

# Special Areas

## Analysis Area

The analysis area for special areas is the NFS lands of the IPNF and KNF that have special designations of special interest area (SIA), research natural area (RNA), or experimental forest.

## Conditions and Trends

The special areas discussed in this section are comprised of special interest areas (SIA), research natural areas (RNA), and experimental forests. These areas designated as special areas owing to their unique or special characteristics. These areas are not congressionally designated, but are designated by the Chief of the Forest Service, Regional Forester, or Forest Supervisor. They are designated under the Proposed Land Management Plan as:

<u>Management Area (MA)</u>	<u>Designation</u>
MA3	Special Interest Areas
MA4a	Experimental Forests
MA4b	Research Natural Areas

Forest Service Manual (FSM) and Handbook (FSH) direction provides guidance on designating and managing these special areas. Direction on designation and management of SIAs is found in FSM 2372, RNAs in FSM 4063, and Experimental Forests in FSM 4062.

## Special Interest Areas (SIAs)

Special Interest Areas are managed with emphasis on protecting and/or enhancing areas of unusual characteristics and to maintain their special interest values. The following are Special Interest Area designations, depending on their special characteristics or unique value(s):

**Aquatic (AQU)** – a unit of land that contains unique or outstanding water features that provide function, process, and habitat for the living organisms within its realm.

**Botanical (BOT)** – a unit of land that contains plant specimens, plant groups, or plant communities that are significant because of their occurrence, habitat, location, life history, ecology, rarity, or other features.

**Ecological (ECO)** – a unit of land that displays the special characteristics between biotic and abiotic components of the landscape.

**Geological (GA)** – a unit of land with outstanding formations or unique geological features of the earth's development.

**Heritage Resource (HR)** – a unit of land possessing a significant site or a concentration of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or prehistorically by plan or physical development.

**Pioneer Area (PA)** – a unit of land that is recognized for its unroaded, scenic, recreational, wildlife, and watershed values intended to provide a primitive recreation experience and maintain an undeveloped setting.

**Recreational (REC)**– a unit of land that has been administratively designated for particular recreation opportunities or activities such as hiking, rock hounding, recreational mining, viewing, or other special activity.

**Scenic (SA)** – a unit of land with outstanding natural beauty that requires special management to preserve this beauty.

**Traditional Cultural (TC)** – a unit of land associated with the traditional beliefs of an American Indian Tribe in relation to its origins, cultural history, or the nature of the world; where American Indian religious practitioners have historically gone, and are known to go today, to perform ceremonial activities in accordance with traditional cultural rules of practice; where an American Indian community has traditionally carried out economic, artistic, or other cultural practices important in maintaining its historic identity.

**Zoological (ZOO)** – a unit of land that contains animal specimens, animal groups, or animal communities that are significant because of their occurrence, habitat, location, life history, rarity, or other features.

Designations can also be made to protect and/or manage areas as a result of:

- threatened, endangered, and sensitive species and other elements of biological diversity
- their spiritual and scenic values
- public popularity
- recreational opportunities/activities
- significant geological features

Many of the areas have more than one feature type and their sizes vary from small sites to large acreages.

Currently there are 44 established SIAs within the KIPZ, with nine designations occurring in the IPNF and 35 in the KNF. The Proposed Land Management Plan (the Plan) identifies an additional four SIAs and expansion of four established SIAs in the IPNF and an additional 55 SIAs and the expansion of three established SIAs in the KNF. The establishment of additional SIAs under the Plan will assist in protecting those values for which the SIAs area designated. Tables S-1 and S-2 display the established and proposed SIAs, their type of designation, and acreage for each Forest. Refer to Appendix L of the Comprehensive Evaluation Report for descriptions and maps of each of these areas.

**Table S-1 Special Interest Areas in the IPNF**

SIA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres	SIA Type
Copper Falls	Lower Kootenai	Bonnors Ferry	40		Geological
Hanna Flats Botanical Area	Priest	Priest Lake	16		Botanical
Hobo Cedar Grove Botanical Area	St. Joe	St. Joe	232	453	Botanical
Mallard Larkins Pioneer Area	St. Joe	St. Joe	13,948	9,004	Pioneer
Northwest Peaks Scenic Area	Lower Kootenai	Bonnors Ferry	1,972	2,639	Scenic
Roosevelt Grove of Ancient Cedars Scenic Area	Priest	Priest Lake	139	115	Scenic/ Botanical

SIA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres	SIA Type
Sandhouse Cedar Grove	St. Joe	St. Joe	120		Botanical
Settlers Grove of Ancient Cedars Botanical Area	Coeur d'Alene	Coeur d'Alene River	182		Botanical
Upper Priest Lake Scenic Area	Priest	Priest Lake	4,809		Scenic
Bath Creek Gorge	Priest	Priest Lake		254	Geological
Emerald Creek	St. Joe	St. Joe		2,350	Recreational
Huff Lake	Priest	Priest Lake		70	Botanical
Upper Priest River Botanical Area	Priest	Priest Lake		5,096	Botanical
<b>Total SIA Acres</b>			<b>21,458</b>	<b>19,981</b>	

Table S-2 Special Interest Areas in the KNF

SIA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres	SIA Type
Barnum Wetland	Fisher	Libby	199		Botanical/Aquatic
Berray Cedars	Clark	Cabinet	47		Botanical
Bitterroot Point	Libby	Libby	126		Botanical/ Traditional, Cultural
Boyd Mill	Yaak	Three Rivers	125		Ecological
Clay Mountain	Yaak	Three Rivers	21		Botanical
Devil Gap	Clark	Cabinet	831		Geological
Fortine Creek Meadows	Tobacco	Fortine	37		Botanical/ Ecological
French Creek Fen	Yaak	Three Rivers	37		Botanical
Hamilton Gorge	Tobacco	Fortine	144		Geological
Hidden Lake	Tobacco	Fortine	607		Botanical/Aquatic
Kelsey Creek	Yaak	Three Rivers	17	36	Botanical
Kerr Meadows	Tobacco	Fortine	58		Aquatic/Botanical
Kilbrennan Lake	Yaak	Three Rivers	56		Botanical
Kootenai Falls	Bull/Libby	Three Rivers/ Libby	420		Traditional, Cultural/Heritage
Lower Brimstone	Tobacco	Fortine	39		Botanical
Lower Sunday Creek Ecosystem	Tobacco	Fortine	150		Ecological/ Traditional, Cultural
Lower West Fork Yaak Falls	Yaak	Three Rivers	274		Traditional, Cultural/Geological
Magnesia Fen	Tobacco	Fortine	12		Aquatic/Botanical
Napi Knob	Tobacco	Fortine	18		Botanical
North End Alkali Ecosystem	Tobacco	Fortine	23		Ecological
Northwest Peaks Scenic Area	Yaak	Three Rivers	4,714	8,533	Scenic

SIA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres	SIA Type
Pete Creek	Yaak	Three Rivers	320		Botanical
Rexford Hoodoos	Tobacco	Rexford	73		Geological
Rocky Fivemile Forest	Tobacco	Fortine	160		Ecological
Ross Creek Scenic Area	Bull	Three Rivers	101		Scenic/Traditional, Cultural
Spread Otis Creeks	Yaak	Three Rivers	381		Botanical
Star Canyon	Bull	Three Rivers	81		Geological
Sterling Forest	Tobacco	Fortine	127		Ecological/ Botanical
Swamp Mountain Meadows	Tobacco	Fortine	34		Botanical
Ten Lakes Scenic Area	Tobacco	Fortine	6,542	54,279	Scenic
Tenmile Talus	Koocanusa	Rexford	390		Geological
Upper Big Creek Riparian Ecosystem	Koocanusa/ Libby	Rexford/ Libby	2,966		Ecological
White Creek Fen	Tobacco	Fortine	14		Botanical
Wood Creek Larch	Yaak	Three Rivers	115		Scenic
Yahk Mining District	Yaak	Three Rivers	456		Heritage
494 Road Bedrock Meadow	Tobacco	Fortine		35	Botanical
Bad Medicine	Bull	Three Rivers		1,937	Zoological/ Traditional, Cultural
Baree Creek	Fisher	Libby		57	Traditional, Cultural
Barron Creek	Koocanusa	Rexford		326	Traditional, Cultural
Big Creek Face	Koocanusa	Rexford		327	Traditional, Cultural
Blacktail Wallows	Yaak	Three Rivers		144	Aquatic/Botanical
Bristow Creek	Koocanusa	Libby		18	Botanical
Callahan Historic Mining & Logging District	Bull	Three Rivers		1,689	Heritage
Canyon Falls	Bull	Libby		33	Geological
Caribou Creek	Yaak	Three Rivers		107	Botanical
Cheer Creek	Bull	Three Rivers		67	Botanical
Chicago Peak	Clark	Cabinet		278	Traditional, Cultural
Cody Lakes	Fisher	Libby		41	Aquatic/Zoological
Drop Creek Fen	Koocanusa	Rexford		25	Aquatic/Botanical
East Fork Bull River	Clark	Cabinet		109	Botanical
East Fork Pipe Creek	Libby	Libby		1,118	Geological

SIA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres	SIA Type
Fairway Falls	Bull	Three Rivers		40	Aquatic/Geological
Falls Creek	Bull	Three Rivers		42	Scenic
Fivemile	Koocanusa	Libby		80	Traditional, Cultural
Flower Lake	Libby	Libby		13	Aquatic/Botanical
French Creek Cedars	Yaak	Three Rivers		131	Botanical
Gateway Prairie	Tobacco	Rexford		2,137	Ecological
Geiger Lakes	Fisher	Libby		577	Traditional, Cultural
Halverson Face	Bull	Three Rivers		47	Botanical
Kenelty Caves	Fisher	Libby		87	Geological
Kootenai Mountain	Libby	Three Rivers		217	Traditional, Cultural
Libby Creek Gold Panning	Libby	Libby		156	Recreational
Little North Fork Falls	Koocanusa	Rexford		6	Recreational/Traditional, Cultural
Lost Horse Fen	Yaak	Three Rivers		308	Aquatic/Botanical
Lower Bristow	Koocanusa	Libby		371	Traditional, Cultural
Lower Stone Hill	Koocanusa	Rexford		81	Traditional, Cultural
McKillop Fen	Fisher	Libby		28	Aquatic
North Fork Keeler	Bull	Three Rivers		95	Aquatic/Botanical
North/Middle/South Forks Bull River	Clark	Cabinet		215	Botanical
Pinkham Falls	Koocanusa	Rexford		21	Traditional, Cultural/Geological
Pipe Ridge	Libby	Libby		30	Botanical
Purcell Summit Fen	Yaak	Three Rivers		76	Aquatic
Rainbow Lake	Libby	Libby		167	Aquatic
Rock Creek Meadows	Clark	Cabinet		186	Aquatic
Ross Falls	Bull	Three Rivers		44	Traditional, Cultural/Geological
Silver Butte Mountain	Fisher	Libby		170	Traditional, Cultural
Skid Creek Fen	Koocanusa	Rexford		79	Aquatic/Botanical
Smeads Bench	Clark	Cabinet		68	Aquatic
Spar Creek Cedars	Bull	Three Rivers		74	Botanical
Spar Springs	Bull	Three Rivers		196	Aquatic
Spruce Mountain Rockfall	Bull	Three Rivers		49	Geological
Stone Hill	Koocanusa	Rexford		760	Recreational/Geological
Sutton Falls	Koocanusa	Rexford		113	Traditional, Cultural/Geological

SIA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres	SIA Type
Tenmile Falls	Koocanusa	Rexford		187	Traditional, Cultural/Geological
Tepee Lake	Libby	Libby		46	Aquatic/Botanical
Vermilion Falls	Clark	Cabinet		99	Recreational/Traditional, Cultural
Vinal Lake	Yaak	Three Rivers		83	Traditional, Cultural/Aquatic
West Pipe	Libby	Libby		17	Botanical
Winkum Creek	Yaak	Three Rivers		80	Botanical
Yaak Falls	Yaak	Three Rivers		44	Traditional, Cultural/Recreational
<b>Total SIA Acres</b>			<b>19,715</b>	<b>76,379</b>	

## Research Natural Areas (RNAs)

Research Natural Areas (RNAs) are part of a national network of ecological areas designated in perpetuity for research and education and/or to maintain biological diversity on NFS lands. These areas are for nonmanipulative research, observation, and study. Most of the RNAs protect either outstanding examples of late successional plant communities; or pristine examples of plant communities that are relatively rare; or unusual complexes of plant communities in very good condition. They also may assist in implementing provisions of special Acts, such as the Endangered Species Act and the monitoring provisions of the National Forest Management Act. *The prime consideration in managing RNAs is maintenance of unmodified conditions and natural processes.*

The general provisions of the Organic Administrative Act of 1897 (16 USC 551) authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to designate RNAs. Under regulations at 7CFR 2.42, the Secretary has delegated this authority to the Chief of the Forest Service, who, pursuant to 36 CFR 251.223 selects and establishes RNAs as part of the continuing land and resource management planning process for National Forest System lands (36 CFR 219.25 and FSM 1922). The Forest Service Manual FSM 4063 provides specific direction concerning RNA management. The selection and establishment of RNAs within the National Forest System primarily emerges from continuing land and resource management planning and associated environmental analyses.

Currently, there are 28 RNAs established within the KIPZ, with 20 in the IPNF and eight in the KNF. The Proposed Land Management Plan identifies five additional RNAs in the Zone, with two in the IPNF and three in the KNF. The establishment of additional RNAs under the Plan will assist in the protection of the research values of these areas. Table S-3 and S-4, below, list the established and proposed RNAs for each Forest. See Appendix L of the CER for descriptions and maps of each of these areas.

**Table S-3 Established and Proposed RNAs on the IPNF**

RNA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres
Binarch Creek	Priest	Priest Lake	653	
Bottle Creek	Priest	Priest Lake	258	
Canyon Creek	Priest	Priest Lake	895	
Five Lakes Butte	St. Joe	St. Joe	325	
Hunt Girl Creek	Lower Kootenai	Bonnors Ferry	1,426	
Kaniksu Marsh	Priest	Priest Lake	172	
Montford Creek	Coeur d'Alene	Coeur d'Alene R	299	
Pond Peak	Coeur d'Alene	Coeur d'Alene R	269	
Potholes	Priest	Priest Lake	305	
Red Horse Mountain	Coeur d'Alene	Coeur d'Alene R		1,274
Round Top Mountain	Priest	Priest Lake	96	
Scotchman #2	Pend Oreille	Sandpoint	1,312	
Smith Creek	Lower Kootenai	Bonnors Ferry	1,248	
Snowy Top	Priest	Priest Lake	845	
Spion Kop	Coeur d'Alene	Coeur d'Alene R	480	
Tepee Creek	Priest	Priest Lake	613	
Therault Lake	St. Joe	St. Joe	111	45
Three Ponds	Lower Kootenai	Bonnors Ferry	243	
Upper Fishhook	St. Joe	St. Joe	319	
Upper Priest River	Priest	Priest Lake		1,351
Upper Shoshone Creek	Coeur d'Alene	Coeur d'Alene R	1,306	
Wellner Cliffs	Priest	Priest Lake	305	
<b>Total RNA Acres</b>			<b>11,480</b>	<b>2,670</b>

**Table S-4 Established and Proposed RNAs in the KNF**

RNA Name	GA Name	District	Established Acres	Proposed Acres
Big Creek	Koocanusa	Rexford	178	
Doonan Peak	Bull	Three Rivers		504
Hoskins Lake	Yaak	Three Rivers	376	
Huson Peak	Yaak / Libby	Libby		731
LeBeau	Tobacco	Fortine	411	
Lower Ross Creek	Bull	Three Rivers	1,874	
Norman Parmenter	Libby	Libby	1,289	
Pete Creek Meadows	Yaak	Three Rivers	153	
Seven Point Genetical	Clark	Cabinet		1,991
Ulm Peak	Clark	Cabinet	689	
Wolf Weigel	Fisher	Libby	240	
<b>Total RNA Acres</b>			<b>5,210</b>	<b>3,226</b>

## Experimental Forests

Experimental Forests are designated for manipulative research that serves as a basis for the management of forests and rangelands. The general provisions of the Organic Administration Act of 1897 (16 USC 551) and the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resource Research Act of 1978 (16USC1643) authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to designate experimental forest and ranges. Under regulations at 7 CFR 2.60(a), the Secretary of Agriculture has delegated this authority to the Chief. Forest Service Manual FSM 4062 provides specific direction concerning experimental forest management.

There are currently two Experimental Forests within the KIPZ planning area, both are in the Idaho Panhandle NF. No additional experimental forests have been proposed in the KIPZ in the Land Management Plan. Table S-5, below, provides a list of the current experimental forests. Refer to Appendix L of the CER for descriptions and maps of each of these areas.

**Table S-5 Experimental Forests in the IPNF**

<b>Experimental Forest</b>	<b>GA Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Priest River Experimental Forest	Priest	Priest Lake	6,200
Deception Creek Experimental Forest	Coeur d'Alene	Coeur d'Alene	3,500