

# Salmon-Challis National Forest

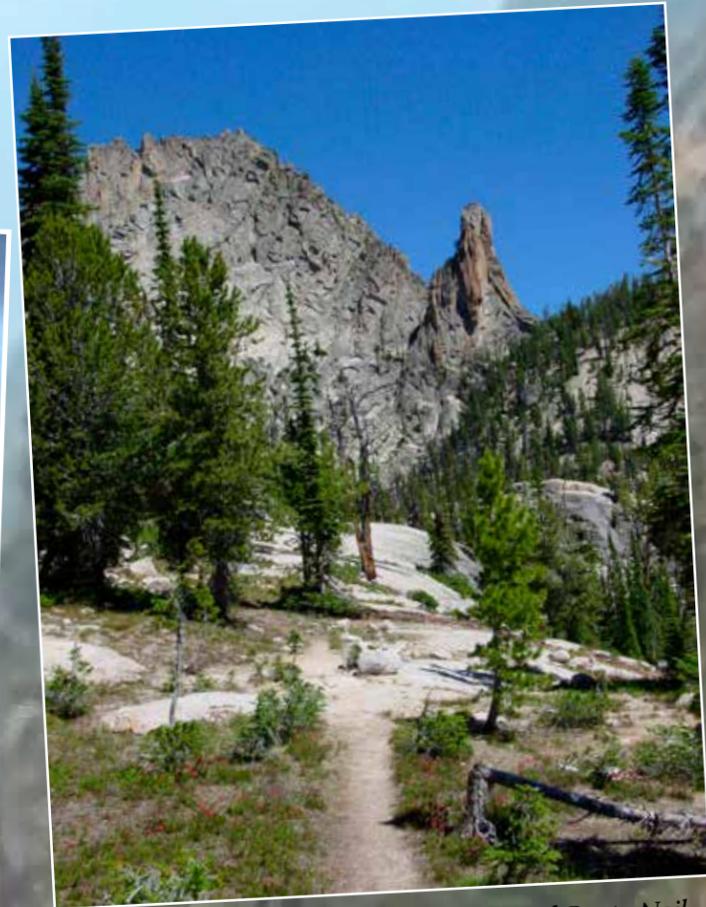
## VISITOR GUIDE



*Lose the Crowds — Find Your Way Back*



*Mt. McCaleb*



*Fishfin Ridge and Rusty Nail*

If you seek refuge from the business of daily life, the Salmon-Challis National Forest may be the place for you. This remote forest in central Idaho is a land of rugged mountains split by untamed rivers. At the heart of the legendary Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, the forest teems with wildlife. Chances are you may spot elk, bear, sheep, goats, moose, deer, antelope, or even a wolf during your visit.

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The Salmon-Challis National Forest is rich with America's heritage. Historic cabins, ranger stations, lookouts, mining ghost towns, and the Lewis and Clark and the Nez Perce National Historic Trails link today's visitor with the past.

### Fast Forest Facts

**Acres:** 4.3 million

**Deepest Canyon:** The Salmon River Canyon is deeper than the Grand Canyon.

**Highest Peak:** Borah Peak is the tallest mountain in Idaho (12,662').

Escape to backcountry in the Lemhi, Bitterroot, Pioneer, or Lost River Mountain Ranges. Raft the Main or Middle Fork of the Salmon River. Relax at one of the 87 campgrounds, or fight a trout or steelhead in one of the many lakes and streams.

*Come explore!*



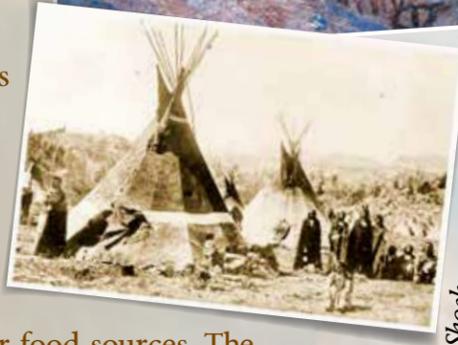
*This Visitor Guide provides the information you need to make the most of your Salmon-Challis National Forest experience.*

# Get to Know Us

## History

There are many stories to tell in this remote and sparsely populated region of Idaho. The Sheepeater Indians, ancestors of the Shoshone, lived along the rivers here, hunting and fishing the forest's bounty. Rock shelters display pictographs and contain remnants of mussel shells and other items these Native Americans used. The Shoshone Indians lived seasonally throughout the forest, fishing and curing salmon and elk among other food sources. The Shoshone-Bannock tribes currently live in Fort Hall, Idaho and come to the forest to celebrate their tradition and culture.

Middle Fork pictograph



Shoshone, circa 1880-1910



Lewis and Clark on the Lower Columbia (painting by Charles M. Russell)

Trappers and explorers came next, the most famous of which was the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1805. The Expedition was thwarted by the rapids of the Salmon River and had to change their route to make a difficult overland trip through the Bitterroot Mountains.

Later, settlement came first by way of miners, missionaries, then ranchers, and lumbermen. Remnants of this past are still visible today in cabin remains and mining artifacts. Historic trails also help to piece together the story of this landscape.

Today, the Salmon-Challis National Forest is valued for its recreational opportunities, water, vast open spaces, wilderness, and biodiversity.



Bear Valley

Beargrass

## Yellowjacket Guard Station

Today, the Yellowjacket Guard Station looks much as it did in the 1930s when it began its long career of hosting crews working in the forest.

In 1934, a Civilian Conservation Corps camp was stationed here to remodel the original dwelling (built in 1925) and construct more buildings including a barn, cellar, and bridge. In addition, Emergency Relief Agency crews worked at Yellowjacket through at least 1938. Next, the complex was the summer headquarters of the Yellowjacket Ranger District until 1954. The site became a seasonal work center until 2002 when it became a rental cabin.



Yellowjacket Guard Station, circa 1952

## Cape Horn Guard Station

Inexplicably named for the southern tip of South America, the Cape Horn Guard Station has been in use since approximately 1910. Beginning in 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps' Beaver Creek Camp made improvements to the site with a house, garage, barn, and a spring house. More alterations and additions came in 1973, including a toilet, gas house, and pumphouse. Cape Horn has been a winter rental cabin since 2002.



Cape Horn Guard Station, circa 1948

Both the Yellowjacket and Cape Horn Guard Station sites are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. They are also available for rent to the public through the **National Recreation Reservation System** by calling 1-877-444-6777 or online at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

## Protecting Our Past For Our Future

Prehistoric and historic sites and artifacts are irreplaceable resources that provide clues into our collective heritage. Once damaged, they lose much of their meaning.

### Do ~

- ☐ Feel free to photograph, draw, and handle artifacts on the ground surface, but put them back where they were found
- ☐ Let forest staff know if you've found something special
- ☐ On rivers, camp on lower beaches, not on upper terraces where pithouses may be found

### Don't ~

- ☐ Gather artifacts into piles or take them home
- ☐ Touch or leave marks on rock art (the oil in your fingers may damage the fragile art)
- ☐ Sit or walk on walls, or enter structures
- ☐ Reveal site locations on websites or give out GPS coordinates

## Custer Townsite

Lode ores were found on the mountains surrounding Jordan Creek and Yankee Fork River in 1875, with the richest being the General Custer (whose namesake was killed during the year of the lode's discovery). By 1879, the town of Custer was established to support area mines, growing to 600 residents by 1896. The town boasted of a school house, jail, Miner's Union Hall, post office, and baseball team.

By 1903, the glory days of mining were slipping away as the mines played out one by one, and by 1910 Custer had become a ghost town.

In 1981, Custer was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Friends of Custer Museum have kept the site open. In 1990, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation joined the Forest Service in establishment of the Land of the Yankee Fork Historic Area.



*The Empire Saloon in Custer still provides refreshments for travelers*

A self-guided walking tour is generally open from June through September. Camping is available throughout the valley and lodging is available in Stanley. You can even pan for gold!

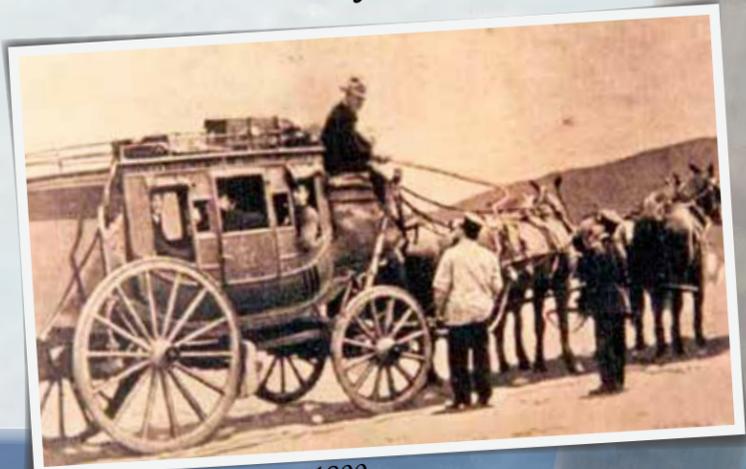
## Custer Motorway

The mining camps of Bonanza and Custer were already established before any roads came into the Yankee Fork area. Pack trains brought supplies in and took gold and silver ore out to Challis, charging 20 cents per pound for their loads.

In 1879, Fred Myers and Alexander Topance constructed a 35-mile road over two steep summits to link Bonanza and Challis. The road proved a boon to the growth of Bonanza and Custer.

Several stopping places were operated along the way since the trip from Bonanza to Challis took at least two days. A toll was charged until 1889, when the construction of a new road along the Salmon River from the mouth of the Yankee Fork provided a new and easier link to Challis.

Traveling along this historic road, you can still see remains of the Eleven Mile Barn, Fannie's Upper Hole and the Toll Gate. **The road is not recommended for trailers.**



*The Custer Stage, circa 1900*

## Yankee Fork Dredge

In 1939 the Silas Mason Co. had the largest dredge in Idaho, built to get gold out of the Yankee Fork River. At 112 feet long, 54 feet wide, and 64 feet high, it weighed 988 tons and was powered by two 7-cylinder Ingersoll-Rand diesel engines.

The dredge dug out rock and washed the gold out of it. In operation from 1940 through 1952, this efficient dredge took out about 80% of the gold in the Yankee Fork.

The Yankee Fork Gold Dredge Association restored the dredge which is now open to the public. It is located 13 miles east of Stanley, and 8 miles north of the Sunbeam Dam up the Yankee Fork River. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, tours are offered between 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.



*Yankee Fork Dredge*

## Leesburg

Leesburg lies along Napias Creek, west of Salmon. This mining ghost town kept an active post office as late as 1942, and in its heyday, had a population of 7,000. Today, the entire community is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



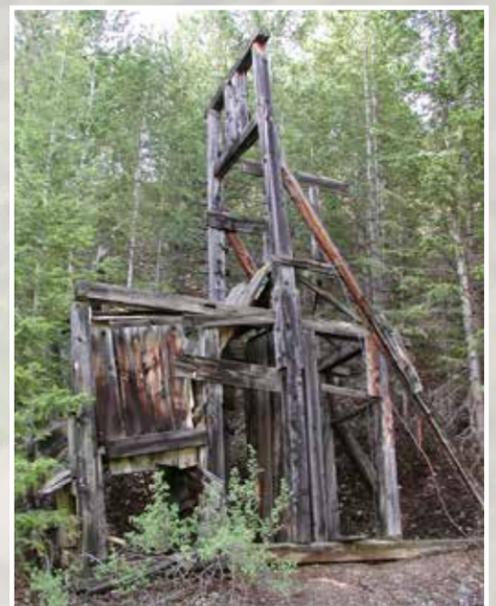
*The Rood Butcher Shop remains at Leesburg*

## Mackay Mine Hill

Prospectors found copper ore in the mountains above present day Mackay, (pronounced Mákey) in 1879. For more than 50 years, mining was the way of life in the Mackay area. Today, more than half a century after the end of the mining heyday, the Mackay Mine Hill is once again bustling with activity.

The White Knob Historical Preservation Committee, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, state, and local officials, has begun an effort to preserve and interpret the remains of the area's copper mining legacy. Thanks to their efforts, visitors to the Mine Hill can experience a piece of Mackay's mining past.

For more information and a virtual tour, [http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/cultural/White\\_Knob.print.html](http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/cultural/White_Knob.print.html) visit or obtain maps of the self-guided tour at local ranger stations and stores in Mackay.



*Headframe and shaft in the Mackay Mine area*

# Get to Know Us

## Special Places

### Middle Fork of the Salmon River



Launch area at Boundary Creek on a busy day

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River is 104 miles of free-flowing whitewater, where every bend reveals a new dramatic vista and a challenge to boaters' skills. Despite the remote location, a few trails, landing strips, private ranches, and Forest Service stations are continued evidence of backcountry use.

The Middle Fork is one of the original eight rivers in the nation designated as Wild and Scenic in 1968. Today it is an internationally recognized

whitewater/wilderness float trip, enjoyed by more than 10,000 people each summer. Restricted to non-motorized boats only, it has many Class III and IV rapids.

### Main Salmon River

Even though the Main Salmon River is within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, there is a 79-mile "Wild" section that allows powerboats, unlike other Wilderness Rivers. Most powerboat use is associated with access to private lands, commercial outfitting, hunting and fishing. River floaters enjoy splendid scenery including remarkable geologic features. This river is not as technically difficult as the Middle Fork of the Salmon.



Main Salmon River

### Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness

A land of steep mountains, deep canyons, and wild rivers, the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, at 2.4 million acres, is vast. It is the second largest Wilderness outside of Alaska.



Middle Fork River Trail

The Salmon River Mountains (south of the Main Salmon and west of the Middle Fork) dominate the Wilderness. North of the Main Salmon River are the Clearwater Mountains; east of the Middle Fork are the Bighorn Crags.

The Salmon River Canyon—one of the deepest gorges in North America—is noted for the diversity of landscapes visible from the river. In places, wooded ridges rise to the sky. Elsewhere, huge eroded monuments, picturesque castles, and rock slides dominate the view.

The name of this Wilderness has two roots. The Main Salmon River was called "The River of No Return" in the days when boats could navigate down the river, but could not get back up through the numerous rapids. The romantic name lives on today, even though jet boats now are allowed on the waters. The Frank Church namesake honors the Idaho senator who contributed greatly to the preservation of this wild central core of Idaho.



Help protect Wilderness for our future generations by following the "Leave No Trace" principles:

- » Travel in small groups (maximum group size is 20 and 20 head of stock)
- » Stay on the trails and do not cut switchbacks
- » If you have a group of 6 or more, select a campsite that has already been impacted
- » Where possible, set up camp out of sight and sound of other campers and at least 200 feet from rivers, streams, and trails
- » Keep soap out of all waters
- » Pack out all unburnable trash
- » On the trail, bury human waste; while in the river corridor, use the required portable toilets
- » Do not build fire circles, gear racks, or other structures
- » **If** there are no fire restrictions, you may build small campfires or use fire pans
- » Use certified weed- and seed-free feed for all stock, and do not bring straw; salt supplements must be mixed with grain or in block form, and excess packed out

### River Permits

Special regulations apply to these two river corridors for resource protection, and private float permits are restricted by using a reservation system that helps preserve the natural character and solitude of both rivers. Permits are required year-round for both rivers. Lottery applications are accepted December 1 to January 31 each year and must be submitted online at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov). Many commercial outfitters also offer guided river trips.

Visit the forest web page for information about the Four Rivers Lottery at: [www.fs.usda.gov/scnf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/scnf).



## Scenic Byways & Trails

### Salmon River Scenic Byway

**Length:** 162 mi./259 km.  
**Time to Allow:** 3-4 hours  
**Location:** From the MT state line, south on US 93; west to Stanley on ID 75  
**Website:** [www.visitidaho.org/scenic-byways/](http://www.visitidaho.org/scenic-byways/)



*Fall's splendor along the byway*

The northern end of the Salmon River Scenic Byway begins on the Montana border at the Lost Trail Pass (elevation 6,995 feet). Lewis and Clark came this way in 1805, and the spectacular view from this vantage point has changed little since then. The route follows the Salmon River through the Salmon-Challis National Forest and through the historic city of Salmon. The river and its forks serve as important natural pathways into Idaho's rugged back country. The deer, elk, and moose that often graze along the hills and meadows that line this road provide a glimpse of the wild country beyond.

Along the way, the town of Challis and the Yankee Fork Historic Area are just two points of interest. Other attractions include the Sacajawea Interpretive Center, Tower Rock, the mining museum in Clayton, and natural hot springs near Stanley where the byway ends.

### Peaks to Craters Scenic Byway

**Length:** 140 mi./224 km.  
**Time to Allow:** 3 hours  
**Location:** From ID 75/US 20 to Carey; US 93 to Arco and on to US 93/ID 75  
**Website:** [www.idahobyways.gov/byways/peaks-to-craters.aspx](http://www.idahobyways.gov/byways/peaks-to-craters.aspx)

Without a doubt, this byway has the most diverse stretch of road in Idaho.

The byway features world-class fly fishing on beautiful Silver Creek, and a unique rock formation known as the "Queens Crown." Idaho's first national monument—Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve—has thousands of acres of lava fields and distinctive rock formations. In Arco, the "First City in the World to be Lit by Atomic Energy," you can see a submarine in the desert.

In the Lost River Valley, there are acres of agricultural lands in the shadow of the Lost River Mountain Range. The valley narrows and mountains seem to grow as you near Mt. Borah and the rest of the "great peaks." At Spar Canyon you may see wild horses roaming the desert, and be reminded of old western movies as you wind through Grandview Canyon.



*Willow Creek Summit*

Special attractions include the Science and Technology Center in Arco, Hayspur Fish Hatchery, Carey Lake Wildlife Management Area, Goodale's Cutoff, King Mountain Hang Glider Launch Site, Lost River Museum; Ghost Towns on the Mine Hill, Big Lost River Access, Mackay Dam and Reservoir, Battleground Cemetery, Land of the Yankee Fork State Park.

### Sacajawea Scenic Byway

**Length:** 132 mi./211 km.  
**Time to Allow:** 2-3 hours  
**Location:** From I-15/ID 33 (Exit 143), west 12 miles to ID 28; northwest 120 miles to Salmon  
**Website:** [www.visitidaho.org/scenic-byways/sacajawea-historic-byway/](http://www.visitidaho.org/scenic-byways/sacajawea-historic-byway/)

Sacajawea, a Lemhi Shoshone woman born around 1788, is known around the world as a trusted and valuable

member of the famed Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery. It was during their expedition that she would help Lewis and Clark find the Salmon River and revisit her people.

This passage through the high country of eastern Idaho takes you through the historical legacies of Idaho and beyond. Found here are fossils of the extinct North American (or Pleistocene) lion, Native American rock art, the compelling stories of the Lemhi-Shoshone people and Sacajawea, the flight of the Nez Perce, the Reverend Samuel Parker, Fort Lemhi, the legacy of Chief Tendoy, stage routes and rail lines that served the mining boom of the late 1800s, and much more.

Special attractions include Mud Lake Wildlife Management Area, Prehistoric Man, Charcoal Kilns, Meadow Lake, Leadore Ranger Station/ Visitor Center, Sacajawea Interpretive Center, and the Lemhi County Historical Museum.



*Along the Sacajawea Scenic Byway*

### Trails

The historic and scenic qualities of the Salmon-Challis National Forest have been recognized through the designation of several national trails.

**Continental Divide National Scenic Trail** - The Continental Divide Trail (CDT) spans nearly 3,200 miles from Mexico to Canada and is known as the "Backbone of the Continent." For more information, visit [www.fs.fed.us/cdt](http://www.fs.fed.us/cdt).

**Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail** - This trail commemorates one of our nation's most amazing expeditions with Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/lecl](http://www.nps.gov/lecl).

**Nez Perce National Historic Trail** - The 1877 flight of the Nez Perce people from the US Army has been designated the Nez Perce National Historic Trail. For more information, visit [www.fs.fed.us/nphnt](http://www.fs.fed.us/nphnt).

The Salmon-Challis National Forest has hundreds of miles of other hiking, biking, and horse trails awaiting your discovery. For more information, contact any Forest Service Office or visit [www.fs.usda.gov/scnf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/scnf).



*Hikers on the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail*





# Salmon-Challis National Forest

Before venturing onto the Salmon-Challis National Forest, please pick up a map with the level of detail appropriate for your planned activities:

**For motorized travel:**

Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUM) are available at all Forest Service offices, and may be downloaded from [www.fs.usda.gov/scnf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/scnf).

**For hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding:**

Topographic maps are recommended. Visit the US Geological Survey for online purchases: [www.usgs.com](http://www.usgs.com).

National forest maps may be purchased at: [www.nationalforeststore.com](http://www.nationalforeststore.com).

Forest Supervisor's Office	Salmon-Challis National Forest
District Ranger Office	Wilderness Areas
Campground	U.S. Highway
River Access	State Highway
Rental Cabin or Lookout	Forest Route
Point of Interest	Roads
Launch Site	Scenic Byways
Scale	National Trails



## Jim McClure-Jerry Peak Wilderness

This Wilderness is a 116,898 acre area managed by the Salmon-Challis National Forest and Bureau of Land Management. The Wilderness directly adjoins the Hemingway-Boulder Wilderness on its southwest and the White Clouds Wilderness to the east. Named for Senator Jim McClure, the area was added to the National Wilderness Preservation System by Congress in August 2015.

Rolling hills, sagebrush, and grasslands dominate the northern half while steeper terrain give way to lodgepole and limber pine up to the 10,010 foot Jerry Peak on the southern portion of the Wilderness.



Bighorn sheep (ram)

## Mount Borah & the Tall Peaks of the Lost River Range

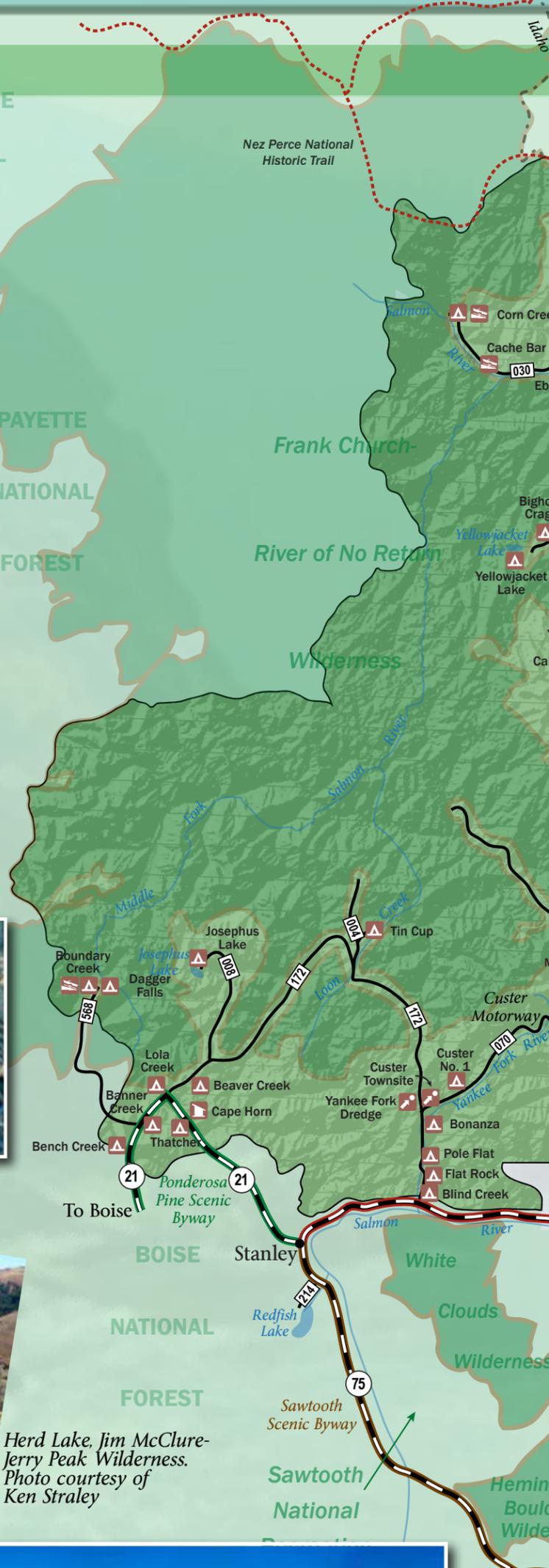
Climbing peaks is a popular activity on the Lost River Ranger District. There are 20 named peaks on the district with elevations over 11,000 feet. In fact, parts of all of the named peaks in Idaho with elevations over 12,000 feet are on this district. There are also many unnamed peaks with elevations over 11,000 feet.



Herd Lake, Jim McClure-Jerry Peak Wilderness. Photo courtesy of Ken Straley



Lost River Range





Harbor Lake

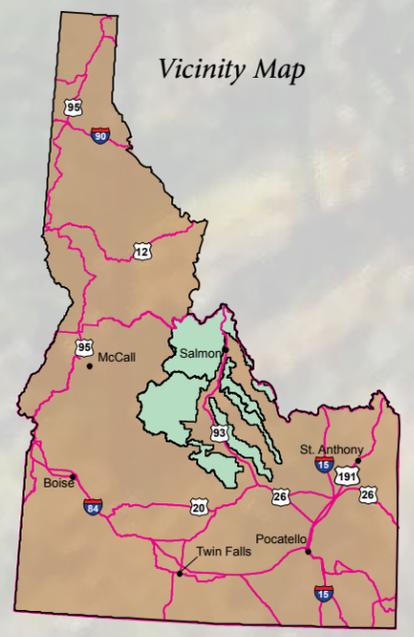


## Lewis & Clark Backcountry Byway

The historic sense of place is still intact along this byway, where you can visit the homeland of Sacajawea and the Shoshone; spot a wide variety of wildlife; and soak in the stupendous views. This road

also provides access to the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. Plan to spend 3-4 hours on this 39-mile byway.

*Caution: This area is very remote, along a single-lane gravel road. Although accessible by car, good tires and full tank of gas are recommended. Be aware that it can snow year-round on the Continental Divide.*



Vicinity Map



Cape Horn Guard Station is a great place for winter fun

# Recreation Sites

## Campgrounds

	Name	Fee	# of Units	Season	Amenities	Reservable
Salmon, Leadore & North Fork Area	Big Eightmile Campground/Trailhead	No	11	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Picnic Area]	No
	Bighorn Crags Complex	Yes	14	July-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Horse Facilities]	No
	Corn Creek	Yes	18	March-Nov.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Picnic Area] [Horse Facilities]	No
	Cougar Point	No	11	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail] [Picnic Area]	No
	Deep Creek	No	3	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Ebenezer	Yes	11	March-Nov.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Picnic Area]	No
	Hawley Creek, Upper	No	2	June-Oct.	[Restroom]	No
	Iron Lake	Yes	8	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	McDonald Flat	No	6	June-Oct.	[Restroom]	No
	Meadow Lake	Yes	18	July-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail]	No
	Twin Creek Campground	Yes	38	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Wallace Lake	Yes	12	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Picnic Area]	No
Yellowjacket Lake	No	7	July-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Horse Facilities]	No	
Mackay Area	Broad Canyon	No	8	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail] [Horse Facilities]	No
	Iron Bog	Yes	21	May-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Horse Facilities]	No
	Lake Creek Trailhead & Campground	Yes	4	June-Sept.	[Drinking Water] [ATV] [Motorcycles]	No
	Mill Creek Trailhead & Campground	Yes	6	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail] [Horse Facilities]	No
	Mt. Borah Trailhead & Campground	Yes	5	May-Oct.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail]	No
	Park Creek	Yes	12	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Pass Creek Narrows	No	7	May-Sept.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail]	No
	Phi Kappa	Yes	21	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Star Hope	Yes	21	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Horse Facilities]	No
	Timber Creek	Yes	12	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Horse Facilities]	No
Wildhorse	Yes	13	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail]	No	
Challis & Stanley Area	Banner Creek	Yes	3	June-Oct.	[Restroom]	No
	Beaver Creek	Yes	12	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Bench Creek	Yes	5	June-Oct.	[Restroom]	No
	Big Bayhorse (8-unit picnic area also)	No	9	July-Sept.	[Restroom] [ATV] [Picnic Area]	No
	Big Creek	No	3	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [ATV]	No
	Blind Creek	Yes	5	June-Sept.	[Restroom]	No
	Boundary Creek	Yes	14	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail] [Picnic Area]	Some
	Custer #1	Yes	6	July-Sept.	[Restroom]	No
	Dagger Falls	Yes	6	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Hiking Trail]	No
	Flat Rock	Yes	6	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Flat Rock Extension	Yes	3	June-Sept.	[Restroom]	No
	Lola Creek	Yes	22	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Picnic Area]	No
	Mill Creek (includes 1 group site)	Yes	9	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Morse Creek	No	3	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail]	No
	Mosquito Flat Reservoir (4-unit picnic area also)	No	11	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail] [Picnic Area]	No
	Pole Flat	Yes	10	June-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Thatcher	Yes	5	July-Sept.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water]	No
	Tin Cup	No	13	July-Sept.	[Restroom] [Hiking Trail] [Horse Facilities]	No

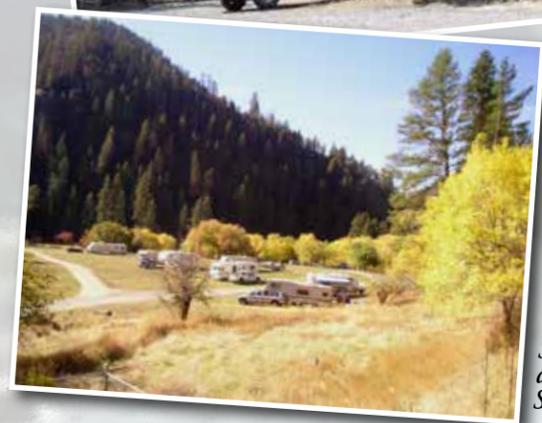
- Restroom
- Drinking Water
- Hiking Trail
- Picnic Area
- ATV
- Motorcycles
- Amphitheatre
- Horse Facilities
- Boat Ramp
- Interpretive Site
- Mountain Climbing
- Dump Station
- Garbage Collection

Starhope Campground



Beaver Creek Campground

Broad Canyon Campground



Spring Creek along the Salmon River

Group Sites				
Name	Fee	Season	Amenities	Reservable
Loristica CG (8 units)	\$30/group	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Amphitheatre]	Yes
Bonanza CG (1 unit)	\$35/25 people \$50/26-50 \$100/51-70	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Picnic Area]	Yes
Twin Creek Picnic Area (1 unit)	\$20/day Up to 50 people	June-Oct.	[Restroom] [Drinking Water] [Picnic Area]	Yes

Fees range from \$4-10 depending on amenities, and are subject to change.



## River Access

Main Salmon River Access Points			
Name	Location	Amenities	Notes
Newland Sanitary Station	1 mile along the Salmon River Road from North Fork (off Hwy 93)		SCAT machine and RV dump station only; NO river access
Deadwater	3.7 miles along the Salmon River Road from North Fork (off Hwy 93)		Put-in and take-out for the recreation section of the Salmon River
Spring Creek	17.7 miles along the Salmon River Road from North Fork (off Hwy 93)		Put-in and take-out for the recreation section of the Salmon River
Cove Creek	28.8 miles along the Salmon River Road from North Fork (off Hwy 93)		Put-in and take-out for the recreation section of the Salmon River
Cache Bar	41.4 miles along the Salmon River Road from North Fork (off Hwy 93)		Put-in and take-out for Salmon River; take-out for Middle Fork
Corn Creek	46.4 miles along the Salmon River Road from North Fork (off Hwy 93)		Put-in and take-out for Salmon River; end of the road, primary put-in for wild river section of Salmon River (launch permits required year-round for this section); staffed during high-use season (other access points are in the Wilderness down river)
Middle Fork of Salmon River Access Point			
Boundary Creek	NW of Stanley about 49 miles, off of Forest Road 551		Primary put-in for Middle Fork of Salmon River (other access points are in the Wilderness down river); hosts on site; launch permits required year-round on the wild river section

## Rental Cabins

*Yellowjacket Guard Station*



Name	Fee/Capacity	Season	Amenities	Notes
Yellowjacket Guard Station	\$40/4 people	June-Oct.	Two queen beds; wood stove and firewood; propane stove and lights; no running water; no kitchen supplies; a 40'X40' corral is available; outhouse nearby	This guard station served as summer headquarters for a Forest Service Ranger Station until 1954. It was built by the CCC and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
Cape Horn Guard Station	\$40/8 people	Dec. - March	One double bed; one single bed; wood stove and firewood; no running water; intermittent electricity	This guard station has ski, snowshoe, or snowmobile access.
Copper Basin Rental Cabin	\$100/7 people	June-Oct	One queen bed; one double bunk set, one convertible couch, water, propane lights and appliances, kitchen supplies.	Includes outside firering and picnic table, access to recreation nearby in Copper Basin. Available in summer.

## Dispersed Camping

Camping is free in most remote areas of the forest and is a traditional way that many people experience the great outdoors in the summer and fall months. Several popular areas have a few amenities (such as fire rings and restrooms) to help protect natural resources. Other areas are simple pull-offs on primitive roads.

Remember to pack out anything you have packed in. Leave your campsite the same or better than you found it.



*Sawmill Canyon (left), Pass Creek (above) and the Upper Pahsimeroi (right) are popular for dispersed camping*

Reservations for cabins and group sites can be made through the National Recreation Reservation Service at 1-877-444-6777 or [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).



# Activities

## Fishing

World-class blue ribbon wild trout streams are scattered throughout the forest. In contrast to some states, most Idaho fishing waters are on public land.



Fall fishing—when the Salmon River is ablaze

Twelve species of game fish are found on the Salmon-Challis National Forest, including chinook and sockeye salmon; steelhead, rainbow, bull, brook, and cutthroat trout; grayling, and several other species.



Fish art © Joe Tomelleri

For more fishing information, visit the forest's website at:  
[www.fs.usda.gov/scnf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/scnf)

For both fishing and hunting information, visit the Idaho Fish and Game Department:  
[www.fishandgame.idaho.gov/](http://www.fishandgame.idaho.gov/)

## Hunting

Idaho has some of the best and most varied hunting in the west! From the trophy species of moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat, to the more often-hunted deer (mule and white tail), elk, and antelope, the choices are many. You may hunt black bear and mountain lions too, and a variety of upland game, turkeys, and waterfowl. Licenses and tags are available over the counter for almost every species.



## Outfitters and Guides

If you have limited experience or equipment, hiring an outfitter may be the best approach to get to know the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The forest permits outfitters for year-round activities, including whitewater rafting, jet boating, hunting, fishing, hiking, backpacking, sightseeing, mountaineering, trail riding, and other activities. These trained professionals are licensed by the Idaho State Outfitter and Guides Licensing board. For more information visit - [www.ioga.org](http://www.ioga.org).

## Off Highway Vehicle Use (OHV)

Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs) are an exciting way to experience our scenic and natural treasures. However, OHV enthusiasts must be sensitive and responsible to the ecosystems they are enjoying and must remain on designated, motorized trail routes. Seasonal restrictions and closures may be in effect in order to prevent road damage during wet periods, or for wildlife or fire concerns.

National Forests adopt their home state's off-highway vehicle regulations, with the basic direction that all areas and routes are closed unless designated open.

Your vehicle may go up to 300 feet from a designated open road on most areas of the forest for dispersed camping. Some road corridors have areas where off-road camping is closed due to concerns about resource damage.

To determine which routes are open, you need:

- A Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)
- A numbered sign on the road or trail

The map displays areas open to off-highway vehicles, trail markers, regulations and route locations.

Just because you see tracks does not mean it is an open route. End of route signs are occasionally removed. The user must know where they are on the map and on the route.

If traveling through gates, be sure to leave them as you find them.

Off highway and other maps are available online at:  
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/scnf/maps-pubs>



Routes open to motorized uses are marked out on the ground.

MVUM maps are available for free at local offices and online or scan the QR code to the right and download maps here.



# Know Before You Go

**tread lightly!**<sup>®</sup>  
LEAVING A GOOD IMPRESSION



Unpaved and primitive roads present special challenges even in good weather. Before you take off, think about another challenge – your responsibility to “Tread Lightly.” Here’s how:

- T** ravel only where motorized vehicles are permitted.
- R** espect the rights of others to enjoy their activities undisturbed.
- E** ducate yourself by getting maps and information; ask owners’ permission to cross private property.
- A** void streams, lakeshores, meadows, muddy roads, steep hillsides, wildlife, and livestock.
- D** rive responsibly to protect the environment and preserve opportunities to enjoy your vehicle on wild lands.

## Be Bear Aware!

Seeing a black bear is a memorable experience. If you want that experience to be positive rather than negative, follow these tips:

- ☞ Keep a clean campsite. Store food and garbage in closed vehicles and out of sight, and never put food scraps in the campfire.
- ☞ Don’t keep food, shampoo—or anything that smells—in tents or sleeping areas.
- ☞ Do not sleep in the clothes you cook in.
- ☞ When camping in the backcountry, hang food and garbage from a tree limb at least 10 feet from the ground and 5 feet from the tree trunk. This tree should be at least 100 yards from your sleeping area.
- ☞ Stay on trails for your safety and to protect the habitat.
- ☞ Taking pets on hiking trails may attract bears and other predators. If you take your pet, keep it on a short leash to avoid conflicts.

If bears become accustomed to human food, they may become aggressive towards humans or cause property damage. To protect people, these bears may have to be destroyed.



For more information, visit [www.BeBearAware.org](http://www.BeBearAware.org)

## Aquatic Nuisance Species

When zebra and/or quagga mussels invade our local waters they damage boats, destroy fish habitat, and clog public water pipes. Zebra and quagga mussels attach to boats, bait buckets, and other gear. You can help stop these aquatic hitchhikers by following these three steps before entering any waters in Idaho:



1. Clean mud, plants, animals or other debris from your boat and equipment
2. Drain the ballast tanks, bilge, livewells and motor
3. Dry (7 days summer; 18 days spring/fall; and 30 days winter) or freeze (3 days)

Anyone who wants to launch a boat or nonmotorized vessel (canoe, kayak, raft, etc.) on Idaho waters must have an *Idaho Invasive Species Fund* sticker. Inflatable, nonmotorized vessels less than 10 feet long are exempt. For more information, visit [www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov](http://www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov), or call (208) 247-6332.

## Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds can rapidly displace native plant species that provide habitat for wildlife and food for livestock. You can help reduce their spread:

- ☞ Remove seeds from livestock by brushing manes and tails thoroughly and cleaning hooves
- ☞ Check your gear and pets for weed seeds and clean
- ☞ When using pack animals, carry only feed that is certified weed-free. Within 96 hours before entering backcountry areas, feed them only weed-free food.
- ☞ Wash your vehicle, including the undercarriage, to remove any weed seed before driving to the forest
- ☞ Camp in weed-free areas
- ☞ Learn to recognize common noxious weed species



Spotted knapweed  
(© John Cardina)



Dalmatian toadflax  
(© Bob Nowierski)

## Try Your Hand At Rockhounding!



Amethyst geode  
(© Vladislav Gajic)

On the south end of the forest, you might discover clear quartz, amethyst, or citrine, as well as large geodes and banded red and yellow agates. The East Fork of the Salmon River is an excellent collecting locality for a variety of crypto-crystalline quartz found in blood-red sandstone. Near Challis there is a forest of petrified wood and a few places where a rare zeolite can be found. The northern end of the Salmon-Challis NF has deposits of quartz, crystals of cobalt, and feldspar. Fluorite, where fossils have been preserved, are typically found more in the Lost River Ranger District near Mackay. Forestwide you may uncover opals or try your luck at gold panning. Treasures await!



# Salmon-Challis National Forest

## Your Fees at Work

Recreation fees make a positive difference in our ability to serve our visitors because these dollars can be reinvested into services and infrastructure on the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Some of our recent accomplishments include:

- \* Rivers - River Ranger staffing; maps; weed control; repair of SCAT machine; garbage removal; Middle Fork Lodge river gauge uplinked for real-time water levels; maintenance and grading on access roads
- \* Rental cabins - Firewood stocking; chimney and woodstove repairs; lightning protection at Sheephorn Lookout; outhouse painting and pumping done over the summer; Cape Horn winter rental lead paint removal
- \* Campgrounds - Maintenance and refurbishment; removal of hazard trees; volunteer staffing; new fee tubes and bulletin boards
- \* Recreation Special Use Permits - Staffing for permit administration, inspections, and heritage surveys
- \* This Visitor Guide



Staffing at Corn Creek launch site



Campground maintenance at Meadow Lake

## America The Beautiful - National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Interagency Pass Program



Many federal lands and activities can be enjoyed for free. However, for those who recreate on multiple federal lands that require a fee, the America the Beautiful Interagency Pass Program is the most convenient way to pay.

**NOTE:** Passes are honored nationwide at all Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and US Fish & Wildlife Service sites charging entrance or standard amenity fees. These fees are not charged to persons 15 and under. Passes do not cover expanded amenity fees such as cabin and river fees.

Purchase online at : <http://store.usgs.gov/pass/index.html>  
Better yet, buy locally at FS offices - keeping 80% of the proceeds here on the Salmon-Challis National Forests!

### Access Pass - Free

Available to US citizens that have been medically determined to have a permanent disability. Good for a 50% discount on camping fees.

### Military Pass - Free

For active military personnel and their dependents.

### Volunteer Pass - Free

For volunteers with over 250 volunteer hours.

### 4th Grade Pass- Free

Available to 4th graders who bring a paper pass from Every Kid in a Park website. [www.everykidinapark.gov](http://www.everykidinapark.gov)

### Senior Pass - \$10.00

Available to US citizens 62 years and older. Good for a 50% discount on camping fees.

### Annual Pass - \$80.00

While Annual Passes cover entrance fees for federal lands such as National Parks and special areas it does not cover camping discounts, river use fees, or cabin rental fees.



## Volunteering on the Salmon-Challis National Forest

The Forest Service Volunteer Program on the Salmon-Challis National Forest is very active. The jobs are exciting and diverse, scenery is exceptional and coworkers are friendly. For more information, contact any Forest Service Office, or visit: [www.volunteer.gov/gov](http://www.volunteer.gov/gov)

### Contact Information

**Salmon-Challis National Forest Forest Supervisor's Office**  
1206 So. Challis Street  
Salmon, ID 83467  
(208) 756-5100

**Challis-Yankee Fork Ranger District**  
HC 63 Box 1669 Hwy 93  
Challis, ID 83226  
(208) 879-4100

**Leadore Ranger District**  
176 North Railroad St.  
P.O. Box 180 Hwy 28  
Leadore, ID 83464  
(208) 768-2500

**Lost River Ranger District**  
716 W Custer  
P.O. Box 507  
Mackay, ID 83251  
(208) 588-3400

**Middle Fork Ranger District**  
HC 63 Box 1669 Hwy 93  
Challis, ID 83226  
(208) 879-4100

**North Fork Ranger District**  
11 Casey Rd.  
P.O. Box 180 Hwy 93 North  
North Fork, ID 83466  
(208) 865-2700

**Salmon-Cobalt Ranger District**  
311 McPherson St.  
Salmon, ID 83467  
(208) 756-5200

Visit the Salmon-Challis National Forest at:  
[www.fs.usda.gov/scnf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/scnf)

Printed on recycled paper

Visitor Guides for other national forests in the Intermountain Region may be found at [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r4/rec\\_publications](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r4/rec_publications)

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