for a temporary increase in sedimentation into the lake, along with short-term effects such as increase in noise and activity.

The marina operations will continue to operate as a valuable part of the community by providing the range of services and facilities to visitors and local residents that may otherwise not be available, along with the employment opportunities the marina provides.

Considering the marina facilities and operations have been permitted and operating for over 50 years, there have been relatively minor effects from the original facilities and operations, or new facilities that have been permitted over time. All of the improvements and services have been permitted due to the public desire for these types of services in the Priest Lake area. The improvements and changes or additions that are planned through the proposed improvements are in response to the need to serve the members of the public who value a marina setting for recreation.

In the 1900s, the intent of development of private facilities on National Forest System lands was to encourage use by the public, and provide facilities for a range of recreation opportunities. This goal typically leads to the clustering of public campgrounds, resorts, marinas and recreation residences within the same area when feasible, to take into account the type of facilities and services that are important to a range of visitors.

One of the goals outlined in the Act of March 4, 1915 (Term Permit Act) identified permitting land “for the purpose of constructing or maintaining hotels, resorts, and any other structures necessary or desirable for recreation, public convenience, or safety.”

By not having the facilities and operations that are provided at the Priest Lake Marina, there are many people who would not have been able to enjoy the lake in a National Forest setting, since they need the services that are offered here.

With the construction of the new lodging facility, the RV Park would be removed. This would allow for further rehabilitation of the area adjacent to Reynolds Creek, and allow an additional buffer area of native vegetation to be planted near the creek edge.

Since the current boat show room and parts store was built in the 1950s, this facility would eventually need to have substantial repairs or be replaced in order to meet code. With the current changes in use at Priest Lake, and the desire for some type of overnight lodging at this facility, it is logical to continue to allow for a limited unit overnight lodging type facility.

## **Alternative 3, Issue a 20-year term permit with new facilities**

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With the issue of a new 20-year term permit, the facilities that are currently within the permit area would continue to be maintained. This would include the usual upkeep of buildings and grounds with items such as; painting, staining, roof replacements and removal of hazard trees, along with other maintenance items that need to occur on an annual or day-to-day basis. The marina would continue to provide the same services they currently offer. Other marina related operations would continue such as boat repair, sales and boat launching.

The visual integrity of the marina would be maintained. The current facilities are stained a medium blue, which blends in as seen from lake, roads and nearby trails and ties in with a water-based theme. When the addition to the boat storage building is constructed, this building will be painted blue at that time. Changes to the landscape would be seen over time as more trees at the marina die, and removal is necessary. New landscaping may be necessary to replace lost trees and other vegetation. As construction occurs, there may be a slight temporary increase in noise, dust and vehicle traffic, as mitigations such as the storm water structures are implemented. Construction of the new buildings may be visible temporarily until siding and stain/paint is applied. With construction of any project, there is a potential for a temporary increase in sedimentation into the lake, along with short-term effects such as increase in noise and activity.

The marina operations will continue to operate as a valuable part of the community by providing the range of services and facilities to visitors and local residents that may otherwise not be available, along with the employment opportunities the marina provides.

Considering the resort facilities and operations have been permitted and operating for over 50 years, there have been relatively minor effects from the original facilities and operations, or new facilities that have been permitted over time. All of the improvements and services have been permitted due to the public desire for these types of services in the Priest Lake area. The improvements and changes or additions that are planned are in response to the need to serve the members of the public who value a marina setting for recreation.

In the 1900s, the intent of development of private facilities on National Forest System lands was to encourage the use by the public, and provide facilities for a range of recreation facilities. This goal typically leads to the clustering of public campgrounds, resorts, marinas and recreation residences within the same area when feasible, to take into account the type of facilities and services that are important to a range of visitors.

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Since the current boat show room and parts store was built in the 1950s, this facility would eventually need to have substantial repairs or be replaced in order to meet code. With the current changes in use at Priest Lake, and the desire for some type of overnight lodging at this facility, it is logical to continue to allow for a limited unit overnight lodging type facility.

The only difference between the issuance of a 30-year term permit (Alternative 2, the Proposed Action) and a 20-year term permit (Alternative 3) is the length of the term. The facilities and operations that would be authorized to occur within the permit area remain the same.

### **Alternative 4, Issue a 30-year term permit with no new facilities, other than the storage building expansion \_\_\_\_\_**

With the issue of a new 30-year term permit, the facilities that are currently within the permit area would continue to be maintained. This would include the usual upkeep of buildings and grounds with items such as; painting, staining, roof replacements and removal of hazard trees, along with other maintenance items that need to occur on an annual or day-to-day basis. The marina would continue to provide the same services they currently offer. Other marina related operations would continue such as boat repair, sales and boat launching.

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By not having the facilities and operations that are provided at the Priest Lake Marina, there are many people who would not have been able to enjoy the lake in a National Forest setting, since they need the services that are offered here.

Without the addition of a new overnight lodging facility, the RV Park would be allowed to remain, however this does not meet the goal of eliminating the overnight lodging from such close proximity to Reynolds Creek

Eventually, because of the age of the current boat repair and sales building, this facility would require major repairs or replacement.

### **Alternative 5, Issue a 20-year term permit with no new facilities, other than the storage building expansion \_\_\_\_\_**

With the issue of a new 20-year term permit, the facilities that are currently within the permit area would continue to be maintained. This would include the usual upkeep of buildings and grounds with items such as; painting, staining, roof replacements and removal of hazard trees, along with other maintenance items that need to occur on an annual or day-to-day basis. The marina would continue to provide the same services they currently offer. Other marina related operations would continue such as boat repair, sales and boat launching.

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Eventually, because of the age of the current boat repair and sales building, this facility would require major repairs or replacement.

The only difference between the issuance of a 30-year term permit (Alternative 4) and a 20-year term permit (Alternative 5) is the length of the term. The facilities and operations that would be authorized to occur within the permit area remain the same.

## **OTHER REQUIRED DISCLOSURES**

### **Effects to consumers, minority groups, women, civil rights, and Environmental Justice**

There would be minimal impacts to consumers. The amount of increased use at the resort would be dependant on the capacity of the facilities.

Minority groups would not be affected by the action alternative and no groups would be disproportionately impacted (Environmental Justice). There would be no effects to women or civil rights. All resort permits contain Equal Employment Opportunity requirements.

## Effects to Prime Farm Land, Rangeland, and Forest Land

None of the activities proposed would adversely impact prime farmland or rangeland. National Forest System lands are not considered prime forestland.

## Effects to floodplains and wetlands

The Inland Native Fish Strategy (INFS) standards and guidelines implemented with this project would protect floodplains and wetlands.

## American Indian Religious Freedom Act

No effects are anticipated to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. No impacts on American Indian social, economic or subsistence rights are anticipated.

## Energy Requirements

There are no unusual energy requirements for implementing the action alternative. In terms of petroleum products, the energy required to implement either action alternative is insignificant when viewed in light of production costs and the effects on the national and worldwide petroleum reserves.

## Consultation and Coordination

The Forest Service consulted the following individuals, Federal, State, and local agencies, tribes and non-Forest Service persons during the development of this environmental assessment:

### ***ID TEAM MEMBERS:***

Debbie Butler, Team Leader, Recreation Resources, Visual Analysis

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### ***FOREST SERVICE CONSULTANTS***

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Terry Knupp, Regional Developed Recreation Program Manager

**FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES:**

Department of Environmental Quality

Environmental Protection Agency

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Idaho Department of Lands

United States Army Corps of Engineers

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

**TRIBES:**

Kalispel Tribe