



**US Department of Agriculture  
US Forest Service**

**Salmon-Challis National Forest  
Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Study and Report**

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**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY**

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*Photo Credit: US Forest Service*



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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Full Phrase

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
FSH	Forest Service Handbook
GIS	geographic information system
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NWSRS	National Wild and Scenic Rivers System
PDF	portable document file
US	United States
USC	United States Code
WSR	Wild and Scenic River

# SECTION I

## INTRODUCTION

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As directed by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, the United States (US) Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service, Region 4 (Intermountain Region) is conducting activities to produce Wild and Scenic River (WSR) eligibility studies and reports. Region 4 encompasses nearly 34-million acres of National Forest System land in Utah, Nevada, western Wyoming, and southern and central Idaho. These WSR eligibility studies and reports will include all named rivers on a standard US Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle map which were not previously evaluated as a part of a systematic, documented study and those rivers with changed circumstances since such a study was completed.

This public participation strategy outlines Salmon-Challis National Forest's approach to public participation and engagement during the development of the Forest's WSR eligibility study and report. The public participation strategy draws on and is consistent with Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12 Chapter 40 and 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subpart 219.4, as directed by FSH 1909.12 81.1.

Background information on the WSR Act and a description of the eligibility study process is available in Section I of the forest's Eligibility Study Process.

### **Target Audiences**

This public participation strategy is designed to promote engagement by a diverse set of individuals and groups in the development of the WSR eligibility study and report. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Local, state, and federal agencies
- Tribal governments
- Interested individuals and entities at the local, regional, and national levels

- Youth, low-income populations, and minority populations
- Nearby private landowners

***Goals of the Public Participation Strategy***

The goals of this public participation strategy are to incorporate the principles of public participation, as identified in FSH 1909.12 41, into the WSR eligibility study process. These principles are as follows:

- Transparency
- Consistency
- Effectiveness
- Accessibility
- Solution orientation
- Efficiency and capacity
- Clear expectations
- Broad and sustainable participation

Additionally, FSH 1909.12, Section 81.1, directs each National Forest to engage the public and other governments early and throughout the eligibility study process. Public participation is intended to be dynamic in that the Forest Service both informs the public and accepts feedback from the public on the overall approach to planning processes and specific phases of the plan, such as the WSR eligibility studies and reports.

The sections below provide details on the public engagement strategy. It focuses on the following five key activities:

1. Ensuring iterative public engagement throughout the WSR eligibility study process
2. Maintaining a master stakeholder list
3. Producing outreach materials and project updates
4. Tracking and documenting public comments
5. Conducting public outreach meetings

Public participation is an adaptive process which may be revised to meet evolving needs during the WSR eligibility study process.

## SECTION 2

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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**Section 1**, Introduction, described the principles and objectives behind the public participation strategy. **Section 2**, Public Engagement, details the manner in which those principles and objectives will be implemented to engage the public during the development of the VSR eligibility study and report.

### 2.1 MESSAGING

An important component of public engagement is informing the public about the nature of the project, including its objectives and possible outcomes and its relationship to forest plan revisions and natural resources management. Another important aspect is the public's role in shaping the VSR eligibility study process and the study results. In order to accomplish this, Region 4 will develop and use consistent messaging.

### 2.2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS

In order to effectively engage the public, the Forest Service will use a variety of activities and tools throughout the VSR eligibility study process. The public participation strategy is structured to emphasize two public engagement periods. The public engagement periods are focused periods of time occurring at important stages in the eligibility study process during which numerous activities and tools for public engagement are employed. Both public engagement periods include the use of follow-up activities and tools designed to inform the public as to how their engagement has shaped the eligibility study process and its results. The public engagement periods correlate with (1) the release of the draft eligibility study process and draft inventory of rivers to be studied, and (2) the draft eligibility report. While the public participation strategy emphasizes the use of these periods, public engagement is not limited to these periods and input is welcome throughout the eligibility study process.

The following table summarizes, in chronological order, the public engagement activities and tools the forest expects to use. **Section 2.3, Description of Public Engagement Activities and Tools**, describes these activities and Tools in detail.

Public Engagement Activity or Tool	Format
<b>First Public Engagement Period</b>	
Newsletter #1 distributed to stakeholder mailing list	Physical mailing and e-mailing; PDF file posted on the project website; social media outreach
Public participation strategy released	PDF file posted online
Release of draft eligibility study process and draft inventory of rivers to be studied for public engagement	PDF file posted online
Fifteen-day opportunity to comment on the draft eligibility study process and draft inventory of rivers to be studied	Multiple
Public meeting	In-person; posters
<b>Follow Up from First Public Engagement Period</b>	
Public notification	E-mailing; social media outreach
Release of public comment report	PDF file posted online
Release of final forest-specific eligibility processes	PDF file posted online
Release of final forest-specific inventories of rivers to be studied	PDF file posted online
<b>Second Public Engagement Period</b>	
Newsletter #2 distributed to stakeholder mailing list	Physical mailing and electronic mailing; PDF file posted online; social media outreach
Release of draft eligibility report for public engagement	PDF file posted online
30-day opportunity to comment on the draft eligibility report	Multiple
Public meeting	In-person; posters
<b>Follow Up from Second Public Engagement Period</b>	
Public notification	E-mailing; social media outreach
Release of public comment report	PDF file posted online
Release of final eligibility report	PDF file posted online

## 2.3 DESCRIPTION OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS

This subsection describes the activities and tools which the Forest expects to use to engage the public and the application of those activities and tools during the WSR eligibility study process.

### Website

The posting of electronic documents to the Forest's website will be the primary means of distributing information to the public. Draft and final versions of the public participation strategy, eligibility study process, inventories of rivers to be studied, eligibility report, project newsletters, and public comment reports will be posted online in a format that complies with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



The draft and final inventories of rivers to be studied will be made into a .kmz file, which can be opened in Google Earth. Users can download the file to review the rivers to be studied in a more interactive manner than from a static map. A similar file will also be made available with the draft and final eligibility reports. It will show the outstandingly remarkable values and preliminary classification of each eligible river.

### ***Newsletters (Paper and Electronic)***

During the first public engagement period, Newsletter #1 will be distributed to potentially interested members of the public, using the Forest's relevant mailing list. The newsletter will be sent in electronic format to individuals or groups on the mailing list who provided an e-mail address. If there is no e-mail address, then a paper copy of the newsletter will be sent.

Newsletter #1 provides general information about the WSR eligibility study project. It also notifies the public that the Forest's eligibility study process and inventory of rivers to be studied have been released for public review and comment.

Newsletter #2 will be used to distribute information and notify the public of the release of the draft eligibility report for review and comment. It will be distributed to individuals and groups from the Newsletter #1 mailing list. It also will go out to any members of the public who requested to join the project mailing list or who submitted a comment during the first public engagement period.

While electronic media, such as websites and e-mail, have become the predominant means of communication, they are not accessible to all members of the public. As such, individuals and groups will have the option to receive hard copies of project notices and updates.

### ***Public Review and Comment Periods/Comment Reports***

During both public engagement periods, the public will have the opportunity to review and comment on the draft eligibility materials. A public comment report will be produced after the conclusion of each public engagement period. These comment reports will be posted on the Forest's website in a Section 508-compliant format. Releasing the comment reports allows members of the public to see that their input was received and how their comments were addressed. Once comment reports are posted on the website, the Forest Service will send an e-mail to those who provided an e-mail address, notifying them that the report is available. Social media can also be used to notify the public of the posting.

### ***Public Meetings***

Public meetings provide a direct opportunity for public engagement and interaction. They provide another opportunity for the public to submit comments and feedback to the Forest Service.

Public meetings will take the format of a public meeting. The Forest Service will document the comments and feedback that it receives at the public meetings via comment cards. These cards will be provided at the public meetings. After the public meetings, Forest Service staff will meet to share and document conversations and feedback that they received from the public. The resulting documentation will be included in the comment report, along with the completed comment cards from the public.

There will be at least one public meeting during each of the two public engagement periods.

Maps at the public meeting(s) will display the administrative boundary of the National Forest, with landownership status, and the inventory of rivers to be studied. Previously studied rivers or those already designated under the WSR Act will be shown in a color different from the inventory of rivers to be studied.

Handouts at the meeting will include the Frequently Asked Questions, Newsletter #1, and comment cards. The PowerPoint presentation will provide information on the WSR Act and eligibility study process.

At the public meeting(s) for the second public engagement period, maps will display the inventory of rivers to be studied and the results of the eligibility study. Handouts at the meeting(s) will include the Frequently Asked Questions,<sup>1</sup> Newsletter #2, and comment cards.

In addition to in-person meetings, a live webinar may be held. The webinar would be interactive and present the same information as the public meetings. The webinar would be recorded and posted on the project website for viewing by interested parties unable to attend the public meetings or live webinar.

### **Social Media**

Another important forum of electronic information exchange is social media. The Forest's collaboration specialist will share social media updates at appropriate junctions during the WSR eligibility studies process. An example of this is the release of a draft document for public review and comment. Anticipated social media platforms are Twitter and Facebook.

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<sup>1</sup>The Frequently Asked Questions handout may be updated throughout the life of this project to incorporate questions that come up during the various public engagement periods.