



Summary of Public Comments and Public Involvement

We would like to take this opportunity to provide you with a brief summary of where we've been and where we're heading in regards to how you've been involved, how we're using your comments, and how we will continue to involve you and utilize your comments in developing our revised Forest Plans.

From April 30, 2002 to May 31, 2004, we had extensive involvement from many of you, through comments that were submitted during the scoping process and through the workgroups work on Geographic Area Desired Conditions. The Revision Team carefully reviewed all of the public comments and workgroup input, summarized and considered it in development of components of the draft Forest Plans. The review of all public input has resulted in many products, including:

- What We Heard From Workgroups- comments that focused on Desired Condition (attached to this page)
- Scoping Comment Summary (Scoping Content Analysis and Summary Document – at www.fs.fed.us/kipz)
- Complete Summary of Workgroup comments (available upon request)

Your input validated the seven revision topics identified in the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS), and provided information for desired conditions and other components of the Forest Plan. The attached document is a summary, which reflects workgroup and other public comments that were specific to Desired Conditions on each Forest and/or Geographic Area. As part of the Forest Plan components, a summary of our public involvement activities, as well as how the team and the decision-makers considered these comments will be developed.

On May 12, 2005, our planning process changed when the Regional Forester made a decision for our two Forests to use the new 2005 Planning Rule. What didn't change is that all of your comments and hard work by the workgroups over the past two years is still helpful to us in developing the components of the revised Forest Plans. Workgroup input, as well as public, agency, and tribal comments, will continue to be used by the Forest Supervisors and the KIPZ team to build and refine the following plan new components:

- Desired Conditions
- Strategy, which includes the Objectives
- Design Criteria, which includes the Guidelines
- Special areas and Suitable Uses

We cannot thank you, the public, enough for your extensive participation in making the past efforts a wonderful example of collaboration. In fact, the willingness of all participants (workgroups, public and the KIPZ Team) to be communicative, responsive, and to promote an active exchange of information, desires, and ideas has brought us to these meetings where we can start talking about the Starting Option map. We hope you will continue to work with us!



DESIRED CONDITIONS SUMMARY

PRIEST GEOGRAPHIC AREA WORKGROUP

From August 2003 through May 2004, there were Workgroup meetings in which people discussed their Desired Conditions for a specific Geographic Area or the Forest. The attached Summary:

- **ONLY** reflects the workgroup comments and letters received during the scoping period that were specific to Desired Conditions on each Forest and/or Geographic Area.
- Is **NOT** a draft of the Desired Condition statements for the revised Forest Plans. This Summary is one source of information the team is using to write the Desired Conditions, both at the Forest and Geographic Area levels. We are using other information to help write the Desired Conditions (ie. Starting Option map after the public has submitted changes; specialists on-the-ground knowledge; and laws, regulations and policies we must adhere to)
- Is **one piece** of our Content Analysis of the scoping and workgroup comments. Some of the comments submitted during the Workgroup meetings and public comment process that are not addressed in the attached summary have been addressed in one or more of the following ways:
 - Incorporated into the following management direction areas: goals, objectives, guidelines, management areas/suitability, special areas, and starting option.
 - May be analyzed at the site-specific project level, where appropriate. Some comment address topics that are outside the scope of the Forest Plan revision process but that are still a Forest Service issue. However through the Forest Plan process, Management Area (MA) allocation and/or direction may or may not allow consideration of this opportunity. For example, Forest Plans will classify all National Forest System (NFS) lands as either suitable for motorized or non-motorized uses for both summer and winter seasons. Through subsequent Travel Management planning and public involvement, decisions will be made regarding individual road and trail management.
 - Addressed by laws, regulations or National and Regional Forest Service policies and are not repeated in the Forest Plan. Other comments are outside Forest Service authority and/or outside the scope of Forest Plan Revision.
- Reflects **areas of general agreement**, where possible, regarding Desired Condition statements. This does not mean these statements reflect consensus on any particular issue as this was not the goal of these meetings and it also was not a voting exercise. They simply identify areas of discussion in which general agreement occurred between the participants that attended that particular meeting.
 - IPNFs workgroups used a process called the Nominal Group Technique to help participants determine areas of general agreement within the revision topics.
 - KNF workgroups did not use this process but some workgroups did reach general agreement on some of the revision topics. However, some of the revision topics in some of the workgroups only reflect a range of desires for management.
- Consists of some Desired Condition statements that are “how to” statements instead of reflecting the condition that the group wants to see on the land or resource conditions. For example, the comment focuses on what silviculture treatments the Forest Service should use, what road improvement activities the Forest Service should implement, etc. The “how to” statements will not be included in the Desired Condition statements in the Revised Forest Plans. In general, the Forest Plan will emphasize what the Desired Condition is and leave it to project implementation to determine the appropriate tools to use to move the area toward the Desired Condition.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE Priest Geographic Area (GA) Workgroup

REVISION TOPIC – VEGETATION

Desired condition is to have an accessible, productive, healthy forest with balanced structure and diverse native species composition. Tools available to achieve this desired condition include, but are not limited to timber management; prescribed fire; fire use, noxious weed treatment, and public awareness/education programs. An emphasis on improving watershed function, improving terrestrial and aquatic habitat, removal of off-site ponderosa pine, current inventory of noxious weed populations, and management action to control and reduce spread (e.g., including equipment washing stations, use weed-free products for restoration and stock fee, Forest user weed education).

REVISION TOPIC – FIRE

Desired condition includes a forest trend toward a more fire-adapted stand composition while maintaining reasonable access (roads and trails) for fire suppression and evacuation (community and general). Specifically within:

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

Management activities should include educational information and fuel reduction activities near homes to reduce fire risk.

Wildland Fire Use Areas (WFUA)

Utilize natural fire to achieve desired vegetation conditions in the Salmo Priest Wilderness area.

General Forest Areas

Management activities should include development of a wildland fire use plan and fire planning on an ecosystem scale (e.g., Colville, British Columbia and Priest.)

Community Evacuation Routes

Consider access needs and fuel reduction activities for community evacuation routes. The Highway 57 corridor is a priority. Other routes to consider include Metaline Falls plus continuing to Bonners Ferry, FS 308 Road to LeClerc Creek, Bear Paw, Eastside, and Squaw Valley.

REVISION TOPIC – TIMBER PRODUCTION

Desired condition is to use timber harvest as a tool to achieve many long-term ecological and social objectives including healthy forest composition and structure; reduced fire risk; sustainable utilization of wood resources and economic stability; improved habitats and water quality; maintenance of existing roads; and to provide funds for watershed improvement activities. Specific priorities for the Priest GA included sustainable timber harvest, timely salvage harvest, protecting vegetative and aquatic habitat, protection of soil resource, and preserving the area for public uses.

REVISION TOPIC – WATERSHEDS AND AQUATIC SPECIES

Desired condition addresses two major issues **Watershed Restoration (to include water quality/quantity and soil productivity)** and **Fisheries**.

Specific **Watershed Restoration** and **Fisheries** desires for the Priest GA include:

- Restore entire Priest River basin and general watershed resilience.
- Meet and/or exceed Clean Water Act and state standards and emphasize streams with ESA concerns.

- Prioritize stream recovery for maximum benefit.
- Emphasize stream maintenance and in-channel restoration.
- Consider methods of reducing hydrologic effects of roads (e.g., culverts, waterflow concentrations, sediments, invasive species and chemicals).
- Minimize effects of timber harvest activities on watershed restoration efforts.
- Recognize complex interaction of all animals in watersheds.
- All species managed toward carrying capacity for strong reproducing populations.
- Utilize precautionary principle when reviewing non-native impacts.
- Do not introduce new non-native species and promote native (not non-native) over the long term.
- If native species do not thrive in an area, manage non-native species where they are not detrimental.
- Broaden Forest-wide Goal 1b to include “all aquatic life forms.”

REVISION TOPIC – IRAs AND PROPOSED WILDERNESS AREAS

Desired condition for management of Inventoried Roadless Areas includes:

Management of IRAs Not Proposed for Wilderness Designation

Management should include winter motorized use of Selkirk Crest, not including current closures, and management as general forest without limiting snowmobile trail areas. Do not consider areas for roadless if they have historically contained roads/abandoned roads. Manage IRAs at the local level. Control noxious weed invasion by all forest uses and users. Minimize impacts of emergency and administrative entry into IRAs (e.g., border patrol).

Management of Proposed Wilderness Areas

Management should include designation of Salmo Priest as proposed wilderness area. Maintain access on Metaline Falls-Nordman Road and do not limit snowmobile use in proposed wilderness areas. Do not propose any additional areas for wilderness designation in north Idaho. Management should include all types of activities (e.g., harvest, recreation, border enforcement, and fire suppression) until final wilderness determination is made.

REVISION TOPIC – ACCESS AND RECREATION

NOTE: It is important to note that the revised Forest Plan will classify all National Forest System (NFS) lands as either suitable for motorized uses or suitable for non-motorized uses for both summer and winter seasons. The Forest Plan will not make individual road and trail decisions. Travel Management Plans and project level planning will make individual roads and trails decisions. Travel management plans will be based, in part, on information in the Forest Plans, specifically: (1) the motorized/non-motorized designations found in the Management Areas, and (2) the desired conditions for the Geographic Areas. These two items from the Forest Plan will be the foundation of the Travel Management Plan.

General Access and Recreation (includes general summer and winter uses (directly below) and summer/winter motorized uses, and summer/winter non-motorized uses) desired conditions include the following:

- Maintain summer and winter motorized/non-motorized road and trail access on NFS lands in the Priest GA for well-being of local economies, recreation, and sustainable use.
- Provide clarity regarding seasonal wildlife protection closures and area restrictions.
- Achieve a range of access opportunities for a variety of user groups and experience levels.
- Seasonal review of closures related to T&E species.
- Administrative access behind closed areas and locked gates to include border patrol.
- Maintain current use levels as described in current Forest Plan.
- Include human recreation use in the effects analysis of the forest.
- Recognize Recreation Fee Enhancement (ie. Fee Demo) as a source of recreation funding.
- Include non-motorized uses in caribou closures.
- Recognize recreation as renewable resource.

- Provide adequate recreation facilities to protect sensitive forest resources.
- Use sound rationale and public involvement when closing areas to motorized uses/users.
- Allow motorized access to upper elevations for physically challenged and elderly forest users.
- Recognize differences between types of motors (combustion vs. electric).
- Consider access need for seniors and disabled.
- Meet grizzly bear standards prior to making decisions regarding motorized use.

Summer Motorized

Desired condition for summer motorized access includes public and administrative access and protecting evacuation routes.

Winter Motorized

Desired condition for winter motorized access includes ensuring winter access if summer access has been restricted and brush removal on all designated snowmobile routes.

Summer Non-motorized

Desired condition for summer non-motorized access includes improving and maintaining mountain bike, hiker and stock trails; and retaining historic stock/pack trails.

Winter Non-motorized

Desired condition for winter non-motorized access includes increasing non-motorized winter trails around Priest Lake without fragmenting or impairing motorized trails.

Motorized, Wheeled Cross-Country Travel

Desired condition for motorized, wheeled cross-country access includes limiting motorized, wheeled cross-country travel to roads and trails. This will go into effect after site-specific NEPA analysis is completed through the Travel Management Plan. Exceptions to be considered in the Travel Plan include: (1) game retrieval, and (2) potential designation of specific areas for motorized cross-country travel off of routes.

Specifically:

- Allow motorized, wheeled cross-country travel unless specific reason exists to restrict.
- Utilize best available science in relation to restricting access in wildlife habitat areas.

Dispersed Recreation Sites/Developed Recreation Facilities

Desired condition for dispersed recreation opportunities is for maintaining and/or improving current access and recreation opportunities, improving on-site sanitation facilities, and protecting natural resources. Increase and maintain day-use sites. Maintain current level of dispersed recreation sites. Maintain Forest Service staffing and presence in Priest Lake especially during seasonal use months. Complete (if necessary) capacity analysis of recreation sites and manage within those findings.

Special Forest Products

Desired condition for special forest products is for maintaining current level of use. Provide special motorized access for handicap individuals in specific locations (e.g., berry picking, etc.). Maintain same open roads during fall hunting season as are open during the summer. Develop monitoring plan for special forest products to include economic value and harvests.

REVISION TOPIC – WILDLIFE

Desired condition addresses both **wildlife habitat** and **access**.

Specific **wildlife habitat** concerns include managing vegetation within its historic range of variability (HRV) for both habitat and security needs; recognize role of natural selection; monitoring habitats and populations; no introductions of non-native species; restoring and maintaining T&E habitat; ecological implications of species extinction; and developing and maintaining habitat linkages and corridors. Vegetation management tools for these purposes include, but are not limited to thinning, integrated

timber management practices, fuels reduction, prescribed burning, noxious weed control and use of best available science.

- More public information regarding designation of T&E habitat and recovery targets.
- Consider adverse effects of recovery habitat designations on existing wildlife populations.
- MIS and focal species should be representative of current habitat and relevant to desired forest conditions.
- Wildlife and its habitat play an important role in the social, cultural, and economic values of the Priest GA.
- Design roads to be compatible with beavers.
- Encourage common loon nesting.
- Discourage radio-collaring resident caribou (stress of animal).

Specific **access** concerns include providing recreational opportunities (motorized, non-motorized and Special Forest Products uses) while protecting habitat and security. Management tools to accomplish this may include short-term and/or seasonal closures and consistent access policies in habitat management areas.

INFORMATION, INTERPRETATION, AND EDUCATION

Desired condition is to utilize public education, interpretation, law enforcement, and information programs (e.g. "Adopt-A-Trail", "Tread Lightly") as tools to achieve the following: better understanding of rules, regulations and responsible use; clear, accurate, and consistent signage throughout the forest; increased awareness of various forest uses and users (appropriate forest uses, user ethics and etiquette, and resource and habitat protection), increased awareness of vegetation diversity; and developing partnerships to economically treat weeds. Make GIS information on the internet and create online database for all documents and reports referenced in the Forest Plan document. Increase awareness regarding noxious weed control; increase awareness related to private property and fire risk; and utilize volunteers to offset fees charged; Develop and publish recreation plans that will incorporate current trends for the GA and the same for the region. Utilize best available science information. Decision makers with the Forest Service will not be held personally or professionally liable.

SOCIAL

Develop recreation needs study with the local community including a capacity analysis for all recreation uses. Recognize that the Priest GA economy is recreation-based and has transitioned already from timber-based.

ECONOMICS

Desired condition related to economics included the following statements and concerns: Annually review recreation restrictions with the local community to ensure necessity of closure. Develop winter and summer recreation impact study with local communities to assist in planning of recreational facilities. Provide sustainable economic diversity and resilience for local communities. Priest GA should provide commodity/non-commodity opportunities to contribute to the social and economic sustainability of local communities. Desires for payment of monies to the county ranged from re-evaluating the payment in lieu of taxes process to continued support of school systems through logging and mining activities. Conduct more localized economic study (e.g., by GA, not by county) to capture issues specifically related to local communities. Employ current technology/best available science with regard to improving water quality (keeping in mind socio-economic impacts). Consider community economics when prioritizing fuel reduction projects. Funding of the Forest Service will be commensurate with access/restrictions to NFS lands. Consider economic impacts related to management of T&E species. Work cooperatively with local businesses and Chamber of Commerce in assessing social and economic needs and implementing programs that promote local social values and evaluating impacts of site-specific projects. Utilize local workforce to accomplish stewardship goals related to ecosystem healthy including watershed restoration and vegetation management. Equal input for all taxpayers regarding forest decisions.