

PROSPECTUS
SNOWMOBILE OUTFITTING AND GUIDING
IDAHO OUTFITTERS AND GUIDES LICENSING BOARD

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

PAYETTE NATIONAL FOREST
COUNCIL, NEW MEADOWS & WEISER RANGER DISTRICTS
ADAMS & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

2020



PROSPECTUS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW

Introduction

This prospectus is being issued to solicit applications for snowmobile outfitting and guiding services consistent with the Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (hereafter, Forest Plan) and the statutes and rules that govern outfitting and guiding services in the State of Idaho. The decision to authorize these commercial services on Payette National Forest is a result of the Forest-wide Snowmobile Outfitter and Guide Project Final Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) signed in March of 2016 by the Payette National Forest Supervisor, as well as the December 2015 7 Devils Lodge, LLC Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit Reissue and Reinstatement of Summer Activities Categorical Exclusion (CE) documentation and Decision Memo (DM), signed in 2015. 7 Devils Lodge, LLC has subsequently ceased operations on National Forest System (NFS) lands, opening these use days for other outfitters and guides.

Entities wishing to provide these services must simultaneously obtain Special Use Authorizations from the Payette National Forest and appropriate licensing from Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB) in order to comply with regulations governing commercial use of NFS lands and Idaho statutes pertaining to commercial outfitters and guides (see below).

Purpose

The purpose of this solicitation is two-fold:

1. To provide outfitting and guiding services to the public on portions of the Forest that do not currently have any such service providers.
2. To meet a need to provide quality experiences to members of the public who are unfamiliar with winter travel in Payette National Forest or those who lack the confidence or riding skills to operate a snowmobile independently.

As such, this prospectus is issued to solicit applications from anyone interested in providing outfitted and guided trips on lands administered by Payette National Forest within Adams and Washington Counties in Idaho. Specifically, services will be provided in Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) Big Game Hunting Units 32A, 22, and 23.¹ (See Appendix B, *Maps of Use Areas*). Three areas are being offered at this time (Table 1). The number of licenses and permits will not be determined until after all of the application packages are reviewed and will be based on the proposed services offered by applicants in submitted packages.

TABLE 1: OFFERING SUMMARY

Area	Acres	Idaho Fish and Game Units	Service Days*	Ranger District(s)
Area One	181,247	22 and 23	300	Council and New Meadows Ranger Districts
Area Two	112,895	31 and 22	400	Council and Weiser Ranger Districts
Area Three	118,280	32A	500	Council Ranger District

* A "Service Day" is defined as one client on National Forest System lands per day. See Appendix A *Glossary of Terms*.

Prospective outfitters and guides will be issued licenses by the IOGLB and permits by the USFS based on the snowmobile opportunities provided to clients by a commercial operator and the ability of the Forest to provide an optimal mix of outfitted and guided opportunities when all prospective outfitters and guides are considered. Examples of these opportunities include:

¹ Note that nothing in this prospectus pertains to outfitted or guided hunting activity; IDFG Big Game Units are used only because of public familiarity and their centrality in outfitter-guide licensing through the IOGLB.

- Trail riding on groomed system routes within the areas offered
- Off-trail riding of various difficulty levels
- Avalanche awareness education
- Half day or full day trips
- Equipment rental drop (outfitting only)

Prospective applicants are advised to read this package and appendices in its entirety. Appendix E: *Area Information and Visitor Use Information* provides an overview of Payette National Forest, visitor use information, and general information about current and past outfitted snowmobiling use. While this document and appendices offer some descriptive information regarding the area and these commercial opportunities, applicants are responsible for conducting their own in-depth investigations into the economic feasibility of any proposal, gathering information about the three areas, and determining their potential to attract clients for any proposed area/activity. A detailed proposal and business plan is required as part of the submission package. As part of this plan, applicants are strongly encouraged to describe how their business will exhibit professionalism with respect to offering a guided service that will both provide an exceptional public service for clients and provide stewardship of natural resources.

Neither the IOGLB nor the Payette National Forest guarantee a profitable operation to any prospective applicant. Applicants are further advised that the IOGLB Board of Directors and the Authorized Officer will be making determinations based on various selective factors outlined later in this document.

IOGLB and USFS Collaborative Process Overview

This prospectus is a collaborative effort by the IOGLB and Payette national Forest guided by the terms of Memorandum of Understanding (2016) between the two organizations. Under the terms of this prospectus, licenses may be issued to qualified applicants by the IOGLB and special use permits may be issued by Payette National Forest allowing these entities to operate on Payette National Forest lands. Furthermore, entities that are awarded licenses by the IOGLB and permits by the Payette National Forest through this prospectus must employ Designated Agents and Guides. These individuals must then be licensed by the IOGLB Board of Directors before they can provide services on behalf of their employing entity. Proof of this licensing must also be shared with the Payette National Forest.

The term “license” and “licensing” are used interchangeably, and refer to the formal instrument to authorize commercial guiding by the State of Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board. Terms and their definitions as they relate to licensing with the State of Idaho can be found at:

<https://elitepublic.oglb.idaho.gov/OGLBPortal/OGLB/User%20Manuals/User%20Manuals/New%20Outfitter%20Applications.pdf>

In this document and appendices, the terms “special use authorization” and “special use permit” are used interchangeably and both terms refer to the formal instrument used to authorize commercial outfitting and guiding on NFS lands. Additional terms and their definitions related to federal permitting can be found in Appendix A: *Glossary of Terms*.

While the IOGLB and Payette National Forest are collaborating to award successful business entities with licenses and permits, prospective applicants must recognize that each organization operates under their own separate laws, rules and policies. Applicants are advised to review the web links and documents listed throughout this document to further their knowledge regarding these matters, as well as review all attached appendices referenced in this document.

OFFERING

Land Use Area Descriptions

The following describes the three use areas being offered on Payette National Forest. The descriptions for each provide information on the maximum number of service days, facilities or administrative sites that may be used, as well as other characteristics and provisions. (See Appendix B for maps of the specific use areas.)

Area 1: Council and New Meadows Ranger Districts (IDFG Big Game Hunting Units 22 and 23)

In Area 1, 300 service days are available. Public access is most convenient via the Price Valley parking area, though several other access points are used by snowmobile recreationists. Staging areas on state or private lands would need to be secured separately and be consistent with the prospective permittee's IOGLB license. This is independent of and outside of this prospectus. Area 1 provides approximately 181,247 acres of NFS lands, though not all of this provides attractive snowmobiling opportunities. Formerly, 7 Devils Lodge, LLC operated a snowmobile outfitting and guiding service from private lands located in the vicinity of the community of Bear, ID. Permits/licenses are likely to be issued to only a very small number of entities in this area (depending on types proposals received) based on limited amounts of high quality riding available in Area 1.

Area 1 contains a potential network of groomed snowmobile routes in the vicinity of Lost Valley Reservoir, though these are not currently being groomed. Future grooming is dependent on funding through the State.

No assigned sites will be permitted if overnight services are to be offered as a part of the proposal by any applicant. No Forest Service cabins are available for use in this area, therefore, no "on-Forest" overnight use will be permitted in Area 3 at this time, though this could be added to a permit should Smith Mountain Lookout be renovated for public use at a future time (this is proposed under the Huckleberry Landscape Restoration Project Final Environmental Impact Statement, currently pending a Record of Decision). Until such time as this became a reality, any overnight use would need to be located off Forest Service lands. See Appendix B: *Maps of the Proposed Use Areas* for location overview.

Area 2: Council and Weiser Ranger Districts (IDFG Big Game Hunting Units 22 and 31)

In Area Two, 400 service days will be made available for outfitting and guiding. Area 2 is approximately 112,895 acres in size. It offers parking and staging opportunities at the Hornet Park and Pole Creek parking areas. Other staging/parking areas, if needed, on private land and/or state land, would need to be secured, and be on the operators IOGLB license. This is independent of and outside of this prospectus.

Area 2 does not contain any groomed snowmobile routes, nor are any allowed under the Payette National Forest's current snowmobile grooming analysis.

No assigned sites will be permitted, if overnight services are to be offered as a part of the proposal by any applicant. Buck Park Cabin could be used for overnight operations, though this could require significant maintenance expenses in order to keep the site useable through the winter months. Use of this administrative site could only occur outside of its summer-fall, reservation-only use season. Use of this site would be reviewed, and approved, annually through the Operating Plan. See Appendix B, *Maps of Use Areas* for location overview.

Area 3: Council Ranger District (IDFG Big Game Hunting Units 32A)

In Area Three, 500 service days will be made available for outfitting and guiding. Area 3 consists of approximately 118,280 acres of NFS lands. Access and staging areas are available at Mill Creek, Middle Fork Weiser River, and Donnelly Garage parking areas (use of the Donnelly Garage location would necessitate crossing several miles of Boise National Forest, which could be used only for ingress/egress from Payette National Forest lands and where no deviation from the groomed route would be allowed for guided clients). Other staging/parking areas, if needed, on private land and/or state land would need to be secured, and be on the operators Idaho Outfitter and Guide License. This is independent and outside of this proposal. Note that significant inholdings of private land formerly open to the public are located within Payette national Forest boundaries with Area 3. The majority of these lands are currently closed to the public by landowners. However, NFS roads and other public roadways that cross or overlay these lands (some of which contain the groomed trail system) have public easements or right-of-ways in many cases.

Area 3 contains an extensive network of groomed snowmobile routes, maintained by agreement between the USFS and the Valley County Department of Parks and Recreation (all of these routes within Area 3 lie in Adams County, though Valley County is responsible for snow grooming).

No assigned sites will be permitted, if overnight services are to be offered as a part of the proposal by any applicant. No Forest Service cabins are available for use in this area, therefore, no on Forest overnight use would be permitted in Area 3. Any overnight use would need to be located off NFS lands. See Appendix B *Maps of the Proposed Use Area* for location overview.

Provisions for Land Use Applicable All Use Areas

While there is no predetermined limit to the numbers of outfitters and guides that will be awarded authorizations under this prospectus, there are design features and constraints that all operators will have to adhere to in order to minimize impacts from permitted activities. Payette National Forest Plan standards and guidelines, Best Management Practices (BMPs) and project design features will apply to all those operating on the Payette National Forests. These design features are reviewed annually as part of the Operating Plan that is attached to the USFS Permit. (Please note, the USFS Operating Plan attached to a permit is a different document than the Operating Plan required by the IOGLB.) All entities issued permits will also need to adhere to current Forest Orders and any future Forest Orders including orders issued subsequent to receiving a special use permit.

Equipment used by guides or clients is limited to 1,000 lbs. or less in overall weight. Proposals related to use of equipment such as snow cats or involving additional grooming will not be considered.

The size of outfitted/guided groups will be limited to 10 clients.

In accordance with USFS policy, a primary goal of providing for outfitting and guiding services on NFS lands is that these services be available at a reasonable price. Therefore, Payette National Forest will not allow fees that are substantially higher than industry norms for proposed activities in comparable areas of operation.

Please note that the availability of parking/staging areas at all locations during the winter can be a limiting factor, including plowed snowmobile parking areas shown on the maps included in Appendix B. Prospective applicants should be aware of sizes and public use levels at parking areas since nothing in USFS special use permits would provide for exclusive use, prioritization, or reservation of any areas for outfitted or guided parking at any parking location on NFS lands.

Please see Appendix D, *USFS Permit and Land Use Requirements* for additional information specific to the USFS permitting process.

IOGLB LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND USFS PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

As described in the Introduction of this document, the respective organizations collaborating on this prospectus have individual rules and regulations that govern their organizations and activities. The following sections outline requirements as prescribed by the IOGLB and the USFS.

IOGLB Licensing Requirements

All selected applicants will be required to obtain and maintain an IOGLB license. Once issued, state outfitter and designated agent (DA) licenses must be renewed annually with the IOGLB. Guides employed by an Idaho licensed outfitter must reapply annually for a license.

- Individuals or businesses conducting outfitted operations covered by federal permits and an IOGLB license will be required to comply with stipulations, applicable laws and regulations from Federal, State, and County governments. A state license and/or federal permit does not convey rights or privileges to use State or private land or to cross State, private, or public land where formal authorization is not first obtained.
- Outfitters are required to provide public liability insurance and carry a performance bond as required by State and Federal policy, for the respective type of operation, and may be required to provide proof of vehicle liability insurance in some cases.
- IOGLB license holders are required to submit annual activity use reports to each organization.

- An Annual Operating Plan, initiated by the OG-7 and OG-7.1, must be prepared and kept on file by the outfitter prior to issuance of the USFS permit or a State license. This Operating Plan will specifically address all outfitting and guiding services to be provided and must be acceptable to USFS and IOGLB. Please note that the Operating Plan for the IOGLB is different than the Operating Plan that is part of the permit issued by the USFS.
- Submission of a Certified Snowmobile Guide Training Form (OG-16) must be prepared and submitted to the IOGLB.
- Licensed snowmobile guides will be required to adhere to State Rules: IDPA 25 IDPA 25, Title 01, Chapter 01, and specifically Rules 047 and 063. These rules specifically identify qualities and qualifications snowmobile guides must have in order to operate as a licensed snowmobile guide. Table 1 of this document provides a URL/hyperlink to the Idaho Statutes and IDPA rules for applicants to review.
- Application information may be made part of both the State License and USFS special use permit and incorporated with modification into the applicant's operating plan(s). Selection under this prospectus does not constitute approval or finalization of any operating plan or proposal.
- The final operating plans will be subject to modification by the USFS and the applicant with final approval by the USFS and IOGLB.
- An outfitter licensed in this area will not be allowed to sell a business operating in this licensed area for the first three years following licensure, and then only after establishing documented use acceptable to the USFS and IOGLB. Special Use Permits issued by the USFS are not transferrable and are not accountable property to be used in any sale.

USFS Permit Requirements

Applicants that are approved a license by the IOGLB will need to submit additional information for review by the Authorized Officer for the Council and Weiser Ranger Districts before a permit is issued. This includes additional financial documentation, as well as business plans. Other information may also be requested by the USFS before final determinations are made on issuing permits. Please refer to Appendix D, *USFS Permit and Land Use Requirements* for additional information.

There are inherent risks associated with winter activities, including but not limited to avalanches. Therefore, all operators that would offer activities or tours off groomed routes or provide avalanche education and training must have a Level II Avalanche Process & Leadership certified training that is issued through the American Avalanche Association. For more information on this certification, please visit: <http://www.americanavalancheassociation.org/>. Level II qualifications from the American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education or the Canadian Avalanche Association *may* be considered. The operating plan should also address all pertinent safety issues, plans and protocols.

Special Use Permit(s) will be administered according to the terms and conditions outlined in any authorization that is issued to an operator, in accordance with Forest Service policy. A sample special use authorization is available in this package for applicants to review that contains clauses and stipulations common to outfitting and guiding permits on National Forest System lands. (See Appendix C, *Sample Permit and Attachments*) Permit holders and their employees are required to understand and observe all terms and conditions under which they operate, as well as the attachments that are part of the permit

Appendix D, *USFS Permit and Land Use Requirements* also provides an overview documents and other requirements necessary to operating on National Forest System lands.

HOW TO APPLY

Existing Outfitters

- If an applicant currently holds a valid State of Idaho Outfitter license, an Outfitter's Amendment Request (OG-9) must be submitted.

- State of Idaho Land Manager’s Statement (OG-6) marked final and signed by Land Manager(USFS)
- State of Idaho Outfitter Operating Plan (OG-7) and OG 7.1 Supplemental Land
- State of Idaho Outfitter Financial Statement (OG-8)
- State of Idaho Outfitter Document Release form (OG-14)
- State of Idaho Outfitter Certified Snowmobile Guide Training Form (OG-16)
- In addition, copies of other certifications and agreements as specified in the outfitter license application, if applicable to the operation, such as: Training Credentials (if guiding) or Employment Agreements (with licensed guides you intend to hire). Applicants must also submit information addressing the selection criteria.
- Responses to the Selection Criteria.

New Outfitter Applicants

- If an applicant has never held an outfitter license and wants to be a sole proprietor outfitter, they must submit an OG-1 Outfitter’s Application for a Sole Proprietor; if the applicant is a corporation, firm, partnership or other business entity, they must submit an OG-2 Outfitter’s application and an OG-3 Designated Agent application
- State of Idaho Land Manager’s Statement (OG-6) marked final and signed by Land Manager (USFS)
- State of Idaho Outfitter Operating Plan (OG-7) and OG 7.1 Supplemental Land
- State of Idaho Outfitter Financial Statement (OG-8)
- State of Idaho Outfitter Document Release form (OG-14)
- In addition, copies of other certifications and agreements as specified in the outfitter license application, if applicable to the operation, such as: Training Credentials (if guiding) or Employment Agreements (with licensed guides you intend to hire). Applicants must also submit information addressing the selection criteria.

Refer to IOGLB website for the User Manuals for Outfitter Amendments or New Outfitter Applications at <https://elitepublic.oglb.idaho.gov/OGLBPortal/> for additional information. Application forms are also available at this website - select the Licensing Tab then Forms tab. The forms are in .pdf format and can only be printed, and then completed in hard copy. Additional pages can be attached if space provided is inadequate for your answers. If you are unable to download the forms described above, please contact the IOGLB. Forms will be mailed to you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions or additional information regarding licensing and or permitting, or any part of this prospectus, please contact the IOGLB and Payette National Forest at the numbers listed below. We will be happy to assist you in any way we can.

IOGLB	PAYETTE NATIONAL FOREST
IOGLB License Staff - Lori Thomason Office Supervisor Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board 1365 N. Orchard, Room 172, Boise, ID 83706 E-mail: licensing@oglb.idaho.gov Phone: (208) 327-7380 Business Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday	Jascha Zeitlin Recreation Specialist Council and Weiser Ranger Districts 851 E. 9 th Street. Weiser, ID 83672 Business Hours: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday E-mail: jascha.zeitlin@usda.gov Phone: (208) 549-4224 -OR- Ronda Bishop (Authorized Officer)

	<p>Council and Weiser District Ranger 2092 Hwy 95 Council, ID 83612</p> <p>E-mail: ronda.bishop@usda.gov Phone: (208) 253-0101 Business Hours: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday</p>
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SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Please send your complete original application materials (along with seven copies) and fees to the following address:

**WEISER RANGER DISTRICT
PAYETTE NATIONAL FOREST
ATTN: JASCHA ZEITLIN
851 EAST 9TH STREET
WEISER, ID 83672**

- Applications and all materials must be received no later than August 31, 2020 by 4:30 pm, MST. Postmarks will not be accepted.
- For applicants submitting checks for processing fees, please make payment to the *Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board*.
- Due to the nature of required signatures and supplemental information requested in the application packet, e-mail applications will not be accepted.
- Eight application packets (1 original plus seven copies) must be submitted. Materials *will not* be returned to applicants. Please make a copy of your application package for yourself.

PROCESSING FEES AND PAYMENT TO THE IOGLB

The following describes the process for existing outfitters and new outfitter applicants.

- The Prospectus application fee for existing outfitters is \$200. Credit card information (Visa or Mastercard only) is to be provided on the original OG-9 Outfitter’s Amendment Request form. Checks are also an acceptable method of payment. *Regardless of whether or not an applicant is awarded use the fee is nonrefundable.*
- The Prospectus application fee for a new outfitter applicant is \$400. If the applicant is a business entity, there will also be a \$50 Designated Agent application fee required. Credit card information (Visa or Mastercard only) is to be provided on the original application form. Checks are also an acceptable method of payment. **Regardless of whether or not an applicant is awarded use the fee is nonrefundable.** Make checks out to the *Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board*.
- Incomplete or illegible applications will NOT be processed.
- Material(s) submitted with applications will not be returned to the sender.

SELECTION AND AWARD

Summary of the selection and award process is as follows:

- Further information may be requested following the initial application. Should the review panel or the Board decide to interview the applicants they will be notified.
- The IOGLB and USFS will evaluate the applications based on information submitted by the applicants. Applicants may be required to be interviewed by the IOGLB with USFS input to jointly determine the preferred applicant. The IOGLB will issue a final license approval and the USFS will issue a Special Use Outfitter and Guide Permit.
- The goal of the application process is to select an applicant whose proposal and experience best meets the public need. The selected applicant will be, in the judgment of the IOGLB and USFS, that individual or business best qualified to operate and provide these public services based on, but not limited to, evidence submitted in the application.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation Criteria can be found on the IOGLB web site at:

[https://elitepublic.oglb.idaho.gov/OGLBPortal/OGLB/Statutes%20and%20Rules/Statutes%20and%20Rules/Rules%20of%20the%20IOGLB%20\(2019\).pdf](https://elitepublic.oglb.idaho.gov/OGLBPortal/OGLB/Statutes%20and%20Rules/Statutes%20and%20Rules/Rules%20of%20the%20IOGLB%20(2019).pdf) in IDAPA 25.01.01.021 and in Forest Service Manual 2712.2. *Generally*, the responses to the selection criteria below, as submitted by the applicant, is what is used to evaluate and select operators. The applicant must supply a detailed operating plan as indicated on the appropriate forms OG – 7 Master, OG- 7.1. Applicants are encouraged to provide as much information as possible in order for proper evaluation. Additional information may be requested.

Evaluation Criteria

The IOGLB and USFS evaluation panel will evaluate each application package using the following selection criteria. :

1. **Operating Plan.** Kind and quality of service proposed in terms of meeting public need as identified in the Operating Plan proposal.
2. **Business Plan.** Outline of the stages of starting and managing your business. Development of business goals and how you intend to reach them.
3. **Experience and References.** Experience and qualifications in operating snowmobile outfitting and guiding services and/or experience in related fields. This will include the business experience, references, and evaluation of past performance information.
4. **Financial Information.** Financial capability and/or backing of the applicant to perform the required services.
5. **Fees Charged to the Public.** Fees charged to the public for the first three years.

The Forest Service may conduct a Financial Ability Determination (FAD) on the selected applicant(s) as a prerequisite to issuing a special use permit, unless the Forest Service has conducted a FAD on the applicant within the past year. Additionally, the selected applicant may be responsible for the cost of preparing and issuing the permit and conducting a Financial Ability Determination (FAD). Instructions and associated forms FS-6500-24 and FS-6500-25 are located in Appendix F. The appropriate financial institution must complete blocks 6 through 15 of form FS-6500-25 and mail the completed form directly to the Forest Service. When/if directed by Payette National Forest, the selected applicant(s) will be required to send these forms to: *USDA Forest Service, Albuquerque Service Center, Attention: Budget and Finance, 101 Sun Avenue Northeast, Albuquerque, NM 87109.*

The Forest Service reserves the right to rescind the prospectus at any time before a special use permit is issued. If the Forest Service rescinds the prospectus, application fees will be returned.

TABLE 3: ATTACHED APPENDICES

Appendix	Title
A	Glossary of Terms

B	Maps of Proposed Use Areas
C	Sample Special Use Permit Trip Itinerary Form Estimated Use Form Actual Use Form Performance Evaluations for Region 4 of the USFS
D	USFS Permit and Land Use Requirements
E	Area Information and Visitor Use Information
F	Required Information for Financial Ability Determinations (FAD)