

Forest Planning –Public Involvement Meeting Notes
Priest Lake Working Group
March 17, 2004

The meeting was held from 6-8:30p.m. at the Priest Lake Ranger Station cookhouse. Forest Service staff took the following meeting and flipchart notes.

Attendees: Community Members- Richard Bencoter, Mike Sudnickovich, Tom Holman, Desi Davis, Dan Davis, Grant Brockus, Steve Anderson, Larry Townsend, Steve Booth, Bill Egolf, Mark Sprengel, Eric Sieracki, Paul Sieracki, Wendy Booth, Ken Wimer, Joanne Hirabayashi, Bill White, Kris Howell, Margie Hall, and Ted Parvin.

Forest Service: Lu LeMieux, Dave Cobb, Jill Cobb, Kathy Murphy, Jodi Kramer, Kent Wellner, and Dale Schrempp.

Kathy Murphy opened meeting with introductions and went over the agenda:

- Welcome/Updates
- Develop Desired Condition statements for:
 - Access and Recreation (3 issues)
 - Inventoried Roadless and Proposed Wilderness
- Set next meeting and homework

Kathy then went over the revision topics the group had chosen to focus on for this meeting. The Recreation and Access topic had three issues to be worked on: 1) Motorized and Non-motorized Areas; 2) Motorized, wheeled cross-country travel; and 3) Recreation Opportunities. The group reviewed the numerous maps and decision space for these topics. The task for the meeting was to develop desired condition statements for these topics. The group agreed not to break up into smaller groups for discussions but instead to remain together for the meeting.

The group reviewed the comments that Tom Holman, Mike Sudnickovich, and Roberta Ulrich had submitted to the FS prior to the meeting. The group then recorded desired condition statements for Issue #1 on summer and winter motorized recreation. At about 7p.m. the group decided they wanted to allow more time for this discussion rather than attempt to move through the other topics during this meeting. The group agreed to schedule an additional meeting March 31st (6-8:30 pm) to complete the other Recreation and Roadless topics.

The meeting concluded at 8:30 p.m. A reminder was made that the group could do homework on the topics. Any desired condition statements that they can prepare in advance are helpful. Those statements submitted to ccary@fs.fed.us prior to March 24th will get added to the flipchart notes and will be reviewed at the next meeting. The notes will be posted on the website by March 26th.

Next meeting is March 31st 6-8:30 pm at the Priest Lake Ranger Station cookhouse

DRAFT STATEMENTS from 3/17/04 meeting	Summer Motorized	Winter Motorized	Summer Non-Motorized	Winter Non-Motorized
No motorized use off of open system roads. Current motorized trails would be closed.	X	X		
No cross country motorized use	X	X		
Upper Priest Lake and Thorofare should be closed to motor boats	X	X		
Establish a monitoring plan to document use and users	X	X		
Consider motorized access for handicapped individuals in specific locations. Reference White River Recreation Plan 2-31	X	X		
Meet current grizzly bear standards before making any decisions for motorized use	X			
Clearly recognize the differences between motor types (combustion vs. electric)	X			
Disperse the motorized use to reduce concentrated effects	X			
Protect evacuation routes	X			
Bicyclists (mechanized) restricted to open system roads if we're restricting motorized use to open system roads. Treat motorized and non-motorized (mechanized) equally.	X			
If gate/road is closed, closed to everyone (motorized) including administrative use. (Okay for emergency use, some exceptions)	X			
The forest needs to remain open to motorized access unless there is a specific reason to close an area.	X	X		
Any area that is recommended for closure to motorized access needs to have a detailed study indicating how the area is being harmed by motorized access and a public review process needs to be conducted before any on the ground action is taken	X	X		
The USFS needs to create a detailed motorist recreation plan, involving the local community, and complete any on the groundwork before any areas are closed to motorized access.	X	X		

DRAFT STATEMENTS from 3/17/04 meeting	Summer Motorized	Winter Motorized	Summer Non-Motorized	Winter Non-Motorized
The USFS needs to work with the business community, the Priest Lake Chamber of Commerce, to develop a winter and summer economic impact study that would become part of the Forest Plan, which would be reviewed before any decisions are made that, would limit any type of recreation	X	X		
The USFS needs to work with the community to develop a recreation needs study that serves as the social component that would be reviewed before any changes are made on the Forest that would affect the social component of the community.	X	X		
Work with local and regional groups in developing connecting trail systems to connect regional communities. These trail systems to be used by all types of recreation in summer and winter. This process to take place before any additional areas are closed to recreation use of the Forest.	X	X		
The regional trail system design needs to include areas of challenge, for all types of recreation use, accessible from the main trail system.	X	X		
In areas where invasive weed control is a problem, post procedures explaining how all types of users transfer seeds and how to prevent these transfers. If needed, to provide proper cleaning stations to remove seeds from shoes, animals, and equipment before entering the forest.	X	X		
No restriction in Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat unless there is peer review science that verifies the activity being restricted is contributing to the loss of the species in question.	X	X		
No net loss of recreation access. If any area that is currently part of a recreation activity has restrictions applied to it then another area of equal value based on community and Forest Service input is opened to the activity that has been restricted.	X	X		
On annual bases, review any areas that have been restricted, via community meetings, to determine if the restriction is still warranted.	X	X		

DRAFT STATEMENTS from 3/17/04 meeting	Summer Motorized	Winter Motorized	Summer Non-Motorized	Winter Non-Motorized
Any area, trail or road closures for T&E species need to be reviewed for seasonal application and opened to the public when they are not seasonally sensitive.	X	X		
Maintain recreational uses as defined in the current Forest Plan in the currently defined Management Areas.	X	X		
Develop recreation guidelines for proper care of our forestlands and post in trailhead locations. Also post information regarding any sensitive areas that are accessible via the trailhead so the public knows to respect these areas.	X	X		
When studying or reviewing recreation use in the national forest where it's possible there may be disturbances that could cause an event that could alter the structure, composition or function of the forest it's important the study also shows that recreation by human use is no different from drought, floods, wind, wildfire or insects. Man was placed here to use its resources by the same process.	X	X		
It should first be recognized that there is only one Public Authority that represents the community and that authority would be the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce is a representation of the economics of the area. Because any decision making within the Forest Plan could alter the community, good or bad the public authority should be notified and involved in the process.	X	X		
The majority of the employment rate of Priest Lake is recreation based, directly or indirectly. Any plans that will effect any employment in the community should be reviewed before any actions are taken.	X	X		
Motorized use is limited to designated roads and trails. Shouldn't be riding ATV's next to streams, etc.	X			
Eliminate user created trails. This should not occur until good ATV travel routes are planned and designated.	X			
Bicycles are allowed access on all road and trail routes (open and closed)	X			
Do a capacity analysis across the entire GA for all uses. (Including density of use)	X	X		

DRAFT STATEMENTS from 3/17/04 meeting	Summer Motorized	Winter Motorized	Summer Non-Motorized	Winter Non-Motorized
The community works with the Forest Service to help communicate proper use and ethics (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Churches, Retail and objective organizations, etc.	X	X		
Create designated off trail areas	X	X		
Place Saver: Consider designation of streams and sensitive areas during development of motorized trails/roads.	X			
Allow law enforcement behind gated roads as needed. (Emphasis on border patrol and drug control)	X	X		
Need to stay flexible to allow for changing needs and events	X	X		
Put roads to bed (obliterate) for 4.5 miles from border to strengthen the northern border	X	X		
Maintain access behind gates for administrative uses	X	X		
Need more space and more trails to accommodate increasing number of user for single track and two track users	X	X		
Enforcement action is needed to avoid resource damage and keep motorized on designated areas (compliance)	X	X		
Develop recreation guidelines for proper care of our forestlands and post in trailhead locations. Also post information regarding any sensitive areas that are accessible via the trailhead so the public knows to respect these areas. Need to educate the users on ethics of use. Pro active education	X	X		
Enforcement of violators of posted regulations	X	X		
All input (local and national) is treated equally	X	X		
Look at utilizing user fees for maintenance, education, monitoring, and enforcement and developing new facilities	X	X		
Keep the same roads open in the fall hunting season as are open in summer	X	X		
Increase emphasis and funding for law enforcement	X	X		
Look beyond the Chamber of Commerce to decimate information and represent the community	X	X		

DRAFT STATEMENTS from 3/17/04 meeting	Summer Motorized	Winter Motorized	Summer Non-Motorized	Winter Non-Motorized
Have Forest Service office hours reflect seasonal uses. Maintain a Forest Service Ranger Station office and a presence at Priest Lake	X	X		
All concerned public should “pay to say”	X	X		
Recognize recreation use as a resource of USFS to maintain/increase funding to support recreation use and staff to support it	X	X		
End off trail use in caribou recovery area until scientific review is complete. Defer to caribou until scientists agree that snowmobiles and caribou are compatible		X		
End off trail use in caribou recovery area until scientific review is complete. Defer to caribou until scientists agree that snowmobiles and caribou are compatible. Voluntarily restrict snowmobile use only if caribou are present		X		
No motorized travel off of open system roads	X	X		
Due to enforcement limitations, if violations (use in restricted areas) continue then implement further restrictions	X	X		
If closed to motorized for caribou, then close to non-motorized recreation as well	X	X		
Provide more clarity of caribou and other species seasonal habitat needs in decisions regarding seasonal access restrictions and decisions	X	X		
Consider damage caused by snowmobiles to regeneration that may affect wildlife habitats, especially caribou	X	X		
Use snowmobiles to accomplish thinning objectives	X	X		
No new restrictions or reductions of dispersed recreation unless closure is mandated after peer reviewed scientific evidence has proven that activities are detrimental to the animals in that area	X	X		
Clearly post restrictions	X	X		
USFS is responsible for managing the forest as a renewable resource. Recreation is a renewable resource. USFS needs more emphasis on managing and expanding recreation	X	X		

DRAFT STATEMENTS from 3/17/04 meeting	Summer Motorized	Winter Motorized	Summer Non-Motorized	Winter Non-Motorized
Trails and FS roads are the “arteries” of the Priest Lake economy. These routes need to be improved and maintained to provide for sustainable use.	X	X		
All USFS roads need to be open to the public during periods when there is no seasonal conflict with intended closure	X	X		
Closed and motorized trails are necessary to accommodate elderly and others with disabilities (e.g. berry picking, hunting, fishing)	X	X		
Recreation pursuits are part of our tradition and needs to be maintained	X	X		
Areas should not be closed arbitrarily to motorized recreation	X	X		
Provide for brush removal from groomed and un-groomed designated snowmobile routes	X	X		
Keep current on recreation trends and make certain there are adequate facilities to accommodate these in order to protect sensitive areas of our forests	X	X		
Re-establish access to more high elevation areas that provide visitors for those who are not able to walk extended distances.	X			
Provide some type of adopt-a-trail program to help maintain trails, road culverts, etc.	X			
Whenever a road is rerouted around a stream or closed near a stream that access be maintained for handicapped unless it creates an impossible situation	X			
Reduce interference by outside groups who do not contribute to the well being of the local economy	X	X		