



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Intermountain
Region

MAY 2008



Environmental Assessment

Danskin-Camas Land Exchange

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Boise National Forest

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Chapter 1 -- Purpose and Need for Action

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternative actions to exchange Federal land parcels for private land parcels. This exchange would convey land, interests in land, and the resources associated with them. However, the act of conveyance itself has no direct biological or physical resource environmental effects. Therefore, this environmental analysis focuses on the future use and management of the lands acquired and conveyed and the effect of the exchange on the lands that adjoin them (FSH 5409.13, section 33.41).

Development of this document is based on direction contained in the 2003 Boise National Forest (NF) Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The proposed exchange is a dual authority exchange, as per Forest Service Handbook 5409.13, section 31.25, pursuant to the General Exchange Act of March 20, 1922 (P.L. 67-173, 42 Stat. 465; 16 U.S.C. 485); and the Weeks Law Act of March 1, 1911 (P.L. 61-435, Ch. 186, 36 Stat. 961, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 516). The exchange is also pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 (P.L. 94-579, 90 Stat. 2743, as amended; 43 U.S.C. 1716); and the Federal Land Exchange Facilitation Act of August 20, 1988 (P.L. 100-409, 102 Stat. 1086; 43 U.S.C. 1716).

1.2 PROPOSED ACTION

The USDA Forest Service would acquire fee title to private land parcels (acquisition parcels) comprising up to 1,542 acres in exchange for fee title to an equal value portion of National Forest System (NFS) land to be selected from about 3,188 acres considered available for conveyance (conveyance parcels) (36 CFR 254.3(b)(1)). All lands considered for exchange are located within the administrative boundaries of the Mountain Home Ranger District, Boise NF.

The acquisition parcels are in Elmore County, Idaho, are owned by Casa Del Norte, LP, and are within the Danskin Mountains Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area. The acquisition parcels are about 17 air miles southeast of Boise, Idaho.

The Federal conveyance parcels have been identified by the Forest Service for conveyance in the past due to their isolation from large blocks of contiguous NFS land. The Federal conveyance parcels are in Elmore County, Idaho, near the Little Camas Reservoir-Bennett Mountain area. They are about 45 air miles southeast of Boise, Idaho, 25 air miles from Glens Ferry, and 20 air miles from Mountain Home (refer to Figure 1-1 and Figure 1-2).

To be a viable action, the proposed exchange must be consistent with the Forest Plan, must be in the public interest (36 CFR 254.3), and address both the Forest Service and the non-Federal exchange party's objectives (FSH 5409.13, section 33.41b).

There are a total of six proposed acquisition parcels, and five potential conveyance parcels (Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2 in section 2.4.2 of this EA). The conveyance parcels include about 200 acres of land previously acquired by the Forest Service under the Weeks Law Act of 1911, some or all of which would be available to be exchanged for acquisition parcels 4, 5 and 6, which consist of

patented mining claims (refer to section 1.5.2). Exact acreages and legal descriptions of all parcels are listed in Appendix A of this EA, and photos of the exchange parcels are shown in Appendix C.



Figure 1-1. General location of land exchange parcels within Idaho.

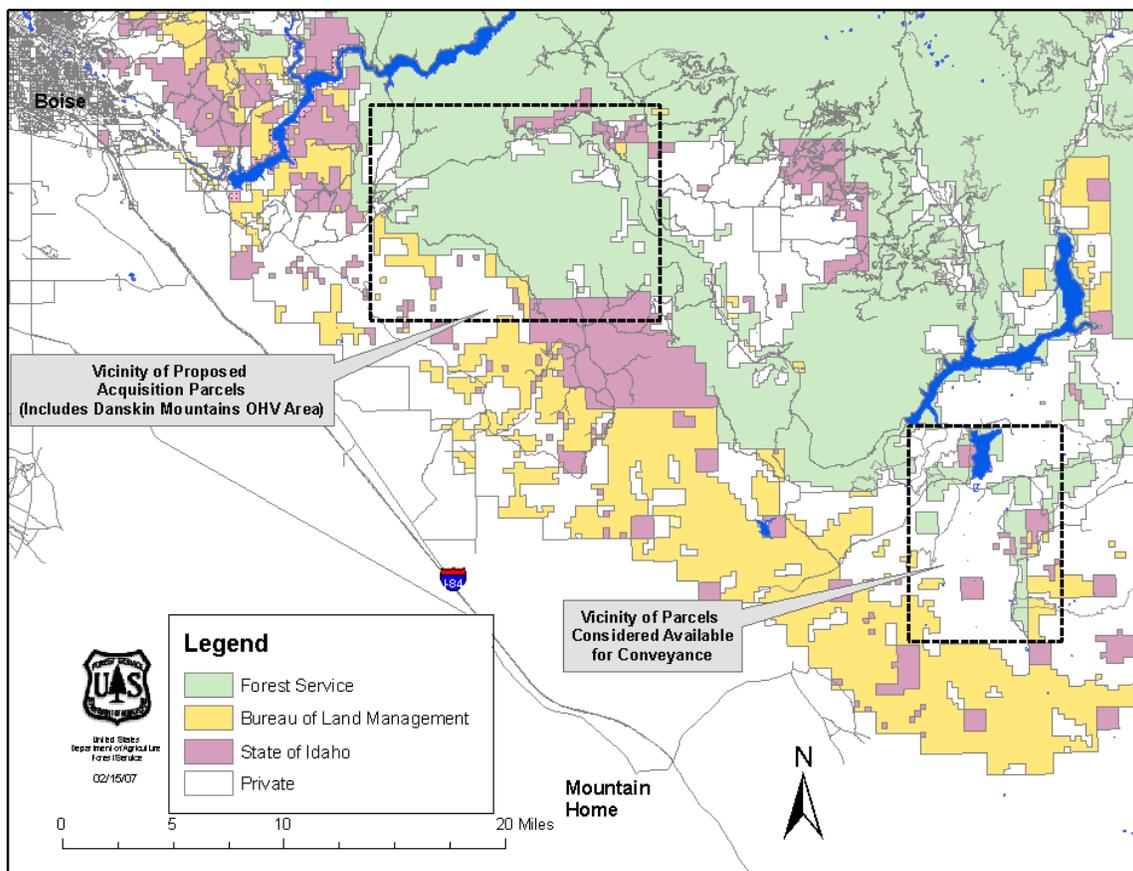


Figure 1-2. Vicinity map of the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange in Elmore County, Idaho.

This land exchange would be a “land-for-land exchange”¹ involving the acquisition of non-Federal land, or interests in land, by the United States in exchange for NFS lands, or interests in land. Land would be exchanged on a value for value basis, based on current market value appraisals, with a goal of creating reasonable, locatable, and manageable boundaries. In such an exchange, a modest amount of cash equalization may be used to equalize values. The amount of cash used to equalize the values between the Federal and non-Federal lands in a land exchange cannot exceed 25 percent of the value of the Federal lands conveyed. Forest Service policy further directs that the exchange should minimize the amount of cash equalization paid to the United States.

A Proposed Action for this exchange was developed and publicly disclosed in 2005. That Proposed Action included conveyance parcels 2 and 6 which were subsequently deleted from the “pool” of lands to be considered for conveyance in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action. The original 2005 parcel numbers were retained in this analysis to maintain consistency. However, conveyance parcels 2 and 6 are not considered available for conveyance in this exchange, and will not undergo analysis in this document. Additionally, for this analysis, Conveyance Parcel 4, as described in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action, has been divided into parcels 4a and 4b. The

¹ Refer to Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 5409.13, 31.11, for detailed discussions concerning land-for-land exchanges.

total combined area of these parcels remains the same as in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action.

1.3 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

There are two purposes of the Proposed Action:

- To improve land management efficiency.
- To improve trail management in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.

The needs for action at this time to address each purpose are described in detail below, along with the indicators that would be carried forward in the analysis to demonstrate the effectiveness of the alternatives in meeting those needs. The effectiveness of the Proposed Action and alternatives in fulfilling these needs is disclosed in sections 2.5 and 3.2 of this EA.

1.3.1 LAND MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES

To address the purpose of improving land management efficiencies, there is a need to consolidate ownership patterns that improve management efficiencies by eliminating the need to survey and maintain boundary lines; and a need to convey scattered and isolated Federal parcels in the Little Camas-Bennett Mountain area that are difficult to manage and have been identified by the Boise NF as a priority for conveyance.

National Forest landownership patterns vary greatly across the Boise NF. Fragmentation created as a result of historic public land conveyance, and recent increases in "parcelization" and conveyance of large tracts of private lands, continues to challenge the Forest Service's ability to efficiently and effectively manage the public's lands and resources. Consolidation remains a critical role of land exchange and acquisition to help reduce management costs related to boundary management and land management activities such as fire suppression. Land exchange continues to be a valuable land adjustment tool due to the benefits afforded to both Federal and non-Federal parties, especially in the arena of manageability that results from consolidating ownership.

Acquiring the non-Federal parcels would eliminate the future need for surveys of about 16.3 miles of boundary and location of 40 property corners. The Forest Service currently spends approximately \$8,000 per mile for landline surveys. At this rate, the Forest Service would avoid about \$130,000 in potential landline survey expenditures and avoid future maintenance responsibilities as well.

Parcels being considered for possible conveyance are largely surrounded by private land and irregular in shape. These factors make efficient management and administration of these lands difficult. Conveyance of these lands would eliminate the need for the costly survey of about 20.0 miles of boundary and location of 32 property corners, and would eliminate the need for the landline survey of the five isolated parcels (conveyance parcels 1, 3, 4a, 4b, and 5), which would potentially cost about \$160,000. Conveyance would also eliminate administrative costs associated with several occupancy and use authorizations and other management needs such as wildfire suppression.

The indicators for achieving this purpose are:

- Miles of boundary survey needed;

- Number of survey corners; and
- Miles of external boundary line to be maintained in the future.

1.3.2 DANSKIN MOUNTAINS OHV AREA TRAIL MANAGEMENT

To address the purpose of improving trail management, there is a need to improve public access to public lands by perfecting trail rights-of-way through acquisition of private in-holdings within the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.

The Danskin Mountains OHV Area is comprised of about 139 miles of ATV and motorcycle trails located on over 60,000 acres of predominately NFS land located on the Mountain Home Ranger District. The area has a long history of motorized recreation use. In 1995, the Forest Service, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Department of Lands, and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), completed a motorized trail system plan for the area (1995 Danskin Trail Management Plan). Today, the area provides a premier, regional OHV trail system with opportunities for a wide variety of trail enthusiasts, including off-highway motorcyclists, all-terrain vehicle enthusiasts, equestrian riders, and mountain bikers.

As part of the 1995 Danskin Trail Management Plan, approximately 6.8 miles of existing trails were designated within portions of six proposed acquisition parcels. These trail segments are an integral part of the trail loop system established in the Danskin area. In 1995, cooperators involved in developing the Danskin Trail Management Plan believed that it would be possible to secure easements from private landowners. However, efforts to-date have proven unsuccessful, placing future public access in jeopardy.

Acquisition of all 1,542 acres of private land in the OHV area would ensure access to 6.8 miles of motorized trails that are currently located on private land. This would also ensure access to 53 percent of the ATV routes in the OHV area (32.1 of the total 60.1 miles), 22 percent of the surrounding motorcycle routes (30.1 of the total 138.7 miles). It would also ensure access to a spectacular vista and destination point for motorized enthusiasts overlooking the South Fork Boise River canyon, via Little Fiddler Flat (Acquisition Parcel 1), and important trail access points near Three Point Mountain (Acquisition Parcel 6). These trails are summarized in and displayed in Chapter 3 (Table 3-2, page 34).

The indicators for fulfilling this need are:

- Actual miles of trail access needs resolved; and
- Miles of trail system access throughout the Danskin OHV Area that are retained by trail segment(s) within an acquisition parcel.

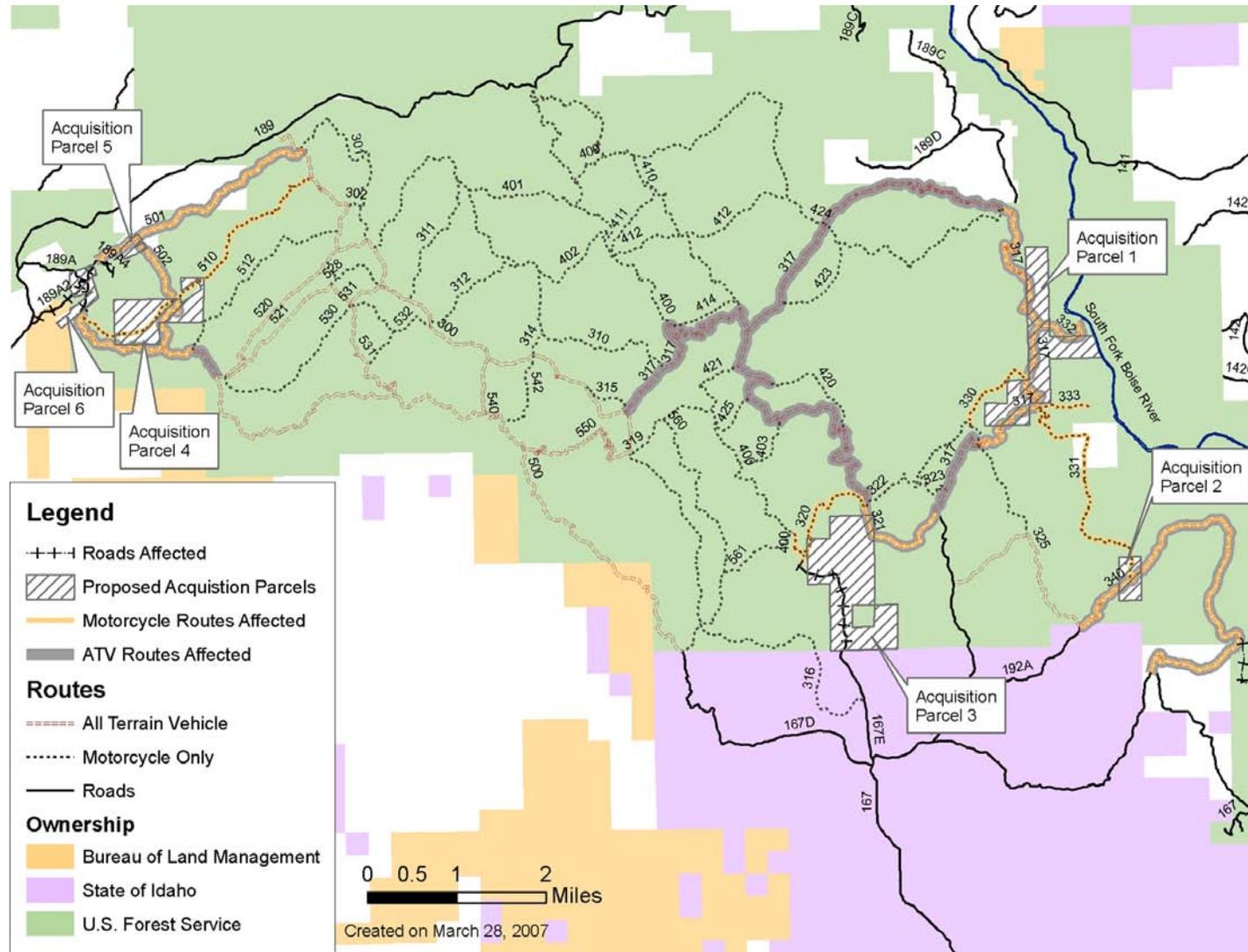


Figure 1-3. Effects of private landownership of motorized routes within the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.

1.4 DECISIONS TO BE MADE

The Director of Lands for the Intermountain Region of the Forest Service is the Responsible Official authorized to take action with regard to this proposal. After considering disclosures in this EA and supporting record documentation, the Director of Lands for the Intermountain Region will decide:

1. Whether to authorize the proposed land exchange, and if so:
 - a. Which non-Federal lands should be acquired and Federal parcels conveyed to meet purpose and need (refer to section 1.3)?
 - b. What reservations, easements, special use permits, or water rights need to be addressed in the exchange to fully or partially resolve significant environmental issues or facilitate future land management activities?
 - c. Which non-Federal Parcels will have Weeks Law status applied to them (refer to section 1.5.2)
2. Whether the resulting action would result in significant environmental impacts necessitating preparation of an environmental impact statement.

These decisions and their rationale will be documented in the Decision Notice for this proposal.

1.4.1 PUBLIC INTEREST DETERMINATION

As part of the decision, and in compliance with Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (Public Law 94-579), the Responsible Official will determine if the proposed exchange serves the public interest. Factors that must be considered in a public interest determination for a proposed land exchange are listed in the Code of Federal Regulations:

“To determine that an exchange well serves the public interest, the authorized officer must find that-

(i) The resource values and the public objectives served by the non-Federal lands or interests to be acquired must equal or exceed the resource values and the public objectives served by the Federal land to be conveyed, and

(ii) The intended use of the conveyed Federal land will not substantially conflict with established management objectives on adjacent Federal lands, including Indian Trust lands” (36 CFR 254.3(b)(2)).

The Public Interest Determination will be included in the Decision Notice.

1.5 CONSISTENCY WITH LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES

1.5.1 CONSISTENCY WITH THE FOREST PLAN

1.5.1.1 NON-FEDERAL LANDS

The acquisition of the non-Federal land is consistent with Forest Plan Objective 0161, which is to *“use land exchange opportunities to acquire scattered parcels of private in-holdings to improve Forest management efficiency”* (Forest Plan, p. III-104). The non-Federal land parcels

are all isolated in-holdings and their current private ownership greatly complicates existing recreational trail management with the overall area. Acquisition would eliminate the problem of trail users trespassing on the private in-holdings, avoid the need for costly and likely ineffective trail construction on adjacent NFS land, and greatly aid in overall management of the motorized recreation use in the area.

Acquisition of the non-Federal parcels is also consistent with the Forest-wide guideline LSGU01 for Priority 1 Land Acquisitions, item "*e) Lands that enhance recreation opportunities, public access, and protection of aesthetic values*" (Forest Plan, p. III-55). Acquisition, which is supported by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation and motorized enthusiast groups, would provide the opportunity to designate and effectively manage a critical loop trail and other key motorized trail segments.

Should the exchange be completed, the non-Federal lands would be managed under direction from the 2003 Forest Plan. The non-Federal parcels lie within the Lower South Fork Boise River Management Area 1 (Forest Plan, pp. III-92 to III-105). The Management Prescription Categories surrounding the non-Forest System Lands in this area are 4.1C (Undeveloped Recreation: Maintain Unroaded Character with Allowance for Restoration Activities) and 6.1 (Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes) (Forest Plan, pp III-87; III-89-90). Managing the acquisition parcels as integral parts of the Danskin motorized trail system would be consistent with either of these categories.

1.5.1.2 FEDERAL LANDS

Conveyance of all the Federal land conforms with Forest Plan Objective 0162, which is to convey "*scattered National Forest Lands south of Anderson Ranch Reservoir, except those lands around [Little] Camas Reservoir, to improve Forest management efficiency*" (Forest Plan, p. III-104). Most of Conveyance Priority 1 land is near Little Camas Reservoir, Conveyance Parcel 3 being the closest to the Reservoir. However, none of the conveyance parcels include NFS land immediately adjacent to Little Camas Reservoir. Conveyance Parcel 3 lies west of Little Camas Reservoir and west of County Road 160. Therefore, this parcel does not include the Little Camas Recreation Site, which is proposed for boat ramp replacement, restroom replacement, and parking area and campsite development. Consequently, conveyance of these lands would not affect use or future development of the Little Camas Recreation Site or public access to and use of the reservoir and its shoreline.

1.5.2 CONSISTENCY WITH MINING LAWS

The proposed exchange would involve title to both surface and subsurface estates for all parcels except two acquisition parcels (parcels 5 and 6, see Appendix A) where the U.S. Government already owns the subsurface estate. No split estate would result from the land exchange.

The General Mining Law of 1872 (30 USC §§ 21 *et seq.*) allows the public to enter, explore, and mine valuable minerals on public domain land. It also allows the miner to obtain title (patent) to the surface of a mining claim if it can be shown that a valuable mineral deposit exists within it. Acquisition parcels 4, 5 and 6 include mining claims covering 110.48 acres patented under the General Mining Law. These claims are mineral in character and the Forest Service would take

measures to prevent these claims from being claimed and patented again under the General Mining Law once they return to the public domain, as explained below.

Any other unforeseen future mineral exploration and extraction that might cause surface disturbance on these acquired lands would be subject to separate environmental analysis.

The Weeks Law (16 USC §§ 515-519, 521, 552, and 563) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to acquire private land for addition to the NFS. A total of 200 acres that includes all of Conveyance Parcel 3, a portion of Conveyance Parcel 4a, and all of Conveyance Parcel 4b was acquired under the Weeks Law in 1934 (refer to Figure 2-2, page 24). Land acquired under the Weeks Law is not subject to the General Mining Law of 1872, and therefore is not open to entry and exploration for valuable "hard rock" minerals. Lands later acquired in exchange for such lands are likewise withdrawn from the effects of the General Mining Law of 1872.

After acquisition by the United States, the mineralized non-Federal parcels (parcels 4, 5 and 6), would be subject to being claimed under the 1872 Mining Law. If claimed, developed or patented, this would offset the very benefits the exchange is being undertaken to achieve. Because of this, it is necessary that the exchange be designed so that Federal lands previously acquired under the Weeks Law are used to acquire the patented mining claim parcels (acquisition parcels 4, 5 and 6). The Weeks Law status of the conveyed parcels would be transferred to acquisition parcels 4, 5 and 6, making them no longer open to mineral exploration and potential patent under the 1872 Mining Law.

The Forest's Mineral Examiner has concluded that the lands considered available for conveyance in the Proposed Action are non-mineral in character (Project Record, Mineral Resource Evaluation). No public lands with more than nominal mineral value would be privatized as a result of this land exchange.

1.5.3 OTHER LAWS, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

The Proposed Action has been reviewed and is found to be consistent with the other laws, regulations and policies governing the management of NFS lands, including:

- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (refer to section 3.4.1)
- Endangered Species Act of 1973 (refer to section 3.4.3)
- Executive Order 11988, *Floodplain Management* (refer to section 3.5.1)
- Executive Order 11990, *Protection of Wetlands* (refer to section 3.5.2)
- Prime Farmland, Rangeland & Forestland (USDA Regulation 9500-3) (section 3.5.3);
- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, section 120(h) (refer to section 3.5.4)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (refer to section 3.5.5)
- Functions Transfer Act of 1960 (refer to section 3.5.6)
- Executive Order 12898, *Environmental Justice* (refer to section 3.5.7)
- Executive Order 13443, *Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation* (refer to section 3.5.8);

- Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988 (refer to section 3.5.9)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (refer to section 3.5.10);
- Clean Air Act (refer to section 3.5.11);
- Clean Water Act (refer to section 3.5.12)

Consistency with these laws, and other regulations and policies, is discussed in more detail in section 3.5.

1.6 TRIBAL CONSULTATION

On January 31, 2003, the proposal was first discussed at a “Wings and Roots” meeting between the Boise NF and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribe. It was discussed at several subsequent “Wings and Roots” meetings, and was last discussed formally at the November 17, 2006, “Wings and Roots” meetings. In October 2005, the Boise NF archaeologist and the cultural resources director for the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes visited sites in the proposed exchange considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Director did not express any opinions about the exchange during that field trip. This field trip and the exchange were then discussed at the November 2005 “Wings and Roots” meeting.

On March 10, 2003, Mountain Home Ranger District resource staff met with the Shoshone-Bannock resource staff to discuss the proposal. A subsequent field trip was held in May 2003 to discuss the proposal with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe. Following the field trip, follow-up discussions were not requested.

During consultation, tribal representatives emphasized that all public domain lands within their aboriginal territories were important to their interests and rights. Both Tribes indicated that tribal interest and rights would be both beneficially and negatively affected by the land exchange. The effects pertain primarily to the loss (conveyed parcels) and gain (acquired parcels) of lands in public domain and the relationship of these lands to their tribal interests and rights.

1.7 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

As required by section 402(g) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and 36 CFR 222.4(a)(1), affected grazing permittees were sent written notification to inform them of the proposed land exchange in January 2004. An additional grazing permittee was sent written notification of the proposed land exchange in October 2004. However, the allotment affected by this later notification was included in lands that were removed from the pool of available conveyance parcels when the Proposed Action was revised in 2006.

The District initiated public scoping on this project with a letter to elected officials, agencies, organizations, and known interested individuals on July 5, 2005. That letter included a detailed description of the proposal and also served as the Notice of Proposed Action (36 CFR 215.5) that provided the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Action within a 30-day comment period. A legal notice of the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Action was published in *The Idaho Statesman*, the newspaper of record for the District and for regional-level decisions affecting National Forests in Idaho, on July 7, 2005. The 30-day comment period ended on August 8, 2005. The proposal has been listed in each quarterly Boise NF Schedule of Proposed Actions since July 1, 2005.

On December 12, 2005, the District Ranger met with officials of the IDF&G, Magic Valley Region, to discuss the proposal.

In the period following the original proposed action letter, an exchange of ownership of three of the proposed acquisition parcels occurred. Additionally the Forest Service derived more accurate estimates of proposed acquisition and conveyance land values. These estimates resulted in an overall reduction in the NFS land considered likely needed to complete the transaction. In response to these events, the Forest Service developed a Revised Proposed Action in July 2006.

The Forest Service and the non-Federal party then finalized an Agreement to Initiate the exchange based on this new information. Once the Agreement to Initiate (ATI) was finalized, the Forest Service published the Legal Notice of Exchange Proposal (NOEP) (36 CFR 254.8) on four consecutive Wednesdays, beginning on July 12, 2006. These notices were published in the *Mountain Home News*, the newspaper of general circulation in the area in which the Federal and non-Federal lands are located. As a public courtesy, the NOEP was also published once in *The Idaho Statesman*, on July 12, 2006. About the same time, letters containing the NOEP were sent to all landowners adjacent to the exchange parcels.

A Legal Notice of Proposed Action (36 CFR 215.5) was published in the applicable newspaper of record, *The Idaho Statesman*, on July 27, 2006. As a public courtesy, the Notice of Proposed Action was also published in the *Mountain Home News* on July 26, 2006. However notice in the *Mountain Home News* specifically stated that the date of publication in *The Idaho Statesman* was the exclusive means for calculating the time to submit comments on the proposal. The 45-day NOEP comment period and the 30-day notice and comment period both ended on August 28, 2006.

The Forest Service mailed notices about the Revised Proposed Action to 90 addressees, including Indian tribes, elected officials, agencies, organizations, and known interested individuals on July 26, 2006. All members of the public who submitted comments in 2005 resubmitted timely comments in 2006. As the information about the revised proposal was disseminated, more interested individuals who requested copies of the notice were promptly mailed copies of the Revised Proposed Action. By the end of the 2006 30-day comment period, 120 interested parties were listed on the project's mailing list.

Sections 4.5 and 4.6 contain lists of agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals who commented on this proposal. The planning record contains all written comments received relative to this proposal. Appendix B discloses how the Interdisciplinary Team addressed those concerns.

1.8 SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Forest Service has received 76 responses, in the form of letters, e-mails, petitions, office visits, and telephone calls, regarding the land exchange since sending out the original proposed action notice in July 2005. Common concerns raised included potential effects to:

- Native American religious or cultural sites, archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas;
- Access to public lands proposed for conveyance for hunting, fishing and general recreation;
- Term grazing permits;

- Big game management; and
- Fragmentation of wildlife habitat block size currently in public ownership.

To identify if concerns that were mentioned in scoping should be considered significant issues or unresolved conflicts with the proposed exchange that should be carried forward into alternative development, the ID team and line officer evaluated concerns against the following:

3. Concern is beyond the scope of the project or not relevant to the action proposed (in other words, no identified cause-effect relationship would result should the proposal be implemented).
4. Concern is addressed and resolved through application of Forest Plan standards and guidelines or best management practices.
5. Concern is addressed and resolved through implementation of project-specific mitigation measures (for example, eligible historic resource sites would be avoided).
6. Concern is addressed during processes or analyses routinely conducted by the ID team (for example, a concern about the effects on Threatened and Endangered species will be addressed in the effects analysis documented in Chapter 3).
7. Concern is an unresolved conflict, or significant NEPA issue, with the Proposed Action and should be carried into alternative development. Resolution typically would be elimination of all or part of an acquisition or conveyance parcel.

Significant issues are listed below. These issues are points of unresolved conflict with the Proposed Action (Alternative 2) identified during internal and external scoping efforts. Following each issue, indicators are identified that will be used in the effects analysis in Chapter 3 to compare how the different alternatives affect that issue.

1.8.1 PUBLIC HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGH INTEREST AREAS

Issue: The exchange of the proposed Conveyance Parcel 1 would reduce the quantity of public lands available support recreational opportunities (primarily hunting) in high interest areas, and reduce the quantity of public lands that can be traversed in order to access those recreational opportunities on adjacent public lands.

While general comments reflecting this concern were brought up relative to several conveyance parcels, many of those who commented specifically noted that changes in quantity of public lands in the Bennett Mountain area would measurably change the quality of their recreational experience. Conveyance Parcel 1 (Bennett Mountain) was specifically identified as the parcel of greatest concern with regard to this issue in internal and external scoping.

Bennett Mountain falls within the State of Idaho's Big Game Management Unit 45, which encompasses about 950,000 acres. Several individuals, elected officials, and the IDF&G believe that Unit 45 provides some of the best mule deer hunting within the state². Available public land (i.e. National Forest, BLM-administered, and State Trust) in Unit 45 near Bennett Mountain is already limited due to the high percentage of private land in this area. Compounding this situation is the fact that access to some public land in this area has become difficult due to private land closures adjacent to public land blocks.

² See Idaho Department of Fish and Game News Release of March 20, 2006, "Land Exchange Could Affect Hunting Access," in the Project Record.

Within a roughly 91,000-acre area loosely identified as the Mount Bennett Hills, Federal and State Trust lands currently occupy about 29,000 acres (32 percent of the area), and are the lands that provide most of the unencumbered access to the public within Unit 45. NFS lands make up about 4,200 acres (slightly less than 5 percent of the entire area and about 14.5 percent of the Federal and State Trust lands). Conveyance Parcel 1, which includes 2,042 of those NFS acres, provides access to some of the most readily available Federal and State Trust lands in the area. The quality of hunting experience is high due to this block size and its adjacency to public roads (easy access). While current public road access through these parcels, and public access to all other public land, would be reserved in the proposed exchange, conveyance of Parcel 1 would result in reductions in public land block size and the corresponding loss of general access to acres to hunt within.

- Indicator: Acres of Conveyance Parcel 1 retained.

The environmental effects of the land exchange on this issue are disclosed in sections 2.5 and 3.3.1 of this EA.

1.8.2 TERM GRAZING PERMITS

Issue: The conveyance of Parcel 1 in its entirety would result in the loss of grazing privileges on the North Little Camas allotment and significantly reduce the viability of grazing on the Cat Creek allotment.

The proposed conveyance parcels include lands in five active grazing allotments (see Figure 3-1, page 37). Preliminary analysis shows that if Conveyance Parcel 1 were to be exchanged in its entirety, it would likely result in the cancellation of the term grazing permits on the North Little Camas and South Little Camas allotments.

As required by section 402(g) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and 36 CFR 222.4(a)(1), affected grazing permittees were sent written notification to inform them of the proposed land exchange in January 2004. An additional grazing permittee was sent written notification of the proposed land exchange in October 2004. However, the allotment affected by this later notification was included in lands removed from the pool of conveyance parcels when the proposed action was revised in 2006.

Comments were received from the permittees on the North Little Camas and Cat Creek allotments, expressing concerns with the effects of the land exchange on their grazing privileges (see comments about grazing privileges beginning on page 68 of this EA).

The permittee on the North Little Camas allotment has expressed concerns with the loss of grazing privileges on that allotment as a result of the exchange. The cancellation of term grazing permits on the North Little Camas allotment would result in a loss of 83 head months of grazing for that permittee. The Forest Service has been advised by the permittee on the South Little Camas allotment that the permittee is not concerned with the closing of that allotment.

The permittee on the Cat Creek allotment has expressed concerns with the effect the exchange would have on the viability of the remaining grazing allotment. Conveyance of Parcel 1 in its entirety would result in a 46 percent decrease in cow/calf pairs and a 27 percent decrease in yearlings permitted on the Cat Creek allotment.

- Indicator: Effect to the viability and management of the Cat Creek and North Little Camas allotments.

The environmental effects of the land exchange on term grazing permits are disclosed in section 2.5 and 3.3.2 of this EA.

1.9 NON-SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS

Several comments expressed by the public were considered but were either beyond the scope of this analysis, not relevant to the action proposed, addressed and resolved through the application of Forest Plan standards and guidelines or best management practices, addressed and resolved through the implementation of project-specific mitigation measures, or addressed during processes or analyses routinely conducted by the ID team. These comments and the Forest Service's responses to each are included in Appendix B of this EA.

1.10 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This EA incorporates by reference the project record (40 CFR 1502.21). The project record contains specialist reports and other technical documentation used to support the analysis and conclusions in this EA.

This document is tiered to the Final EIS and planning record supporting the 2003 revised Forest Plan, including documentation related to the Continuous Assessment and Planning (CAP) process described in Chapters III and IV of the Forest Plan. This documentation includes monitoring reports, implementation guides, and errata and corrections to the 2003 FEIS and Forest Plan. Documented analyses in the Forest Plan Final EIS have been referenced rather than repeated in some instances. Detailed information that supports the analyses presented in this document, unless specifically noted otherwise, is contained in the project planning record located at the Mountain Home Ranger District Office. Analyses pertaining to the Final EIS for the 2003 Forest Plan are contained in the forest planning record located at the Forest Supervisor's Office in Boise Idaho.

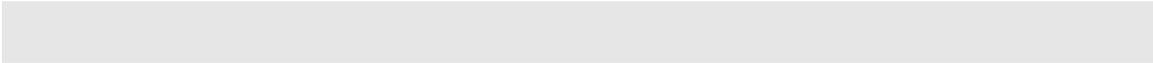
This document consists of the following main chapters:

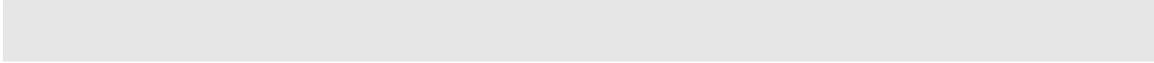
- Chapter 1 - Purpose and Need: Describes the Proposed Action, purpose and need for the action, decisions to be made, Forest Plan consistency, regulatory requirements and required coordination, public involvement, and identification of significant issues.
- Chapter 2 - Alternatives: Includes mitigation measures common to all action alternatives, descriptions of the alternatives considered in detail, alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed study, and a comparative summary of the environmental consequences of acquisition or conveyance of identified parcels.
- Chapter 3 - Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences: Describes the existing conditions of the resources within parcels proposed for conveyance or acquisition and the environmental impacts of the alternatives on those resources. As noted in the introduction, this exchange would convey land, interests in land, and the resources associated with them. However, the act of conveyance itself has no direct biological or physical resource environmental effects. Therefore, the environmental analysis focuses on the future use and management of the lands acquired and

conveyed and the effect of the exchange on the lands that adjoin them (FSH 5409.13, section 33.41).

- Chapter 4 - Consultation and Coordination: Provides a list of the primary preparers of this document; a list of agencies, organizations, and persons who were consulted or from whom scoping comments and/or comments during the 30-day notice and comment period were received.

Three appendices follow the main chapters:

- Appendix A – Legal Descriptions and Areas of Exchange Parcels
 - Appendix B – Comments Received and Forest Service Responses
 - Appendix C – Parcel Photographs
- 



Chapter 2 -- Alternatives

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes and compares the No-Action Alternative, Proposed Action Alternative, and one additional alternative developed to address significant issues identified in Chapter 1. Also presented are alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed study, including reasons for their elimination. This chapter concludes with a comparative summary of the alternatives considered in detail (section 2.5). This comparison, combined with the more detailed disclosure in Chapter 3, provides the information necessary for the Responsible Official to make an informed choice between alternatives.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

As discussed in Chapter 1, section 1.2, the Proposed Action was developed to address both Forest Service and the non-Federal party's interests and objectives. To be a viable exchange alternative, the proposed exchange must complement the Forest Plan, be in the public interest, and address both the Forest Service's and non-Federal exchange party's objectives (FSH 5409.13, section 33.41b).

The purpose of this EA is to address in detail those alternatives that address significant issues that meet both items #1 and #2 of section 1.4. (Item #3 of section 1.4, determinations of equal value based on current, market value appraisals, will be addressed in the decision document and not in this EA.) Exchange alternatives that were considered that did not meet items #1 and #2, were eliminated from detailed study (refer to section 2.3).

Each action alternative addressed in detail includes for conveyance a surplus of parcels from the Federal estate. In other words, each action alternative includes a "pool" of Federal estate parcels to be considered for conveyance that in total have a higher market value than the proposed non-Federal acquisition parcels; in this case nearly a 2:1 ratio under the Proposed Action (Appraisal Review, March 16, 2007).

The Forest Service has intentionally carried forward for detailed study action alternatives that contain a "pool" of Federal estate parcels that could be considered in the final exchange decision. Providing the Responsible Official with this "pool" of Federal estate parcels to draw from during the balancing of market values process allows flexibility to include, or not include, all of or portions of Federal estate parcels as needed to most effectively address the multitude of factors that must be weighed. These factors include each party's minimum interest and objectives for proceeding with a land-for-land exchange, significant issues, and policy, regulation and law requirements such as those concerning the Weeks Law (section 1.5.2). The decision on which lands to include in the exchange (section 1.4) will be consistent with the NEPA requirement that alternatives considered by the decision maker be encompassed by the range of alternatives discussed in this EA (40 CFR 1508.1(e)).

2.3 ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

In addition to the alternatives considered in detail (refer to section 2.4), other approaches to the exchange were considered by the ID team and Responsible Official in response to concerns

generated from internal and external scoping of the Proposed Action. These alternatives, which were eliminated from detailed study, are described in this section along with an explanation as to why they were not considered for detailed study.

2.3.1 DIRECT PURCHASE ALTERNATIVE

Consideration of this alternative is required by FSH 5409.13, section 34.1. Under this alternative no Federal lands would be exchanged and the private lands identified for Federal acquisition would be purchased. The private landowner has stated they have no desire to simply sell their lands and are only willing to pursue a land-for-land exchange. This alternative was eliminated from detailed study because it did not meet the non-Federal party's minimum interests and objectives for entering into this land-for-land exchange proposal and did not meet the Purpose and Need for Action. To pursue this alternative would, in effect, result in no action.

2.3.2 DEED RESTRICTION ALTERNATIVE

Consideration of this alternative is required by FSH 5409.13, section 34.1. The purpose of deed restriction would be to limit use or development of the Federal lands after conveyance as a means of addressing an environmental concern. Deed restrictions controlling future use and development of Federal lands conveyed into non-Federal ownership devalue the Federal estate in the transaction, requiring more Federal land to exchange for a given amount of private land and reducing other benefits that might be received. Forest Service policy (FSH 5409.13, 32.12), states that the reduced value of the Federal estate and perpetual obligations resulting from such reservations mandates that they should be used sparingly. They should be used only when required by law, regulation, or executive order, or when the intended use of the conveyed Federal land would substantially conflict with established management objectives on adjacent Federal lands (FSH 5409.13, section 33.41c). This alternative was eliminated from detailed study because none of the criteria for applying a deed restriction were met on lands conveyed through this exchange and the Forest Service believes the public interest would be best served by minimizing the amount of land to be conveyed in the exchange by conveying that land in an unencumbered state.

2.3.3 ACCESS OR CONSERVATION EASEMENTS IN BENNETT HILLS FOR CRITICAL DEER WINTER RANGE ON PRIVATE LAND AS A CONDITION FOR EXCHANGE

The IDF&G suggested that the Forest Service mitigate the effects on access by requiring the non-Federal party to grant public road easements to trust lands managed by the Idaho Department of Lands in the Bennett Hills. The IDF&G's reasoning was that this action would mitigate for the acres of public land they presumed would be lost to hunting access as a result of the exchange. In addition, or as an alternative to the road access easements, they suggested that the non-Federal party grant conservation easements for the long term preservation of critical deer winter range located on their private land.

The Forest Service has authority (36 CFR 254.3(h)) to "reserve or retain such interests as are needed to protect the public interest," and both alternatives carried forward for detailed study provide for the reservation of access to both State and Federal lands where access would be lost as a result of the exchange. To require that the non-Federal party grant additional access or

conservation easements on their private lands would be contrary to both purposes for considering the Proposed Action. Additional rights and easements acquired in the Little Camas-Bennett Mountain area would require active management by the Forest Service. This would be in direct opposition to the Purpose and Need for Action of improving land management efficiencies by conveying the scattered and isolated Federal parcels in this area. Likewise, the value of any conservation easements acquired would offset and reduce the amount of private land that could be acquired for the purpose of improving trail management in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.

2.3.4 ELIMINATION OF CONVEYANCE PARCEL 1 IN ITS ENTIRETY FROM THE LAND EXCHANGE

The IDF&G prioritized Conveyance Parcel 1 as the least desirable to them to be exchanged out of public ownership, as that agency believes this parcel provides for important big game hunting opportunities within the Bennett Mountain area of Big Game Management Unit 45, a premier unit in southern Idaho within which mule deer hunting tags are highly sought. The IDF&G believes this parcel provides for important big game hunting opportunities in part due to the readily available public access points adjacent to Conveyance Parcel 1 and the continuous public land habitat block size (combination of NFS, State Trust, and BLM-administered land) to which it contributes (refer to Figure 2-2).

In addition to IDF&G, several big game hunters and recreationists identified the importance of this parcel to their recreational experience. While road access would be retained, commenters believed that foot access would likely be restricted by the non-Federal party should they acquire the land. In addition, they believe that eliminating this portion of public land would further fragment a publicly accessible land block in the Bennett Mountain area where it is already highly fragmented, and use of private land by the public for hunting and recreation is becoming more and more restricted.

Elimination of this entire parcel did not meet the minimum interests and objectives of the non-Federal party and did not meet the Purpose and Need for Action. Acquisition of some portion of Conveyance Parcel 1 was of key interest to the non-Federal party because it is contiguous to their existing private land. Because the minimum interests of the non-Federal party would not be met and the alternative therefore would be infeasible, it was eliminated from detailed study.

2.3.5 ACQUIRE TRAIL EASEMENTS ACROSS PRIVATE LAND PARCELS TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC USE

This alternative was considered by the Forest Service as a way to partially meet the Purpose and Need for the land exchange by securing easements for the affected trails in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area located on private land. In 1995, cooperators involved in developing the Danskin Trail Management Plan believed that it would eventually be possible to secure easements from private land owners for existing trails. However, efforts over the ensuing years have proven unsuccessful. Prior landowners either rejected easement offers or simply failed to respond at all. The current landowner of the six proposed acquisition parcels purchased the parcels with the sole intent of consummating a land exchange with the Forest Service; thus they have no interest in granting trail easements.

Although the United States has legal authority to acquire trail easements under eminent domain even without the landowner's consent, Forest Service policy (FSM 5480.2) is that this authority be used only after all other methods of acquisition fail. Because a mutually agreeable means of acquiring this access exists through exchange, this alternative was eliminated from detailed study.

2.3.6 RE-ROUTING TRAILS AROUND PRIVATE LAND PARCELS

This alternative was considered by the Forest Service as a way to partially meet the Purpose and Need for the land exchange by relocating the trails on private lands in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area off from private land. It has long been recognized that managing a trail system where key segments of trails are located on private land parcels without authorization is problematic. However, despite that fact, no readily apparent, practical trail routes around the private land parcels have been identified to date. Land around several of the parcels has actually been reviewed in the field in an attempt to identify feasible and practical reroutes to resolve the trail trespass situation. In each and every instance, it was determined that while a trail could conceivably be constructed, it was determined to be not practical when given consideration of cost, topography, long-term maintenance, or resultant resource effects. For these reasons, this alternative was deemed infeasible and it was therefore eliminated from detailed study.

2.4 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN DETAIL

2.4.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

This is a required "No-Action" alternative that provides a baseline against which impacts of the various action alternatives can be measured and compared. Under the No-Action Alternative, the land exchange would not occur. Ownership and management of the Federal and non-Federal parcels would remain as they are. Six parcels in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area would remain private, and all five parcels considered available for conveyance would remain in the NFS.

2.4.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Under Alternative 2, the Forest Service would acquire about 1,542 acres of private land, owned by Casa Del Norte, LP, located within the Danskin Mountains OHV Area (Figure 2-1) in exchange for an equal value portion to be selected from about 3,188 acres of NFS land considered available for conveyance near the Little Camas Reservoir-Bennett Mountain area.

This land exchange would be a "land-for-land exchange" involving the acquisition of non-Federal land, or interests in land, by the United States in exchange for NFS lands, or interests in land. Land would be exchanged on a value for value basis, based on current market value appraisals, with a goal of creating reasonable, locatable, and manageable boundaries. In such an exchange, a modest amount of cash equalization may be used to equalize values. The amount of cash used to equalize the values between the Federal and non-Federal lands in a land exchange cannot exceed 25 percent of the value of the Federal lands conveyed. Forest Service policy further directs that the exchange should minimize the amount of cash equalization paid to the United States. Appendix A contains the legal descriptions and land areas of each exchange parcel. Appendix C contains photographs of the exchange parcels.

2.4.2.1 NON-FEDERAL LANDS TO BE ACQUIRED

The Forest Service would acquire six parcels of land that total about 1,541.74 acres. All lands considered for acquisition lie within Elmore County, Idaho, and are located within the administrative boundaries of the Mountain Home Ranger District, Boise NF.

Table 2-1 includes the list of parcels proposed for acquisition. The surface and mineral estate would be included in the exchange, except for the minerals in T. 2 N., R. 5 E., Sec. 17, Lot 1; and Sec. 20, Lot 1, which the United States already owns. Included in Table 2-1 is the number of trail miles within each parcel.

Following completion of the exchange, the 6.8 miles of trails located within these parcels would become part of the authorized and designated motorized trail system within the Danskin Mountains OHV Area. Refer to Appendix A for detailed legal descriptions of each acquisition parcel.

Table 2-1. Parcel acres, Weeks Law relationship, and miles of trail within acquisition parcels and the proposed trail designation for authorized motorized use following the exchange.

Acquisition Parcel	Acres	Weeks Law Relationship	Miles of Trails within Parcel	Miles of Authorized Motorized Use Following Exchange		
				Motorcycle Only Trail	Motorcycle/ATV Trail	Roads
Parcel 1: Little Fiddler Flat	484.10	No	2.5	0.01	2.50	0.00
Parcel 2: Devil's Hole	79.98	No	0.6	0.27	0.37	0.00
Parcel 3: Packsaddle Creek	601.95	No	1.4	0.17	0.00	1.25
Parcel 4: Bender Creek	265.23	Yes	1.4	0.96	0.43	0.0
Parcel 5: Wood Creek	25.37	Yes	0.4	0.00	0.39	0.00
Parcel 6: Three Point Mtn.	85.11	Yes	0.5	0.00	0.00	0.49
TOTAL	1,541.74		6.8			

2.4.2.1.1 PATENT RESERVATIONS, PERMITS, AND WATER RIGHTS

No rights-of-way reservations for ditches, canals or roads would be retained by the non-Federal party. No water rights would be conveyed to the Forest Service (refer to section 3.4.10). Barb wire pasture fences on acquisition parcels owned by the non-Federal party would be conveyed to the Forest Service. Boundaries associated with two Federal term grazing permits (i.e. Willow Creek and Grouse Creek Allotments) would be adjusted to include the private lands acquired; however, this would not change head months or other terms of the permits (refer to section 3.3.2.3.2). No existing special use permits would be affected. There are no existing uses or occupancies that would require resolution or authorization by the Forest Service following the transaction.

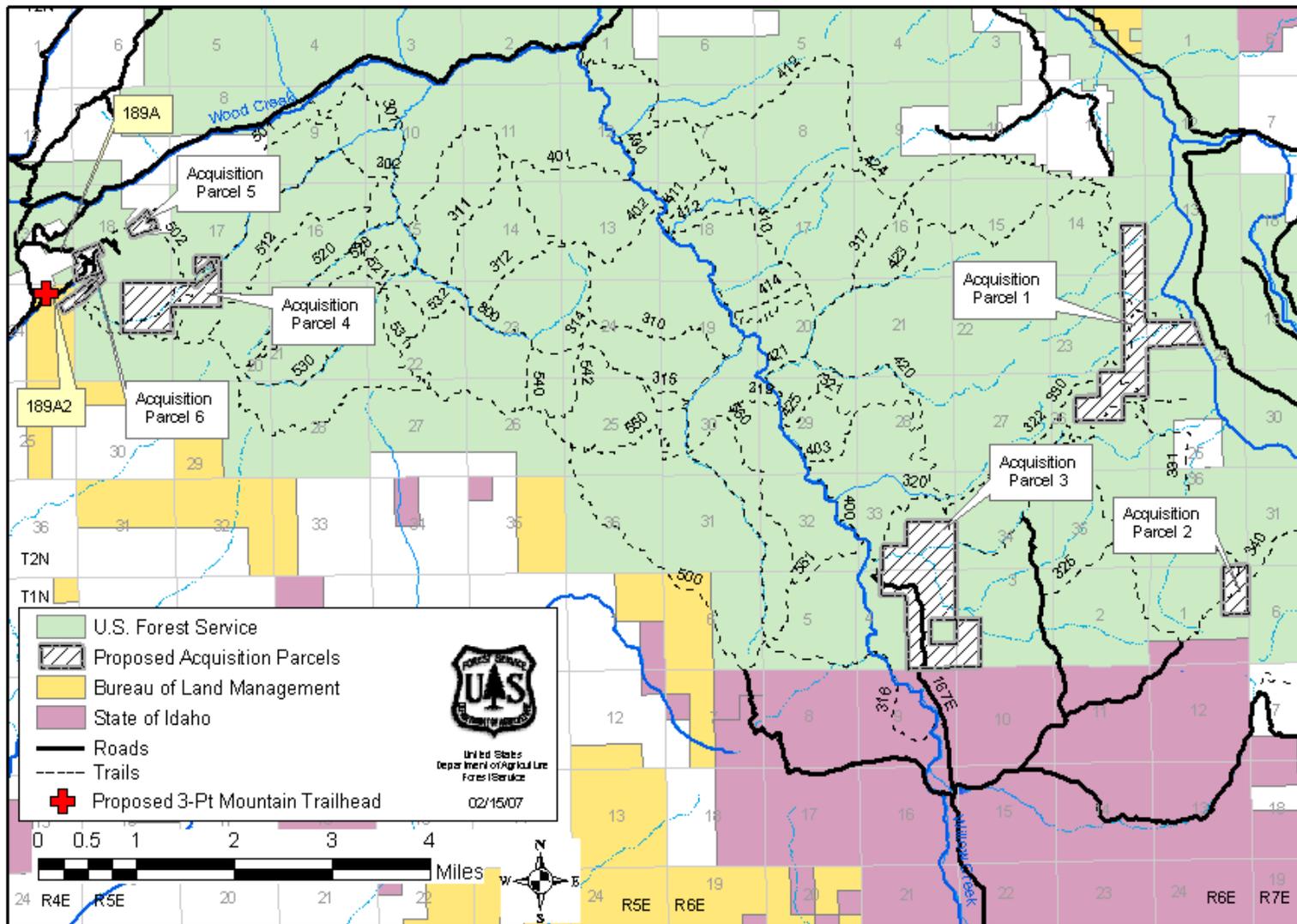


Figure 2-1. Private land parcels to be acquired in the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange.

2.4.2.1.2 LAND ALLOCATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

This land exchange would result in no change in the current use of acquired lands. All lands to be acquired are currently used for dispersed recreation and grazing, and are expected to continue to be used as such following acquisition. All lands to be acquired are located in Management Area 01 – Lower South Fork Boise River. Acquired land would be assigned the Management Prescription Category of NFS land immediately adjacent to it (Table 2-2).

Table 2-2. Forest Plan Management Prescription Categories for proposed acquisition parcels after acquisition.

Acquisition Parcel	Proposed Management Prescription Category ³
1	4.1c Undeveloped Recreation: Maintain Unroaded Character with Allowance for Restoration Activities
2	4.1c Undeveloped Recreation: Maintain Unroaded Character with Allowance for Restoration Activities
3	6.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes
4	6.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes
5	6.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes
6	6.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes

2.4.2.1.3 MANAGEMENT OF ACQUIRED ROADS

Roads located on acquisition parcels include the road identified as 167E within Acquisition Parcel 3 (1.25 miles), and the roads identified as 189A (Little Fiddler Spur) (0.21 mile) and 189A2 (0.28 mile) within Acquisition Parcel 6 (see Figure 1-3 and Figure 2-1). The roads to be acquired are private, low standard roads largely unsuitable for most public travel. Their future use depends on other future actions and decisions. The Forest Service will determine their status at a later date, but has no intention of denying public access in these areas.

2.4.2.2 NFS LANDS PROPOSED FOR CONVEYANCE

As identified in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action (PA), the “pool” of NFS land considered available for conveyance to the non-Federal party in exchange for the land proposed for acquisition consists of five parcels around Little Camas Reservoir and Bennett Mountain (Figure 2-2). Combined, the parcels considered available for conveyance total about 3,187.98 acres. They are about 45 air miles from Boise at their closest point. Table 2-3 shows the land area of each exchange parcel, its Weeks Law status, and the non-Federal party’s stated priorities.

³ For descriptions of these Management Prescription Categories, refer to the Forest Plan, p. III-87 and pp. III-89-90.

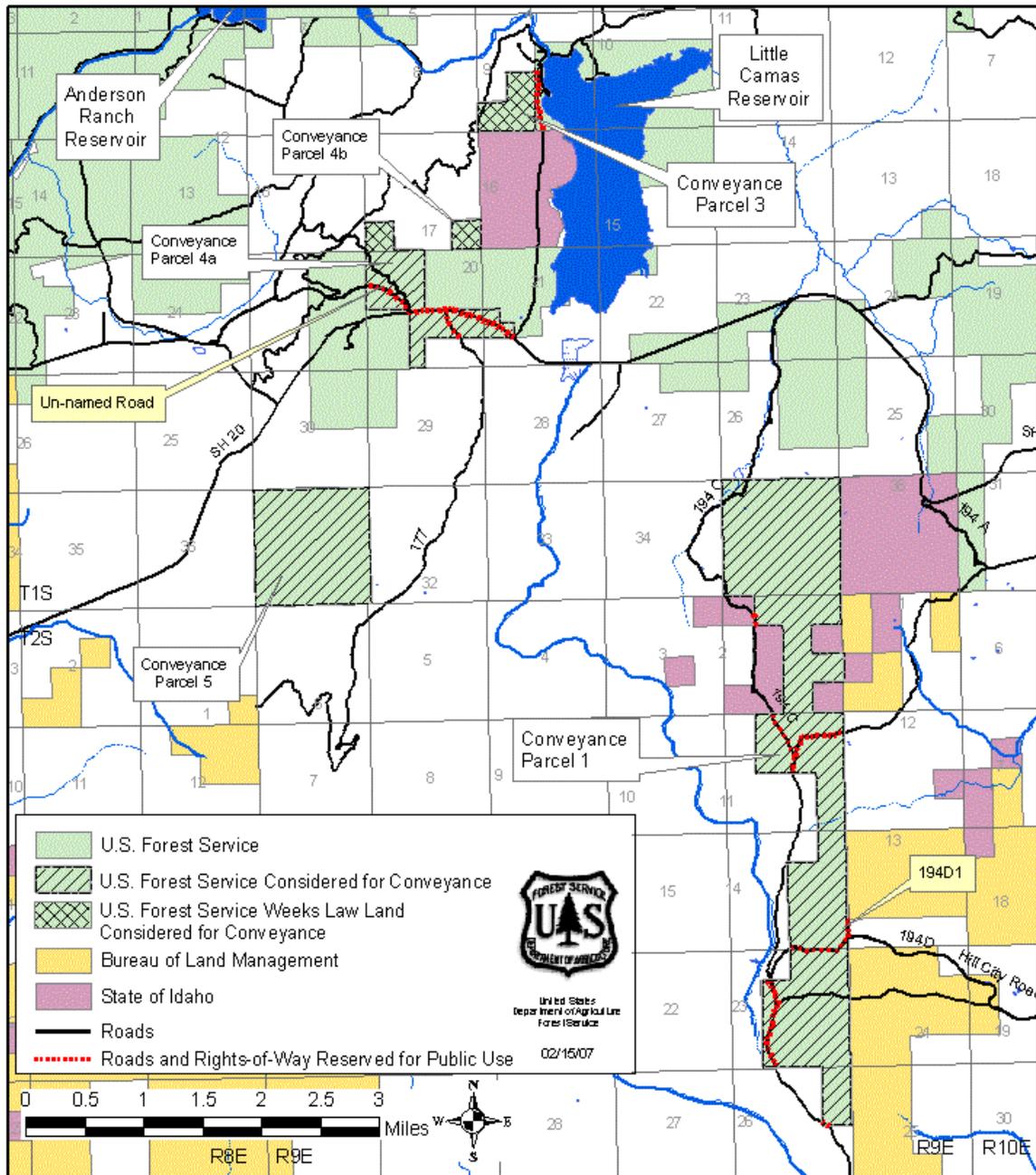


Figure 2-2. NFS land parcels considered available for conveyance in the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange.

2.4.2.2.1 PATENT RESERVATIONS, PERMITS, AND WATER RIGHTS

Easements for roads, ditches and other facilities serving remaining public lands will be retained and existing third party uses and outstanding rights will be recognized and protected. A complete listing of reservations to the United States, easements, water rights, and outstanding rights is shown in Appendix A.

Stock watering developments, barb wire pasture, and allotment boundary fences owned by the Forest Service would be conveyed to the non-Federal party.

Federal term grazing permits associated with the North Little Camas and South Little Camas allotments would likely be closed following completion of the exchange. Head months would likely be reduced on the Lockman Gulch, Windy Gap and Cat Creek allotments due to the reduction of NFS acreage from allotments, resulting from the conveyance of parcels (refer to section 3.3.2.3.2).

2.4.2.2.2 ANTICIPATED MANAGEMENT OF CONVEYED LANDS

The conveyance parcels are located in Management Area 01 – Lower Southfork Boise River and are within Management Prescription Category 6.1 – Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes. As noted in the introduction to Chapter 1 of this EA, this environmental analysis focuses in part on the future use and management of the lands to be conveyed. The Forest Service acknowledges that it would no longer have the long-term assurance inherent in Federal ownership of conveyed lands that any future actions taken and changes made would be done under Federal rules. However, the conveyance parcels are currently used for grazing and there is little likelihood that use would change after conveyance.

Table 2-3. Conveyance Parcel NFS Acres, Weeks Law relationship, and indicated Non-Federal Party Priority for Proposed Action.

Conveyance Parcel*	NFS Acres	Weeks Law	Non-Federal Party Priority
1 – Bennett Mountain	2,041.64	No	Priority #1: southern third, high; northern third, moderate; middle third low priority
3 – Little Camas	120.00	Yes	Drop unless required by Weeks Law (refer to section 1.5.2)
4a – no name	350.00	40 acres north of Highway 20	Priority #2: south of Highway 20, high; north of highway, moderate; Weeks Law portion north of highway only if needed to be legal requirement
4b – no name	40.00	Yes	Drop unless required by Weeks Law (refer to section 1.5.2)
5 – no name	636.34	No	Priority #3: very little interest
Total Acres	3,187.98		

*Note: Parcels 2 and 6 included in the 2005 Proposed Action were subsequently deleted from the “pool” of lands to be considered for conveyance in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action. The original 2005 parcel numbers were retained to minimize confusion. For this analysis, Conveyance Parcel 4 as described in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action has been divided into parcels 4a and 4b. The total area of these parcels, combined, remains the same as in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action.

If the land exchange is approved, lands to be conveyed to the non-Federal party would be subject to the zoning and development ordinance and regulations of Elmore County, Idaho. All conveyance parcels included in the exchange would be zoned by Elmore County as Ag B – General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest, once privatized. *“The purpose of the Ag B District is to preserve and protect this land for multiple land uses that are compatible with farming, ranching, grazing, forest products, and limited mining. Residential land use is allowed in the Ag B zone subject to site development standards and compatibility with agricultural operations”* (Elmore County Zoning and Development Ordinance, Amended 1995, page 22)⁴.

⁴ A revised zoning ordinance has been proposed for Elmore County. Under this proposed ordinance, the Ag A and Ag B designation would be combined into a single Ag (General Agriculture) designation. Consequently, the land included in the land exchange would be zoned Ag – General Agriculture. The revised ordinance states, *“The purpose of the Ag district is to preserve and protect the supply of agriculture and grazing land in Elmore County until development is*

About 79 percent of Elmore County's population lives in two percent of its land area – the cities of Mountain Home and Glenns Ferry, and the Mountain Home Air Force Base. The population density in the remaining 98 percent of the county is about 5 people per square mile (Project Record, Socioeconomic Analysis).

2.4.2.2.3 MITIGATION MEASURE

Areas that contain historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will not be conveyed in the exchange.

2.4.3 ALTERNATIVE 3: ELIMINATION OF THE PORTION OF CONVEYANCE PARCEL 1 THAT INCLUDES THE NORTH LITTLE CAMAS AND CAT CREEK ALLOTMENTS

Alternative 3 was developed to specifically address the two significant issues to the Proposed Action identified in Chapter 1, section 1.8. Both issues involved conveyance of lands in Parcel 1.

Figure 3-1 (page 37) shows the grazing allotments affected by the Proposed Action. While an alternative that would remove Conveyance Parcel 1 in its entirety has already been eliminated from detailed study (refer to section 2.3.4), Alternative 3 would remove the portion of Parcel 1 that includes the North Little Camas allotment and areas north of this allotment (see Figure 2-3) and thus would address in part the term grazing permit issue (refer to section 1.8.2). Essentially, removing these portions of Parcel 1 from the "pool" to be considered for conveyance would eliminate the likelihood that the term grazing permit associated with the North Little Camas allotment would be cancelled due to allotment manageability and head month number reductions.

This alternative also addresses Issue #1 (refer to section 1.8.1) by maintaining public hunting access to lands adjacent to roads on about 1,514 acres of the 2,041.46 acres of Parcel 1 identified under Alternative 2 (Proposed Action). It would also maintain the public land habitat block size in the northern section of Conveyance Parcel 1 where large blocks of State Trust land and smaller blocks of BLM-administered lands are adjacent to Conveyance Parcel 1. Maintaining overall block size is believed by some commenters to be important to the overall hunting experience (e.g. solitude, less public access restrictions, etc.).

appropriate. This district will also control the infiltration of urban development and other uses into agriculture areas, which will adversely affect agricultural operations. Uses that are compatible with farming, ranching, grazing, forest products, and limited mining may be considered in this district. Residential land use is allowed in the Ag zone subject to site development standards and compatibility with agricultural operations. The 'Ag' land use designation is the base zone throughout Elmore County. It contains areas of productive irrigated croplands, grazing lands, forestland, mining lands, public lands as well as rangeland and ground of lesser agricultural value' (Proposed Section 6-8-5-A, Title 6, Elmore County, Idaho Code, Zoning and Development Regulations). Base residential density in the Ag district would be one dwelling unit per 40 acres (Proposed Section 6-8-7). A density bonus of up to two dwelling units per 40 acres would be allowed for cluster developments in the Ag district, subject to conditions (Proposed Section 6-8-8-E).

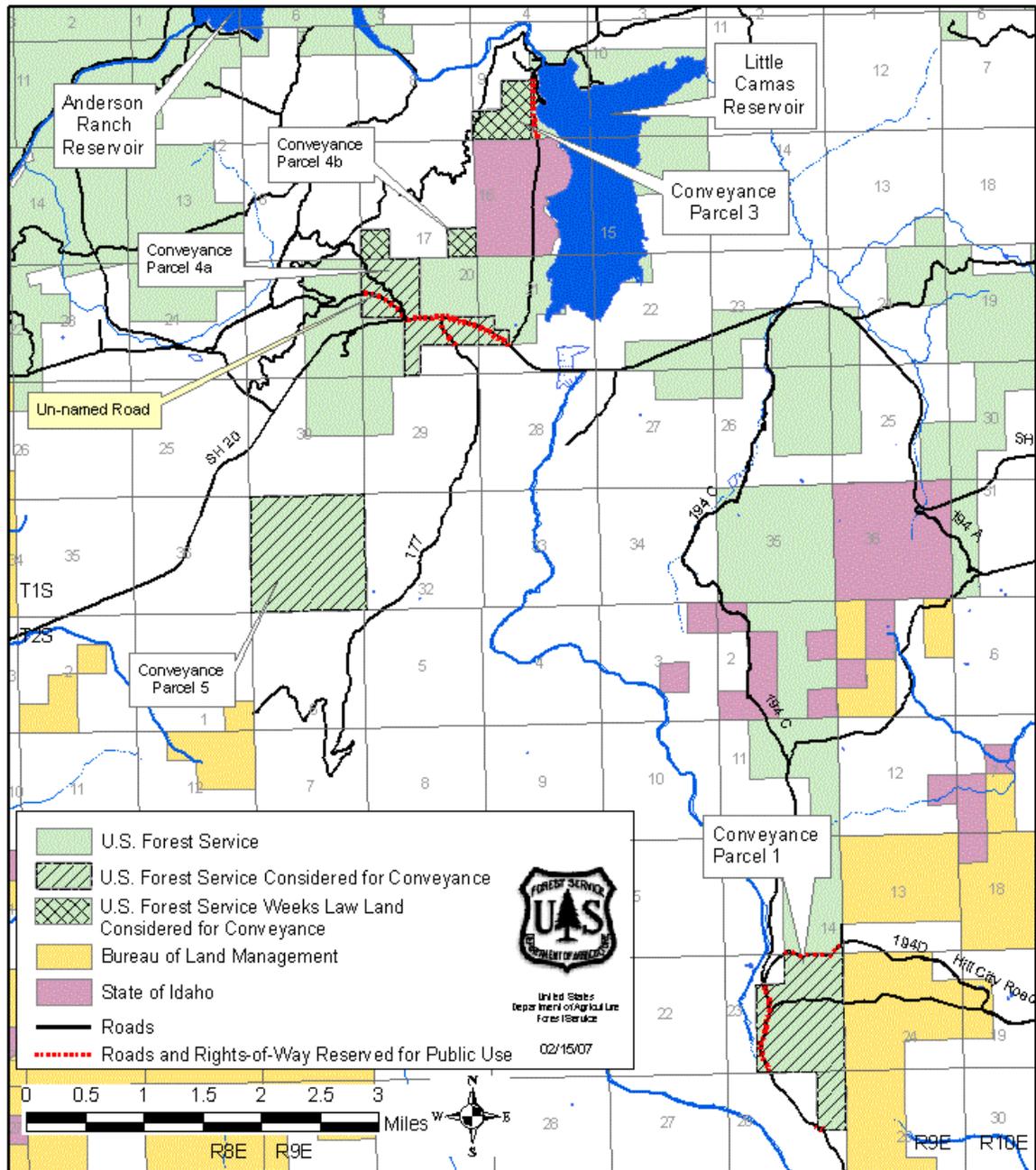


Figure 2-3. NFS land parcels considered available for conveyance in the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange – Alternative 3.

2.4.3.1 NON-FEDERAL LANDS TO BE ACQUIRED

There would be no change from that described under Alternative 2 (Proposed Action), section 2.4.2.1.

2.4.3.1.1 LANDS PROPOSED FOR ACQUISITION

There would be no change from that described under Alternative 2 (Proposed Action).

2.4.3.1.2 PATENT RESERVATIONS, PERMITS, AND WATER RIGHTS

There would be no change from that described under Alternative 2 (Proposed Action).

2.4.3.1.3 LAND ALLOCATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

There would be no change from that described under Alternative 2 (Proposed Action).

2.4.3.1.4 MANAGEMENT OF ACQUIRED ROADS

There would be no change from that described under Alternative 2 (Proposed Action).

2.4.3.2 NFS LANDS PROPOSED FOR CONVEYANCE

2.4.3.2.1 "POOL" OF LANDS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR CONVEYANCE

Parcels 3, 4a, 4b and 5 are the same as described under Alternative 2 (Proposed Action). However, that portion of Conveyance Parcel 1 north of Hill City Road (about 1,514 acres) would be eliminated from the pool of NFS lands to be considered for conveyance, while the southern portion of Conveyance Parcel 1, which includes the South Little Camas allotment, would be retained in the conveyance pool. Consequently, Conveyance Parcel 1 would total about 527 acres.

Table 2-4. Conveyance parcel NFS Acres, Weeks Law relationship, and indicated Non-Federal Party Priority for Alternative 3.

Conveyance Parcel*	NFS Acres	Weeks Law	Non-Federal Party Priority
1 – Bennett Mountain	527	No	Priority #1
3 – Little Camas	120	Yes	Drop unless required by Weeks Law (refer to section 1.5.2)
4a – no name	350	40 acres north of Highway 20	Priority #2: south of Highway 20, high; north of highway, moderate; Weeks Law portion north of highway only if needed to be legal requirement
4b – no name	40	Yes	Drop unless required by Weeks Law (refer to section 1.5.2)
5 – no name	636	No	Priority #3: very little interest
Total Acres	1,673		

*Note: Parcels 2 and 6 included in the 2005 Proposed Action were subsequently deleted from the "pool" of lands to be considered for conveyance in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action. The original 2005 parcel numbers were retained to minimize confusion. For this analysis, Conveyance Parcel 4, as described in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action, has been divided into parcels 4a and 4b. The total acres of these parcels, combined, remains the same as in the July 2006 Revised Proposed Action.

The southern portion of Conveyance Parcel 1 was the non-Federal party's highest priority for retention in the pool. As discussed in section 2.3.4, if the southern portion of Conveyance Parcel 1 were removed, the non-Federal party indicated that the exchange would no longer meet their minimum interests for pursuing this exchange (refer to Figure 2-3 and Table 2-4).

2.4.3.2.2 PATENT RESERVATIONS, PERMITS, AND WATER RIGHTS

Under Alternative 3, Federal term grazing permits associated with the North Little Camas allotment would likely not be cancelled, nor would head month numbers authorized under the

current term grazing permit associated with the North Little Camas or Cat Creek allotments likely change.

The NF System Road portion of Road 194C, the right-of-way for Forest Road 194D1, and those portions of County Road 194 no longer affected by the conveyance of adjacent lands would remain on lands under Forest Service jurisdiction and would not need to be reserved to maintain public access. Other rights-of-way would be reserved as specified in the Proposed Action.

No water rights would exist on land available to be conveyed to the non-Federal party.

2.4.3.2.3 ANTICIPATED MANAGEMENT OF CONVEYED LANDS

There would be no change from that described under the Proposed Action, section 2.4.2.2.2.

2.4.3.2.4 MITIGATION MEASURE

Areas that contain historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will not be conveyed in the exchange.

2.5 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

Table 2-5. Summary of project alternatives in terms of actions, objectives, and effects.

Indicator	Alternative		
	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3
Project Actions			
Acres Acquired	0	1,542	1,542
Acres Considered Available for Conveyance	0	3,188	1,673
Project Objectives			
Actual miles of trail access needs resolved	0	6.8	6.8
Miles of trail system access throughout the Danskin area retained by trail segment(s) within an acquisition parcel.	0	32.1 miles of ATV routes and 30.1 miles of motorcycle routes	32.1 miles of ATV routes and 30.1 miles of motorcycle routes
Miles of Boundary Survey Needed	41.3	5.0	16.9
Numbers of Survey Corners	94	22	44
Miles of External Boundary Line to be Maintained	43.6	5.0	16.9
Project Effects to Issues			
Acres of Conveyance Parcel 1 retained (acres)	2,042	0	1,515
Effect to the Viability and Management of the Cat Creek Allotment	No Effect	Allotment remains viable with 46% decrease in permitted cow/calf pairs and 27% decrease in permitted yearlings*	No Effect
Effect to the Viability and Management of the North Little Camas Allotment	No Effect	Closure of Allotment	No Effect

* Current permitted grazing on the Cat Creek Allotment is 192 head-months for cow/calf pairs and 281 head-months for yearlings.

Chapter 3 -- Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the existing conditions of the environment in and/or adjacent to the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange area that may affect or be affected by the alternatives presented in Chapter 2. The current situation is the baseline for assessing the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of the alternatives considered in detail. This chapter also discloses the environmental effects that would occur following implementation of the alternatives.

Chapter 3 is organized first by achievement of objectives, as described in the Purpose and Need (refer to section 1.3), the environmental effects in light of the significant issues (refer to section 1.8) which were identified in scoping and brought forward for detailed analysis in this chapter. It then covers other resource concerns addressed during processes or analyses routinely conducted by the ID team. Within each section, the affected environment is described first, followed by the effects of the No-Action Alternative, which provides a baseline for evaluation and comparison with the Proposed Action and Alternative 3.

3.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

3.2.1 LAND MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES

3.2.1.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for this issue is the parcels to be acquired and available to be conveyed in the Proposed Action. There are a total of 43.6 miles of exterior boundary line and 94 property corners associated with the parcels to be acquired and available to be conveyed under the Proposed Action. A small portion of this boundary line (2.3 miles) has previously been surveyed. A total of 41.3 miles of exterior boundary and 94 corners have never been surveyed, but would require survey by the Forest Service at some time in the future.

3.2.1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The effects on the resource condition indicators used to evaluate each alternative are described below and summarized on Table 3-1.

3.2.1.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

Under Alternative 1, no land exchange would occur, and the number of miles of surveyed and unsurveyed boundary and property corners would remain unchanged from those described in the Affected Environment section above. Although not all subject to the cost of survey in the future, maintenance and administration of all of the existing lines and corners, whether or not they had been previously surveyed, would continue to challenge the agency's ability to efficiently and effectively manage the public's lands and resources. Additionally, at a rate of \$8,000 per mile, the

future survey of lines not previously surveyed would potentially cost the Forest Service \$330,400, in current dollars.⁵

Table 3-1. Comparison of resulting exterior boundary line and survey corners for each parcel: alternatives 1-3.

Parcel	Unsurveyed Exterior Boundary (miles)			Unsurveyed Corners			Total Exterior Boundary (miles)*			
	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	
Acquisition	1	6.58	0	0	14	0	0	6.58	0	0
	2	1.50	0	0	4	0	0	1.50	0	0
	3	5.30	0.70	0.70	15	0	0	5.30	0.70	0.70
	4	4.00	0	0	13	0	0	4.00	0	0
	5	0.26	0.47	0.47	1	5	5	0.52	0.47	0.47
	6	0.06	0.23	0.23	3	5	5	1.85	0.23	0.23
	Total	17.70	1.40	1.40	50	10	10	19.75	1.40	1.40
Conveyance	1	15.50	0	11.90	26	0	22	15.50	0	11.90
	3	1.50	0.50	0.50	5	1	1	1.50	0.50	0.50
	4a	1.86	2.86	2.86	5	10	10	2.13	2.86	2.86
	4b	0.74	0.25	0.25	4	1	1	0.74	0.25	0.25
	5	4.00	0	0	4	0	0	4.00	0	0
	Total	23.60	3.61	15.51	44	12	34	23.87	3.61	15.51
Grand Total	41.30	5.01	16.91	94	22	44	43.62	5.01	16.91	

*The totals in these columns include both previously surveyed and unsurveyed boundary.

3.2.1.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION)

The Proposed Action would reduce the miles of exterior boundary, both unsurveyed and previously surveyed, to about 5.0 miles. This would allow the Forest Service to avoid maintenance and administration of about 38.6 miles of exterior boundary, and avoid future survey of 36.2 miles of exterior boundary. Future survey costs would potentially total about \$40,000 instead of \$330,400, avoiding over \$290,000 in potential survey costs.

3.2.1.2.3 ALTERNATIVE 3

Alternative 3 would reduce the miles of exterior boundary, both unsurveyed and previously surveyed, to about 16.9 miles. This would allow the Forest Service to avoid maintenance and administration of about 26.7 miles of exterior boundary. Future survey costs would potentially total about \$135,200 instead of \$330,400, avoiding about \$195,200 in potential survey costs.

3.2.1.2.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The analysis area for cumulative effects to land management efficiencies is the acquisition and conveyance parcels whose boundaries would need to be surveyed and maintained if the land exchange did not take place. This is the area that would be affected by the action alternatives. This

⁵ Although boundary surveys are not currently planned on these conveyance parcels, boundary surveys are often done when an unauthorized encroachment on Federal land occurs. The likelihood of such encroachments increases with the existence of outlying NFS parcels whose boundaries meander between a variety of other public and private ownerships.

area was selected because the direct and indirect effects on management efficiency caused by the action alternatives would diminish to unrecognizable levels outside of this area. No other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future action would accumulate with the effects of the land exchange on land management efficiency.

3.2.2 DANSKIN MOUNTAINS OHV AREA TRAIL MANAGEMENT

3.2.2.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for this issue is the Danskin Mountains OHV Area. As noted in Chapter I, the Danskin Mountains OHV Area includes about 60,000 acres of predominantly NFS land located on the Mountain Home Ranger District. The area is popular with OHV enthusiasts and is publicized by several organizations, including the Idaho OHV Public Outreach Project, Trailsource™, and Nyroc.

In 1995, the Forest Service and other partners completed a motorized trail system plan for the area, and today the area provides a premier, regional OHV trail system with opportunities for a wide variety of trail enthusiasts, including off-highway motorcyclists, all-terrain vehicle enthusiasts, equestrian riders, and mountain bikers. In 1995, there were 22,967 OHV (Motorbike/ATV) registrations in the state of Idaho. That number increased at an average annual rate of 16.3 percent to 104,129 OHV registrations by 2005, with 20 percent of those registrations in Elmore and Ada counties⁶ (Project Record, Idaho OHV Registration Statistics).

Approximately 6.8 miles of existing trails in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area are located within portions of the six proposed acquisition parcels. These trail segments are an integral part of the trail loop system established in the Danskin area. In 1995, cooperators involved in developing the Danskin Trail Management Plan believed that it would be possible to secure easements from private land owners. However, efforts to date have proven unsuccessful, placing future public access in jeopardy.

3.2.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.2.2.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

Under Alternative 1, no land exchange would occur, and the six proposed acquisition parcels would remain in private ownership. With the anticipated continued increased use of the Danskin Mountains OHV Area, the private landowner would likely exclude public motorized use from the private lands. Should access to these 6.8 miles of trails be closed by the current private landowner, it would effectively eliminate access to 53 percent of surrounding ATV routes (32.1 of the total 60.1 miles), 22 percent of the surrounding motorcycle routes (30.1 of the total 138.7 miles), a spectacular vista and destination point overlooking the South Fork Boise River canyon (Acquisition Parcel 1), and important trail access points near Three Point Mountain (Acquisition Parcel 6).

3.2.2.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION) AND ALTERNATIVE 3

The efficacy in achieving the trail management objectives would be the same for both action alternatives. With the implementation of either action alternative, all of the acquisition parcels would be procured. As compared to Alternative 1, public access would be ensured on 6.8 miles of trails

⁶ Ada County extends to within 3 miles of the acquisition parcels and includes the City of Boise.

located within an acquisition parcel. The need to maintain access to 32.1 miles of the total of 60.1 miles of surrounding ATV routes and 31.1 miles of the total of 138.7 miles of the surrounding motorcycle routes would be addressed with both action alternatives.

Table 3-2. Miles of trail within private lands and that would be affected by loss of access to trails in the acquisition parcels.

Acquisition Parcel	Trail Miles Within Parcel	Surrounding Trail Mile Access Lost, should Routes be Closed Within Parcel
Parcel 1: Little Fiddler Flat	2.5	16.5
Parcel 2: Devil's Hole	0.6	9.6
Parcel 3: Packsaddle Creek	1.4	4.7
Parcel 4: Bender Creek	1.4	5.4
Parcel 5: Wood Creek	0.4	4.8
Parcel 6: Three Point Mtn.	0.5	3.4
Total	6.8	Some trails are affected by multiple parcels and allow multiple uses; therefore an overall total is not appropriate.*

*As described above, when the overlap of trail miles affected by parcels is removed, access to 32.1 of the 60.1 total miles of ATV routes and 30.1 of the 138.7 total miles of motorcycle routes could be eliminated if retained in private ownership.

3.2.2.2.3 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The analysis area for cumulative effects to Danskin Mountains OHV Area trail management is the acquisition parcels and the surrounding miles of trail which would be inaccessible, should routes be closed within acquisition parcels. This is the area that would be affected by the action alternatives. This area was selected because the direct and indirect effects on trail management caused by the action alternatives would diminish to unrecognizable levels outside of this area. Grazing and OHV recreation are past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions considered in analyzing cumulative effects of the land exchange on trail management in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area. An additional reasonably foreseeable future action is the proposed improvement to the Three Point Mountain Trailhead, which would be built on BLM-administered land along private road 189A2. This proposed trailhead would include construction of a parking lot, restrooms, and improvements to road 189A2. An additional past event was the Wood Creek Fire that burned about 2,300 acres in the OHV area in July 2007.

The effects of Alternatives 2 and 3 on trail accessibility would help prevent the use of unauthorized trails that have been built and illegally used on the private parcels in the past and present, and improve the management of reasonably foreseeable future recreational use of the area by addressing the need to curtail illegal uses of unauthorized trails. In addition, these alternatives would keep the existing trail system intact for future recreational use.

The Three Point Mountain Trailhead would improve future access to the OHV area, while Alternatives 2 and 3 would keep the interior trails intact for those users who would access the area from the proposed trailhead. The effects of the Wood Creek Fire would not accumulate with the effects of the land exchange because the fire has had no effect on the accessibility of trails in the OHV area. Consequently, Alternatives 2 and 3 would result in a positive cumulative impact to Danskin Mountain OHV Area trail management. By contrast, Alternative 1 would result in a

negative cumulative impact as it would likely indirectly eliminate public motorized access to much of the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

3.3.1 PUBLIC HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGH INTEREST AREAS

3.3.1.1 ISSUE

The exchange of the proposed conveyance parcels would reduce the quantity of public lands available in high interest areas to support recreational opportunities for local and regional user groups and individuals. While general comments reflecting this concern were brought up relative to several conveyance parcels, many of those who commented specifically noted that changes in quantity of public lands in the Bennett Mountain area would measurably change the quality of their recreational experience. Conveyance Parcel 1, Bennett Mountain, was specifically identified as the parcel of greatest concern with regard to this issue in internal and external scoping. While current public road access through these parcels, and public access to all other public land, would be reserved in the proposed exchange, conveyance of Parcel 1 would result in reductions in public land block size and the corresponding loss of general access to acres to hunt within.

3.3.1.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

As described in Chapter 1, Conveyance Parcel 1 (about 2,042 acres) lies within the State of Idaho's Big Game Management Unit 45, which encompasses about 950,000 acres. Several individuals, elected officials, and the IDF&G believe that Unit 45 provides some of the best mule deer hunting within the state. Available public land (i.e. National Forest, BLM-administered, and State Trust) in Unit 45 in the vicinity of Bennett Mountain is already limited due to the high percentage of private land in this area. Compounding this situation is the fact that access to some public land in this area has become difficult due to private land closures adjacent to public land blocks.

The analysis area for this issue is a roughly 91,000 acre area loosely identified as the Mount Bennett Hills. This area includes Bennett Mountain in its northwestern portion. Federal and State Trust lands currently occupy about 29,000 acres (32 percent of the area), and are the lands that provide most of the unencumbered access to the public within Unit 45. NFS lands make up about 4,200 acres (slightly less than 5 percent of the entire area and 14.5 percent of the Federal and State Trust land base). Conveyance Parcel 1, which includes 2,042 of those acres, provides access to some of the most readily available Federal and State Trust lands in the area. The quality of hunting experience is high due to this block size and its adjacency to public roads (easy access).

3.3.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.3.1.3.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

Under Alternative 1, no land exchange would occur. None of the land proposed for acquisition would be acquired, and all NFS land considered available for conveyance, including the 2,042 acres of NFS land in Conveyance Parcel 1, would be retained in public ownership. Conveyance

Parcel 1, which includes 2,042 of those acres, would continue to provide access to some of the most readily available Federal and State Trust lands in the area.

3.3.1.3.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION)

The Proposed Action would convey up to about 3,188 acres of NFS land considered available for conveyance in exchange for about 1,542 acres of lands proposed for acquisition. This would include about 2,042 acres in Conveyance Parcel 1, or about 2 percent of the 91,000 acres or 7 percent of the Federal and State Trust lands in the area around the Bennett Hills. No acres of Conveyance Parcel 1 would remain in the NFS. Public recreational access, including hunting, would be eliminated on the conveyed acres. However, access and use of other public and trust lands in the Bennett Mountain area would be maintained through the reservation of access rights on existing roads.

3.3.1.3.3 ALTERNATIVE 3

Alternative 3 would convey up to about 1,673 acres of NFS land in exchange for about 1,542 acres of lands proposed for acquisition. The conveyance lands would include about 527 acres in the south end of the area described in the Proposed Action as Conveyance Parcel 1, or about 0.5 percent of the 91,000 acres or 1.8 percent of the Federal and State Trust lands in the area around the Bennett Hills. About 1,515 acres of Conveyance Parcel 1 would remain in the NFS. Public recreational access, including hunting, would be reduced on the conveyed acres. However, access and use of other public Federal and State Trust lands in the Bennett Mountain area would be maintained through the reservation of access rights on existing roads.

3.3.1.3.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The analysis area for the cumulative effects of the land exchange on this issue is the 91,000 acres around the Bennett Hills. No other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions are known that would accumulate with the effects of the land exchange on the acres of Conveyance Parcel 1 retained in Federal ownership.

3.3.2 TERM GRAZING PERMITS

3.3.2.1 ISSUE

The proposed conveyance parcels include lands in five active grazing allotments and one vacant allotment (Figure 3-1). Comments were received from the permittees on the North Little Camas and Cat Creek allotments, expressing concerns with the effects of the land exchange on their grazing privileges.

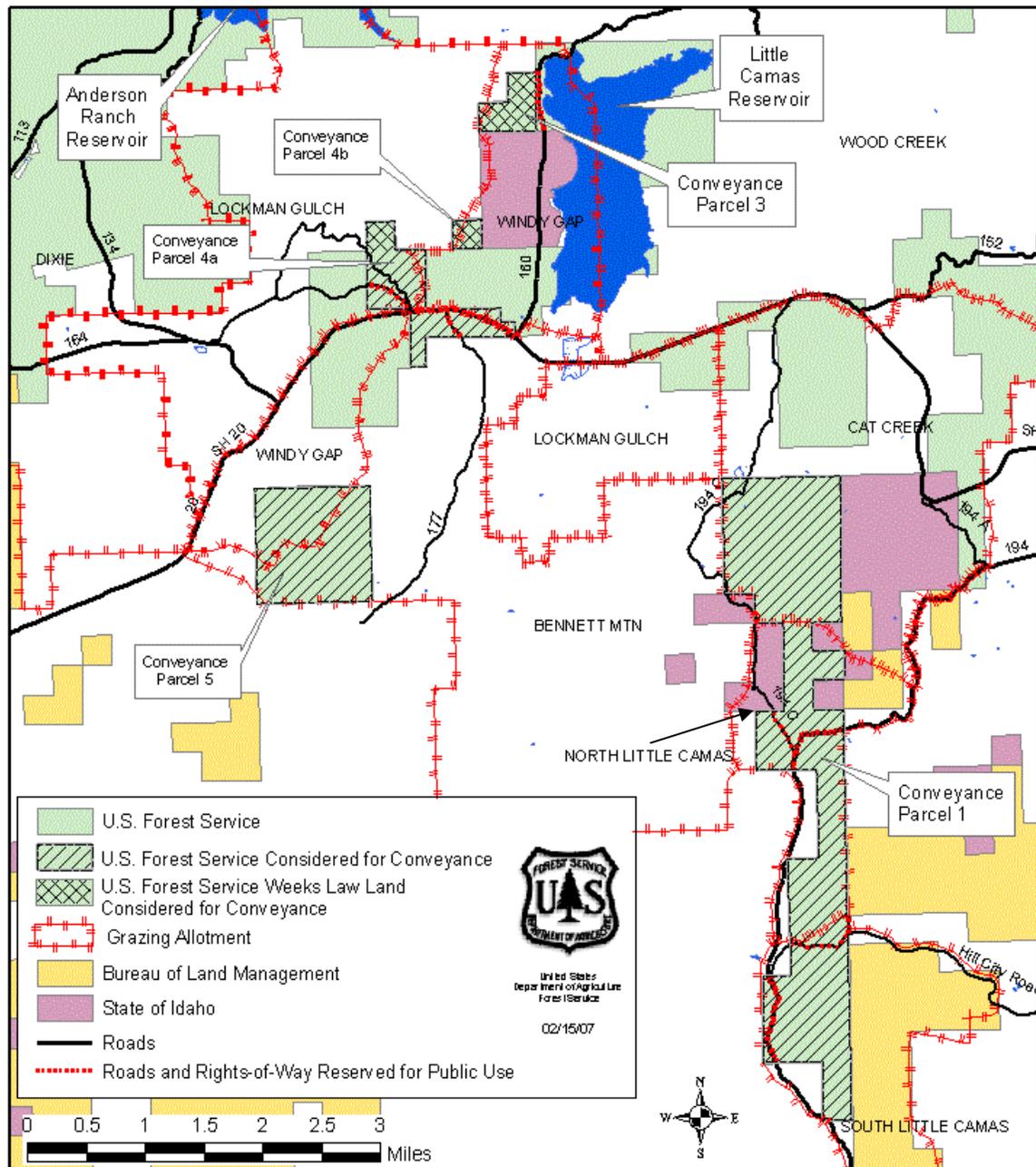


Figure 3-1. Grazing allotments included in conveyance parcels.

3.3.2.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for this issue is the area of the allotments affected by both the acquisition parcels and conveyance parcels. Acquisition parcels 1, 2, and 3 occupy about 1,170 acres of the 38,510-acre Willow Creek C&H Allotment. Acquisition parcels 4, 5, and 6 occupy about 380 acres of the 23,160-acre Grouse Creek C&H Allotment. None of the currently private acquisition parcels are fenced to exclude livestock from entering. Each acquisition parcel is grazed as a part of the allotment within which it is located (Table 3-3).

Table 3-3. Existing ownership of grazing allotment land (acres) on parcels proposed for acquisition.

Ownership/Parcel	Acquisition Parcel Grazing Allotment*		
	Willow Creek	Grouse Creek	Total
State	4,540	0	4,540
Private	2,700	2,970	5,670
NFS	31,270	20,200	51,470
Total	38,510	23,170	61,680
Parcel 1	480	0	480
Parcel 2	80	0	80
Parcel 3	600	0	600
Parcel 4	0	270	270
Parcel 5	0	30	30
Parcel 6	0	90	90
Total Exchange	1160	390	1,550
NFS Remainder	30,110	19,810	49,920
Total Remainder	37,350	22,780	60,130

* Areas are rounded to the nearest 10 acres.

The five parcels considered available for conveyance encompass six grazing allotments and include a mixture of ownerships (Table 3-4). Other ownerships include the USDI Bureau of Land Management, State of Idaho, and private. The allotments and their respective permitted numbers are shown in Table 3-5. The Bennett Mountain allotment is currently vacant, but the numbers displayed in the table reflect the most recent permitted numbers.

Table 3-4. Existing ownership of grazing allotment land (acres) on parcels considered available for conveyance.

Ownership/ Parcel	Conveyance Parcel Grazing Allotments*						
	South Little Camas	North Little Camas	Cat Creek	Lockman Gulch	Windy Gap	Bennett Mountain	Total
NFS	560	740	2,130	1,020	1,270	680	6,400
Other	1,230	640	2,400	5,150	1,410	6,400	17,230
Total	1,790	1,380	4,530	6,170	2,680	7,080	23,630
Parcel 1	560	740	750	0	0	0	2,050
Parcel 3	0	0	0	10	120	0	130
Parcel 4a	0	0	0	170	40	130	340
Parcel 4b	0	0	0	10	30	0	40
Parcel 5	0	0	0	0	220	400	620
Total Exchange	560	740	750	190	410	530	3,180
NFS Remainder	0	0	1,380	830	860	150	3,220
Total Remainder	1,230	640	3,780	5,980	2,270	6,550	20,450

* Areas are rounded to the nearest 10 acres.

Table 3-5. Total permitted NFS grazing numbers and seasons for grazing allotments on all parcels considered available for conveyance.

Use	Conveyance Parcel Grazing Allotments						Total Head Months
	South Little Camas	North Little Camas	Cat Creek	Lockman Gulch	Windy Gap	Bennett Mountain**	
Cow/Calf Pair	55	55	146	28	62	5	1,110
Days	46	46	40	153	153	107	
Yearlings	0	0	62	0	0	0	
Days	0	0	138	0	0	0	
Head Months*	83	83	473	141	312	18	

* One cow/calf pair = one yearling. Head Months = [(CC Pair x Days) + (Yearlings x Days)] ÷ (365÷12)

** The Bennett Mountain Allotment is not currently in use.

3.3.2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The effects on the allotment use under each alternative are described below and summarized in Table 3-6.

3.3.2.3.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

Under the No Action scenario, the land exchange would not occur. There would be no change in the affected environment. Grazing on NFS land would remain as currently permitted. The Bennett Mountain Allotment would likely remain vacant.

3.3.2.3.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION)

The allotment use resulting from the exchange of all lands considered available for conveyance under the Proposed Action is shown in Table 3-6. Under Alternative 2, all of Conveyance Parcel 1 would be exchanged, and there would be no NFS land remaining in either the North Little Camas or South Little Camas allotments. The term grazing permits on the North Little Camas and South Little Camas allotments would be cancelled. These allotments would cease to exist. Neither of these allotments would remain viable under this alternative. The cancellation of term grazing permits on both of these allotments would result in a loss of 83 head months of grazing for each permittee. The Forest Service has been advised by the permittee on the South Little Camas allotment that the permittee is not concerned with the closing of that allotment.

Table 3-6. Comparison of resulting allotment permitted numbers under alternatives 1- 3.

Alternative	Conveyance Parcel Grazing Allotments (Head Months)						Total Head Months
	South Little Camas	North Little Camas	Cat Creek	Lockman Gulch	Windy Gap	Bennett Mountain	
Alt 1	83	83	473	141	312	18	1,110
Alt 2	0	0	307	104	128	0	539
Alt 3	0	83	473	104	128	0	788

About 750 acres of Conveyance Parcel 1 lies within the Cat Creek allotment. Conveyance of Parcel 1 would leave 1,380 acres of NFS land within the 3,780-acre allotment. Conveyance of Parcel 1 in its entirety would result in a 46 percent decrease in cow/calf pairs and a 27 percent decrease in yearlings permitted on the Cat Creek Allotment. This represents an overall decrease of

35 percent in use (in terms of head months) on the allotment. Although the permitted numbers on the Cat Creek Allotment would decrease, the allotment would remain manageable and viable under this alternative.

Portions of conveyance parcels 3, 4a, and 4b, totaling about 190 acres, are within the 5,980-acre Lockman Gulch allotment. Conveyance of these parcels would leave about 830 acres of NFS land within the allotment, reducing permitted numbers by about 26 percent from the existing 141 head months to 104 head months. Although the permitted number of the Lockman Gulch allotment would decrease, the allotment would remain manageable and viable under this alternative.

Portions of conveyance parcels 3, 4a, 4b, and 5, totaling about 410 acres, are within the 2,270-acre Windy Gap allotment. Conveyance of these parcels would leave about 860 acres of NFS land within the allotment, reducing permitted numbers by about 59 percent from the existing 312 head months to 128 head months. Although the permitted number of the Windy Gap allotment would decrease, the allotment would remain manageable and viable under this alternative.

Portions of conveyance parcels 4a and 5 are located within the Bennett Mountain Allotment. The allotment, which has been vacant for a number of years, would have only 150 acres of NFS land remaining within its boundary after these parcels are exchanged. If parcels 4a and 5 are exchanged, all viable grazing lands would be removed from the allotment, and it would no longer exist.

For the Willow Creek and Grouse Creek allotments, given that the six acquisition parcels are currently being grazed as parts of their respective grazing allotments, and that these parcels occupy a relatively small part of the total areas of the allotments, no change in allotment management in terms of season and numbers would likely occur.

3.3.2.3.3 ALTERNATIVE 3

The allotment use resulting from the exchange of all lands considered available for conveyance under Alternative 3 is also shown in Table 3-6. Alternative 3 would convey only the most southern 527 acres of the area identified in the Proposed Action as Conveyance Parcel 1. This would result in the cancellation of term grazing permits only on the South Little Camas allotment. The South Little Camas allotment would cease to exist. There would be no change in the season, numbers, or management of the North Little Camas or Cat Creek allotments. With no change in permitted season, numbers, or management of the North Little Camas or Cat Creek allotments, both of these allotments would remain viable under this alternative.

The effects of this alternative on grazing within the Lockman Gulch, Windy Gap, and Bennett Mountain allotments would be the same as in Alternative 2.

The effects of Alternative 3 on grazing within the Willow Creek and Grouse Creek allotments would be the same as under Alternative 2.

3.3.2.3.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Because the effects on the viability and management of the Cat Creek and North Little Camas allotments (i.e., the issue) occur within those two allotments, the cumulative effects analysis area is limited to the areas of those two allotments, including the state, private, and other Federal portions. No other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions, on either NFS or non-NFS portions of these allotments, are known that would accumulate with the land exchange's effects on

the viability and management of the Cat Creek and North Little Camas allotments, or any of the other allotments involved in the land exchange.

3.4 OTHER RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

3.4.1 NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS OR CULTURAL SITES, ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES, OR HISTORIC PROPERTIES OR AREAS

Cultural resources management on NFS lands is performed in accordance with public law, which includes the Antiquities Act, the Historic Sites Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act. As provided for in the Historic Sites Act and subsequent public laws, the Secretary of Interior provides oversight and guidance to all Federal agencies through the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Officers.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is the principal guiding statute for the management of cultural resources. Section 106 of NHPA requires Federal agencies to evaluate the effects of their activities and programs on historic properties, and provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation the opportunity to comment on Agency undertakings. Such evaluations result in either "no effect," "no adverse effect," or "adverse effect" determinations. At the state level, the Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) reviews Federal undertakings on behalf of the Advisory Council. The procedures for implementing Section 106 of NHPA are outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR Part 800).

Historic properties are significant cultural resources that are included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Historic properties include but are not limited to prehistoric or historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects. The criteria for National Register eligibility are outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR Part 60).

NHPA, as amended in 1992, also requires Federal agencies to consult with appropriate Indian tribes regarding the management of traditional religious and cultural properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and Shoshone-Paiute Tribes have expressed concern about cultural resources management on the Boise NF. The Tribes consider cultural resources in the proposed land exchange to be important to their history. The Forest Service is consulting with these tribes and has conducted field visits with tribal representatives to the Federal parcels in the exchange.

3.4.1.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for cultural resources consists of the parcels potentially involved in the exchange and areas immediately adjacent.

The conveyance parcels of the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange encompass lands of Little Camas Prairie and the Mount Bennett Hills in Elmore County, Idaho. Archaeological, historical, and ethnographic records document the cultural sensitivity of the area. Ancestors of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and Shoshone-Paiute Tribes originally inhabited the area. There are 18 cultural resource sites on these parcels, three of which are historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These historic properties are best described as Native

American campsites. Archaeological excavations at these sites have not recovered any evidence for burials.

By the mid 1800s, emigrants leaving Fort Hall began using Camas Prairie as an alternative route to the Oregon Trail along the Snake River Plain. The route was named Goodale's Cutoff in honor of a trapper who led a party of miners across Camas Prairie in 1862. Goodale's Cutoff bisects Conveyance Parcel 4a of the proposed land exchange. The available historical evidence points to State Highway 20 as the primary alignment for the historic cutoff, although local informants also describe various alternate routes in the immediate area. A segment of Goodale's Cutoff is listed on the National Register in Butte County. In Elmore County, the trail segment in Acquisition Parcel 4a is not considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Developments in this parcel have altered important aspects of the trail's integrity that convey its significance to the American public, thus precluding eligibility for the Register. These developments include the construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of State Highway 20 over the years.

Homesteading on Little Camas Prairie began as early as 1891, and continued through the late 1960s under a variety of Federal land conveyance laws including the Homestead Act of 1862, Desert Land Act of 1877, Stockraising Homestead Act of 1916, and Weeks Law of 1911. In 1912, the Mountain Home Cooperative Irrigation Company built Little Camas Dam, which is now owned and operated by the Mountain Home Irrigation District. Today, Little Camas Reservoir is the dominant feature of the landscape.

Historical data and the results of previous surveys on NFS lands adjacent to the acquisition parcels indicate that several of these parcels may contain historic properties of interest to the Forest Service. Four of these parcels were originally acquired by private landowners in the nineteen-teens and twenties under the Homestead Act of 1862 and Stockraising Homestead Act of 1916. Two of the parcels were originally mining claims patented at the turn of the century. All of the acquisition parcels may contain historic sites related to these activities. Two parcels are high probability areas for Native American sites.

3.4.1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.4.1.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

There would be no effect to cultural resources under Alternative 1 because the land exchange would not occur. Historic properties on NFS lands would remain in Federal ownership.

3.4.1.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION) AND ALTERNATIVE 3

Under either action alternative, a mitigation measure specifies that areas containing historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places would not be conveyed in the exchange (refer to sections 2.4.2.2.3 and 2.4.3.2.4). Consequently, neither action alternative would affect the three historic properties in conveyance parcels eligible for listing on the National Register.

Although there is a high probability that historic sites exist on the acquisition parcels, the acquisition parcels contain no known historic sites. Under Forest Service management, the acquisition parcels would be subject to cultural resources inventory prior to any project work being conducted and significant cultural resources would receive protection.

On September 24, 2007, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the Forest Service's determination that the Danskin-Camas land exchange would have no adverse effect to historic properties, because areas containing historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places would not be conveyed in the exchange.

3.4.1.2.3 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The cumulative effects analysis area for cultural resources includes the NFS lands proposed for acquisition and conveyance and their larger geographic setting. Past, present and reasonably future activities include ongoing livestock grazing and dispersed recreation, including OHV recreation and hunting.

Because there would be no direct or indirect effect to historic properties under alternatives 1, 2 or 3, no cumulative effects would occur as a result of this land exchange.

3.4.2 INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREAS (IRAS)

3.4.2.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for analyzing the effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives on this resource is the area included in both the acquisition and conveyance parcels. None of the parcels considered available for conveyance are in IRAs. Some of the acquisition parcels are in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area, which lies within the Danskin IRA (Figure 3-2). Acquisition parcels 1, 2, and 4 adjoin the IRA.

The Danskin IRA encompasses 30,627 acres about 35 miles east of Boise. The area is accessed by the Upper Black's Creek Road from Interstate 84, and may also be accessed with OHVs throughout the Willow Creek area. Brush and grass communities, with scattered stands of ponderosa pine, dominate this area. (Forest Plan FEIS, Appendix C, p. C-59).

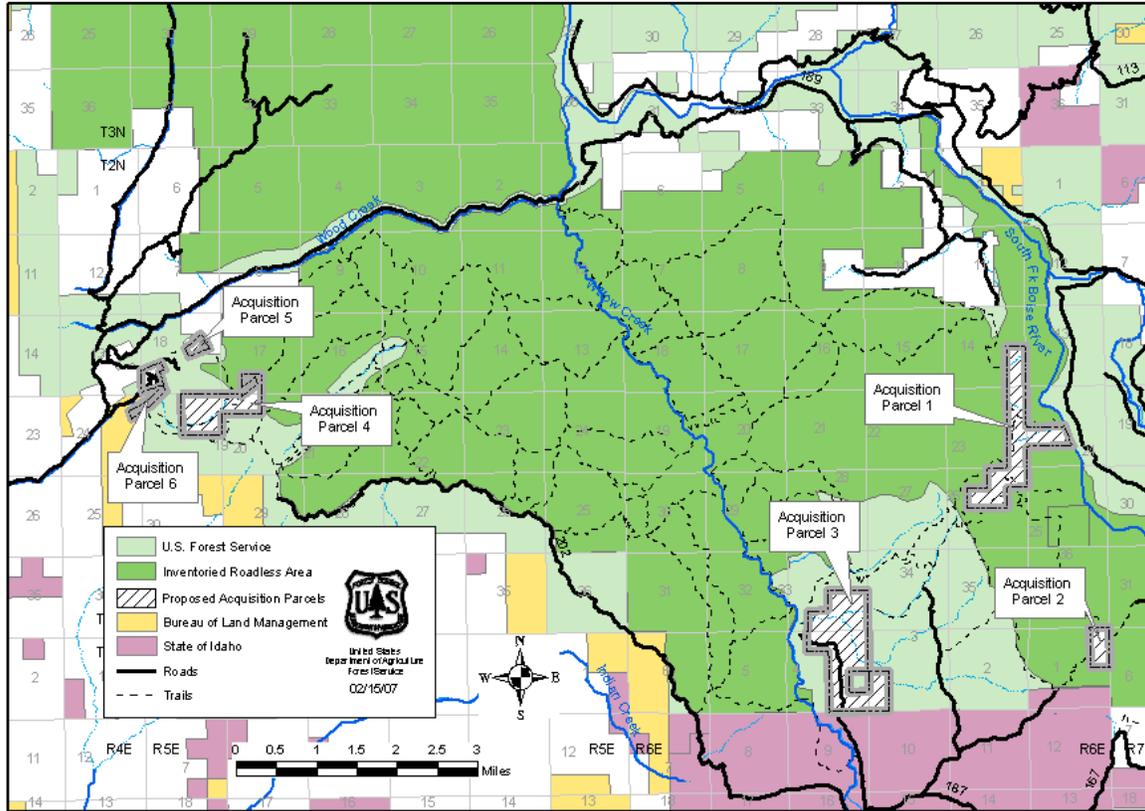


Figure 3-2. Location of proposed acquisition parcels with reference to the Danskin Mountains Inventoried Roadless Area.

3.4.2.1.1 WILDERNESS ATTRIBUTES

The Danskin IRA has a low capability rating for apparent naturalness and opportunities for challenge and adventure, and a moderate capability for opportunity for solitude. The natural integrity and appearance of this area has been altered in many locations by an extensive network of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and motorcycle trails. Currently the motorized use on the popular off-road trail system interrupts the available solitude. Special features of the area are the extensive trail network, a Research Natural Area, and the South Fork Boise River Eligible Wild and Scenic River corridor (Forest Plan FEIS, Appendix C, pp. C-59-61).

3.4.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.4.2.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

The No-Action Alternative would allow the continuation of the existing situation and not directly affect the existing condition or capability ratings of the Danskin IRA. There would be no change in the current status of the area as an Inventoried Roadless Area. If the private landowner were to deny public access through these parcels, the opportunities for challenge, adventure, and solitude would be reduced. If the private landowner were to only allow non-motorized access to these parcels, opportunities for challenge, adventure, and solitude would be increased for non-motorized users.

3.4.2.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION) AND ALTERNATIVE 3

Under Alternatives 2 and 3, acquisition parcels 1, 2, and 4, should they be procured in the final land exchange, would be included in the NFS land base and would be assigned the same management direction as adjacent NFS lands. Parcels 1 and 2 (484.10 and 79.98 acres, respectively) are entirely surrounded by the IRA and would likely be considered part of the Danskin IRA during the next IRA boundary update. Acquisition Parcel 4 (265.23 acres) partially overlaps the logical IRA boundary and a portion of this parcel would likely be included in the IRA during any update of IRA boundaries.

These parcels currently contain portions of motorized routes that are actively being used. Overall motorized use is not anticipated to change as a result of these acquisitions. No new roads would be constructed in IRAs as a result of this land exchange. The opportunities for solitude would remain limited as noted in the description of the attributes of the area.

Acquisition of parcels 1, 2, and 4 would result in more manageable boundaries if the area were to be designated wilderness. The current enclosed parcels were noted as contributing to management difficulty if the area were to be designated wilderness. Parcel 1 effectively isolated a 5,000-acre portion of the IRA, and as a result it was noted that this portion could be deleted to arrive at a more manageable boundary (Forest Plan FEIS, Appendix C, p. C-59). The current connection to this 5,000 acre portion of the Danskin IRA is a gap of NFS land less than ¼-mile in width. The acquisition of Parcel 1 effectively removes this private land "barrier" to approximately 5,000 contiguous IRA acres and improves the potential manageability of the area.

Acquisition of parcels 3, 5, and 6 should have no direct or indirect effects to the Danskin IRA. These parcels are not adjacent or contiguous to the Danskin IRA.

3.4.2.2.3 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Past actions have resulted in the current Danskin IRA boundaries and in the current capability and availability as potential wilderness.

Acquisition of parcels 1, 2, and 4 would likely increase the acreage of the current Danskin IRA from the current 30,627 acres to an estimated 31,251 acres (a 2 percent increase). There would be an improvement in the manageability and boundaries if designated wilderness as acquisition of Parcel 1 removes the private land "isolation" of approximately 5,000 acres that currently is connected by a narrow gap (less than ¼ mile) of NFS land.

The State of Idaho has submitted to the Secretary of Agriculture (Secretary) a petition for rule-making: *The State of Idaho Petition* (Petition). The Petition, pursuant to section 553(e) of the Administrative Procedures Act and Department of Agriculture (Department) regulations at 7 CFR 1.28, requested specific regulatory protections and certain management flexibility for the 9.3 million acres of NFS IRAs in Idaho.

The FS is proposing to promulgate a state-specific rule in response to the Idaho State Petition presented by former Governor James Risch on November 29 and 30, 2006, to the Roadless Area Conservation National Advisory Committee (RACNAC).

The proposed rule would designate a system of lands called Idaho Roadless Areas and establish five management area themes -- Wild Land Recreation, Primitive, Special Areas of Historic and Tribal Significance, Backcountry/Recreation, and General Forest, Rangeland, and Grassland for each individual IRA.

The Forest Service has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that discloses the environmental consequences that could result from the proposed rule and alternatives. The State of Idaho Petition assigned the Danskin IRA to a "Primitive" management theme. The DEIS retains this management category for the Danskin area. The Primitive theme would retain the current capability and availability for potential wilderness.

Overall, the cumulative effect would be similar to the direct and indirect effects previously disclosed; the Danskin IRA would likely increase slightly in size (two percent), a private land barrier that partially isolates a 5,000 acre portion of the IRA would be acquired as public lands, and the IRA would have more manageable boundaries. There are no effects resulting from past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future grazing that would accumulate with the effects of the land exchange on wilderness attributes in the Danskin IRA.

3.4.3 THREATENED, ENDANGERED, PROPOSED, OR CANDIDATE SPECIES, AND THEIR CRITICAL HABITAT

Wildlife and Fish Biological Assessments (BAs) completed in 2004 for the original Proposed Action and reviewed and updated in 2007 concluded that the Revised Proposed Action would have "no effect" on Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Candidate species or their critical habitat (Project Record, BAs). The original Proposed Action included all of the current acquisition parcels, as well as a total of about 5,200 acres of conveyance parcels. About 2,012 of these approximately 5,200 conveyance-parcel acres were not included in the Revised Proposed Action analyzed in this EA. Although the effects described below reflect the 5,200 acres of conveyance parcels, there would be no change from the "no effects" determination because fewer acres would be conveyed under either action alternative. The BAs were reviewed in 2007 in light of the June 1, 2007, species list and reviewed again in light of the September 1, 2007, species list. The current species list is the same as in 2004, except that bald eagle has been removed as of September 1, 2007 (Project Record, BAs). The effects to bald eagle are now analyzed in a Biological Evaluation because it remains a sensitive species.

3.4.3.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for analyzing the effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives on these species is the habitat for these species that would be acquired and conveyed in the exchange. The USDI Fish and Wildlife Service currently list gray wolf, Canada lynx, yellow-billed cuckoo, and bull trout as listed wildlife species on the Mountain Home Ranger District. BAs were completed to determine the likely effects of the Proposed Action on listed wildlife and fish species (Project Record, Biological Assessments (updated 2007)). There are no threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species of plants, or their critical habitat listed on the Mountain Home Ranger District.

3.4.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.4.3.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

Under Alternative 1, no land exchange would occur, and there would be no effects to listed fish and wildlife species.

3.4.3.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION)

Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*)

As documented in the BA, Alternative 2 would have “no effect” on gray wolves, because the only potential direct effect to gray wolves is adverse human/wolf encounters, and no adverse human/wolf encounters have occurred in recent history on the Mountain Home Ranger District. Moreover, in general, human activities occurring more than a mile from a rendezvous or den site are unlikely to disrupt or inhibit life history behavior to a point where abandonment is likely to occur. The nearest known den site is 27 miles from the nearest exchange parcels, and there are no known wolf rendezvous sites within one mile of the analysis area.

Canada Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*)

As documented in the BA, Alternative 2 would have “no effect” on Canada lynx, because the exchange parcels are outside an existing Lynx Analysis Unit (LAU).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)

As documented in the BA, Alternative 2 would have “no effect” on the yellow-billed cuckoo because Alternative 2 would not directly, indirectly, or cumulatively affect suitable habitat for this species.

Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*)

As documented in the BA, Alternative 2 would have “no effect” on bull trout and bull trout proposed critical habitat. None of the parcels considered available for conveyance are in bull trout core areas.

3.4.3.2.3 ALTERNATIVE 3

The effects of this alternative would be the same as those of Alternative 2. Alternative 3 would have no effect to any of the five species discussed in Alternative 2, or their critical habitat. This is because the area affected by Alternative 3 is a subset of the area affected by Alternative 2 and the action analyzed is of the same type as in Alternative 2.

3.4.3.2.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future activities include ongoing grazing and OHV recreation in the project area. Because there are no direct or indirect effects to listed fish and wildlife species as a result of any of the alternatives, direct and indirect effects would not accumulate with the effects of other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions.

3.4.4 SENSITIVE SPECIES

Biological Evaluations for Sensitive wildlife and plants were completed in 2007 and are included in the project record. This section summarizes the results of those evaluations.

3.4.4.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.4.4.1.1 SENSITIVE WILDLIFE

The analysis area for analyzing the effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives on these species is the habitat for these species that would be acquired and conveyed in the exchange. Suitable habitat exists within the analysis area for the Columbia spotted frog, flammulated owl, greater sage grouse, mountain quail, spotted bat, and western big-eared bat. The effects of the land exchange on these species are described later in this section.

Suitable habitat does not exist for the bald eagle, boreal owl, common loon, northern goshawk, great gray owl, peregrine falcon, three-toed woodpecker, white-headed woodpecker, fisher, or wolverine, and therefore the land exchange would have “no impact to any populations or individuals” of these species (Project Record, Wildlife Biological Evaluation).

3.4.4.1.2 SENSITIVE PLANTS

There are no documented populations of Sensitive plant species within the parcels of land proposed for exchange, although suitable habitat may exist in aspen stands, vernal wet areas adjacent to sagebrush, and riparian areas/springs/wet seeps. These areas of suitable habitat are associated with slender moonwort, least phacelia, bugleg/wholeleaf goldenweed and slickspot peppergrass. These species will be discussed later in this section.

3.4.4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.4.4.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

This alternative would not affect sensitive wildlife or plants because no exchange of land would take place. Species would continue to exist as described in the affected environment.

3.4.4.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION) AND ALTERNATIVE 3

Columbia Spotted Frog (*Rana luteiventris*)

Although there are no perennial streams within the analysis area, there are permanent water sources, limited to water developments for grazing, that could support this species. However, if spotted frogs are present in the exchange parcels, there would be no impact to them because the use of the exchanged parcels would remain unchanged. The exchange would have “no impact to any population or individuals.”

Flammulated Owl (*Otus flammeolus*)

Conveyance Parcel 1 contains about 280 suitable acres of habitat for flammulated owl. Flammulated owls were detected in this area in the late 1990s. However, because the use of the exchanged parcels would remain unchanged, the exchange would have “no impact to any population or individuals.”

Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)

All parcels involved in this land exchange have potential sage-grouse habitat. The species has been detected within one mile of these parcels. The nearest documented sage-grouse lek is two miles away from Conveyance Parcel 1 and is at a lower elevation. Aerial lek surveys (2005-2007) across potential sage-grouse habitat on BLM-administered and NFS lands conducted in

cooperation with the BLM and IDF&G did not identify any new lek sites on any of the land exchange parcels. Although potential sage-grouse habitat exists within the exchange parcels, it is anticipated that the use of the exchanged parcels would remain unchanged, and the exchange would have “no impact to any population or individuals.”

Mountain Quail (*Oerortyx pictus*)

Habitat suitability assessments in 2004 indicated that the Bennett Hills, north of Glenns Ferry, were suitable for mountain quail re-introduction. In the spring of 2006, 52 mountain quail were released approximately five miles south of Conveyance Parcel 1. In the spring of 2007, another 75 mountain quail were released in the same area. No mountain quail have been detected on NFS lands in this area, but the likelihood of individuals utilizing habitat in Conveyance Parcel 1 would be high. However, because the use of the exchanged parcels would remain unchanged, it is anticipated that the exchange would have “no impact to any population or individuals.”

Spotted Bat (*Euderma maculatum*) and Western Big-eared Bat (*Plecotus townsendii*)

These species may use the land exchange parcels during migration, or fly over the area during nighttime foraging, since suitable roosting habitat exists adjacent to the land exchange parcels in the basalt cliffs found along the South Fork Boise River. However, the land exchange would not hinder these species’ ability to fly over the area during migration or foraging, and would not affect roosting habitat, so the exchange would have “no impact to any population or individuals” of either species.

Slender Moonwort (*Botrychium lineare*), Least Phacelia (*Phacelia minutissima*), and Bugleg/wholeleaf goldenweed (*Pyrrocoma insecticruris*)

While no rare plants are known to exist on either the conveyance or acquisition parcels, there is a higher likelihood of finding either *Phacelia minutissima* (least phacelia) or *Pyrrocoma insecticruris* (bugleg goldenweed) within the parcels slated for conveyance than those for acquisition. The conveyance parcels are higher in elevation, have a greater incidence of fine/volcanic soil types, and they have the presence of aspen. Land that the Forest Service proposes to acquire has a lower likelihood of supporting *P. minutissima* or *P. insecticruris* due to less suitable habitat conditions (lower elevation, higher incidence of granitic parent material, absence of aspen). The *Botrychium lineare* (slender moonwort) could hypothetically exist on any of the parcels with riparian acreage/wet meadow/seeps/aspen. There are drainages on both acquisition and conveyance parcels that could hypothetically support slender moonwort. This land exchange “may impact” individuals of these species, “but would not likely contribute to a trend towards Federal Listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or species (MII)”

Slickspot Peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*)

No impacts are anticipated to potential habitat for *Lepidium papilliferum* due to the lack of suitable habitat.

3.4.5 ELIGIBLE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

3.4.5.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for analyzing the effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives on this resource is the area included in both the acquisition and conveyance parcels. No Wild and Scenic

River corridors exist within the conveyance parcels. Approximately 40 acres of Acquisition Parcel 1 is within a river corridor that is eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. The parcel lies within Segment 3 of the South Fork Boise River Wild and Scenic River corridor (Figure 3-3), which extends ¼-mile on either side of the high water mark of the river. The affected river segment is 12.27 miles long and classified as Wild. The Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) in this segment of the corridor are identified in the Forest Plan as scenic, recreation, and geologic (Forest Plan, Appendix D, page D-10). An undeveloped scenic overlook of the South Fork Boise River exists within this acquisition parcel. As Figure 3-3 shows, there is a small amount of motorized trail within the corridor, within the acquisition parcel, and on NFS land. This trail pre-dated the designation of the eligible Wild and Scenic River corridor. The trail would remain open, but the Forest Service has no plans for additional development of motorized trails in the corridor.

3.4.5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.4.5.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

The No-Action Alternative would allow the continuation of the existing situation and would not directly affect the existing condition of the eligible Wild and Scenic River corridor. However, the corridor would be indirectly affected in that Federal government would not gain long-term control over the use of this parcel of private land in the river corridor. Other indirect effects could be either detrimental or beneficial. However, efforts to-date at securing access have proven unsuccessful, placing future public access in jeopardy. Effects could range from the complete elimination of public access to the corridor (detrimental) to the elimination of only motorized access to the corridor (beneficial).

3.4.5.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION) AND ALTERNATIVE 3

Because Acquisition Parcel 1 would be procured under both Alternatives 2 and 3, the direct and indirect effects to Wild and Scenic Rivers would be the same under either alternative. The acquisition of this parcel would not affect the free flowing character or wild classification of the river. Although motorized travel on land or water is generally not compatible within eligible river corridors classified as Wild, as Figure 3-3 shows, the Forest Service would acquire a small amount of existing motorized trail within the corridor.

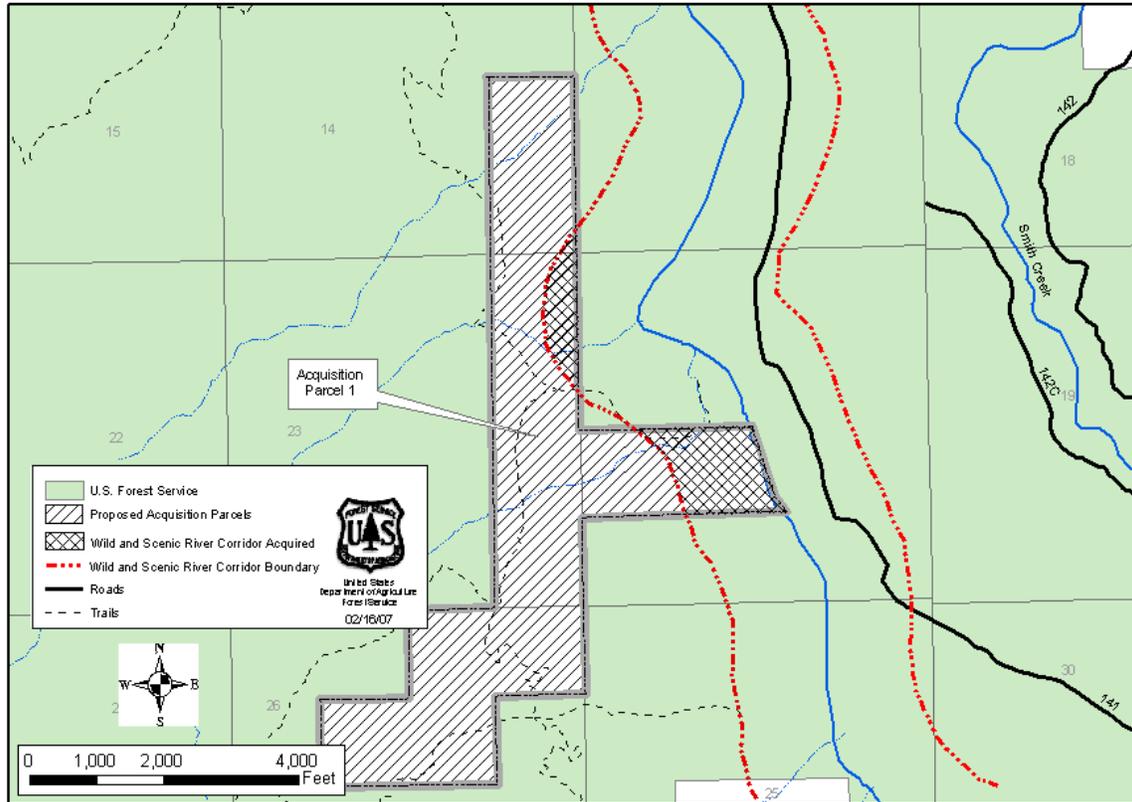


Figure 3-3. Approximate location of South Fork Boise River Wild and Scenic River corridor in Acquisition Parcel 1.

Acquiring about 40 acres of Wild and Scenic River corridor along the South Fork Boise River would contribute to maintaining the scenic and geologic ORVs in the corridor by ensuring public land access to the corridor. This acquisition would enhance the recreation ORV by improving public access to this segment of the corridor for fishing, sightseeing, wildlife viewing, swimming, hunting, hiking, biking and non-motorized boating, and the public would be assured the opportunity to access the scenic vista of the river corridor located in this parcel. In addition, Federal holdings in the corridor would be consolidated, improving the corridor's manageability. The acquisition of this parcel would not affect the free-flowing character or Wild classification of this segment of the river.

3.4.5.2.3 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Grazing, OHV recreation, and river recreation are past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions considered in analyzing cumulative effects of the land exchange on the eligible Wild and Scenic River corridor. The land exchange would enhance the future OHV recreation experience in the corridor by maintaining access to all trails in the OHV area, especially access to the scenic viewpoint in Acquisition Parcel 1. The Three Point Mountain Trailhead parking lot, located on BLM-administered land outside of the Danskin IRA, would improve access to the corridor and would likely cause a slight increase in use from the western end of the OHV area. Any increase in use caused by the construction of the trailhead's parking lot would be made more manageable with the acquisition of lands in the IRA. The Forest Service is in the process of improving the Danskin Boat Launch. That project includes construction of a new parking lot, restroom facility, and boat launch. Users of this boat launch float past this acquisition parcel, and

acquisition of this parcel would add to the enjoyment of river users who wish to experience the ORVs in this segment of the river. None of these activities would cause effects that would accumulate with the direct and indirect effects of the land exchange on the scenic, recreational, or geological ORVs, the free flowing character, or the Wild classification of this segment of the eligible Wild and Scenic River corridor.

There are no effects of grazing that would accumulate with the effects of the land exchange on scenic, recreational, or geological ORVs, the free flowing character, or the Wild classification of this segment of the eligible Wild and Scenic River corridor.

3.4.6 ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

Roads located on acquisition parcels include the road identified as 167E within Acquisition Parcel 3 (1.25 miles), and the roads identified as 189A (Little Fiddler Spur) (0.21 mile) and 189A2 (0.28 mile) within Acquisition Parcel 6. The acquisition of these parcels would secure these roads for public use. The roads to be acquired are private, low standard roads largely unsuitable for most public travel. Their future use depends on a number of other actions and decisions that would take place in the future. The Forest Service will determine their status at a later date, but has no intention of denying public access in these areas.

3.4.6.1 COST SHARING

There are no cost sharing areas in the land parcels being considered in this land exchange (Project Record, Map of Cost Share Roads).

3.4.7 IDAHO BIRDING TRAIL

3.4.7.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The analysis area for this resource is the area within the viewshed of the public lands and roads around Little Camas Reservoir for observing birds. Conveyance Parcel 3 is located adjacent to Little Camas Reservoir. Little Camas Reservoir is one of 175 sites along 2,000 miles of the Idaho Birding Trail (IBT). This trail was developed by the IDF&G's non-game program with other state, Federal, and private partners to promote opportunities for rural economic growth in the form of providing amenities to travelers who are birding, and to promote the conservation of bird and wildlife habitat to maintain the quality of life for Idahoans. The state-wide trail is a network of sites and side trips that provide the best viewing opportunities to see large concentrations of birds, high species diversity, or unique places of high habitat quality and their associated birds in Idaho.

3.4.7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.4.7.2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)

The No Action alternative would not affect bird observation opportunities on the Idaho Birding Trail.

3.4.7.2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION) AND ALTERNATIVE 3

Conveyance of Parcel 3 would not affect road access to the Little Camas Reservoir site of the IBT. Although 120 acres of adjacent upland habitat would be conveyed into private ownership,

opportunities for observing wildlife on this parcel from adjacent public roads and lands would not be affected because the primary use of the conveyed land would not change. Conveyance of this parcel would only prohibit public walking access to the 120 acres of upland habitat on Parcel 3.

3.4.7.2.3 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

There are no effects of past, other present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions that would accumulate with the effects of the land exchange on the public's access to or use of the Idaho Birding Trail.

3.4.8 CONGRESSIONALLY DESIGNATED AREAS

The exchange involves no Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, or National Recreation Areas.

3.4.9 RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS

The exchange involves no Research Natural Areas.

3.4.10 WATER RIGHTS

No water rights would be conveyed to the Forest Service in the acquisition parcels. Alternative 2 would convey three water rights to the non-Federal party:

1. Water Rights No. 63-9566/63-30630 would be conveyed to the non-Federal party. The points of diversion and use for this right are in Conveyance Parcel 1, T2S, R9E, Section 2, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$.
2. Water Permit No.37-8524 would be conveyed to the non-Federal party. The points of diversion and use for this right are in Conveyance Parcel 1, T2S, R9E, Section 23, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$.
3. Water Right 63-10825 would be conveyed to the non-Federal party. The point of diversion for this right is in Conveyance Parcel 3, T1S, R9E, Section 9, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$. The place of use for this right is in Conveyance Parcel 3, T1S, R9E, Section 9, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$.

Alternative 3 would convey water right 63-10825 to the non-Federal party (Project Record, Water Rights Specialist's Report).

3.4.11 STEEP SLOPES OR HIGHLY ERODIBLE SOILS

There would be no cause-effect relationship between the land exchange and effects to steep slopes and highly erodible soils because no change in land use is anticipated as a result of this land exchange (refer to section 2.4.2.2.2).

3.5 CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES

A number of disclosures involving compliance with various laws, executive orders, and regulations are required in NEPA analyses addressing land exchanges. These disclosures are listed below.

3.5.1 EXECUTIVE ORDER 11988, *FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT*

Executive Order 11988 requires that the exchange not increase flood hazards to the non-Federal estate. There would be no increase in flood hazards to the non-Federal estate as a result of this land exchange under either action alternative. Consistency with this order was determined in 2004 with the evaluation of the land exchange as it was originally configured. At that time, the District Hydrologist determined that the land exchange as it was then configured would result in a net gain of 15.6 acres of stream floodplains to the United States. This determination was reviewed in 2007. With a reduction of parcels considered available for conveyance since the 2004 report was prepared, and no change in the acreage of acquisition parcels, the net gain found in 2004 would either remain static, or would increase the acres of floodplains to the United States, over what was determined in 2004.

3.5.2 EXECUTIVE ORDER 11990, *PROTECTION OF WETLANDS*

Executive Order 11990 requires that the exchange preserve wetland functions with no net loss to the Federal estate. There would be no net loss of wetlands to the Federal estate as a result of this land exchange under either action alternative. Consistency with this order was determined in 2004 with the evaluation of the land exchange as it was originally configured. At that time, the District Hydrologist determined that the land exchange as it was then configured would result in “no net gain or loss of wetlands to the United States.” This determination was reviewed in 2007. With a reduction of parcels considered available for conveyance since the 2004 report was prepared, and no change in the acreage of acquisition parcels, the results found in 2004 would either remain static, or would increase the acres of wetlands to the United States over what was determined in 2004.

3.5.3 PRIME FARMLAND, RANGELAND, AND FOREST LAND (DEPT. REGULATION 9500-3)

Because there are no prime farmlands, rangeland, or forest lands located within the parcels considered for exchange under the Proposed Action, neither action alternative would have any impact on prime farmlands, rangelands, or forestlands.

3.5.4 COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE, COMPENSATION AND LIABILITY ACT OF 1980, SECTION 120(h)

The Forest Service performed a Land Transaction Screening Process on the acquisition and conveyance parcels. These assessments revealed no recognized environmental conditions or indications of the presence of hazardous substances on the proposed exchange lands (Land Transaction Screening Process checklists, Project Record).

3.5.5 FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT (FLPMA)

3.5.5.1 SECTION 206

This section of FLPMA describes the requirements of land exchanges including the requirement that the Secretary concerned (in this case, the Secretary of Agriculture and her designees) determine the public interest will be well served by making an exchange. As part of the decision,

and in compliance with Section 206, the Responsible Official will determine if the proposed exchange serves the public interest.

3.5.5.2 SECTION 402(G)

This section requires two years' notice to a grazing permittee that the permittee's grazing privileges may be cancelled, except in emergency situations. Affected grazing permittees were sent written notification to inform them of the proposed land exchange, and the effects such an exchange might have on their grazing privileges, in January 2004. An additional grazing permittee was sent written notification of the proposed land exchange in October 2004. However, the allotment affected by this later notification was included in lands removed from the pool of conveyance parcels when the proposed action was revised in 2006.

3.5.6 FUNCTIONS TRANSFER ACT OF 1960

NFS lands cannot be conveyed without reserving the minerals unless the land is determined to be non-mineral in character. None of the land parcels being considered for conveyance in this land exchange are mineral in character (Project Record, Mineral Resource Evaluation and supplement, 2004 and 2007).

3.5.7 EXECUTIVE ORDER 12898, *ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE*

The Proposed Action is in compliance with Executive Order 12898, "*Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations.*" The Proposed Action would not place any burden or disproportionate impact which could be considered an environmental injustice on any segment of the population. The proposal would not result in unequal protection of any part of the population of Elmore County, Idaho.

All parts of the community that have potential to be affected by this proposal have had the opportunity to make comments. Due to the nature of the Proposed Action – i.e., a land exchange that does not include any existing permanent residence – no residents or businesses would be displaced. Since no development is proposed, there would be no future or long-term impacts that would affect the livability of the surrounding areas. Opportunities for recreation in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area would extend to minorities and people with low incomes in the area.

The Forest Service makes an annual payment to Elmore County with respect to Federal lands under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (PL 106-393). The addition of about 1,542 acres and reduction of up to about 3,188 acres of NFS land in Elmore County could decrease the amount of NFS land in Elmore County by up to 1,646 acres (0.08 percent of NFS land in Elmore County) and decrease the payment to Elmore County, proportionally.

Based on consideration of the potential effects, it was determined that consumers, civil rights, minority groups, or women would be neither significantly impacted nor disproportionately impacted by the proposed land exchange.

3.5.8 EXECUTIVE ORDER 13443, *FACILITATION OF HUNTING HERITAGE AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION*

On August 16, 2007, President George Bush signed an Executive Order directing appropriate Federal agencies to facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the

management of game species and their habitat. Section 3.3.1 of this EA discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access. Although public recreational access, including hunting, would be eliminated on the conveyed acres under either action alternative, access and use of other public and trust lands in the Bennett Mountain area would be maintained through the reservation of access rights on existing roads. In addition, because no change in management is anticipated as a result of the land exchange, the conveyance parcels would remain mule deer habitat after the exchange.

3.5.9 FEDERAL CAVE RESOURCES PROTECTION ACT OF 1988

No federally protected caves are known to exist on any of the parcels considered for exchange, and therefore, none would be affected by this land exchange.

3.5.10 MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT OF 1918

There would be no cause-effect relationship between the land exchange and effects to migratory birds because no change in land use is anticipated as a result of this land exchange (refer to section 2.4.2.2.2).

3.5.11 CLEAN AIR ACT

There would be no cause-effect relationship between the land exchange and effects to air quality because no change in land use is anticipated as a result of this land exchange (refer to section 2.4.2.2.2).

3.5.12 CLEAN WATER ACT

There would be no cause-effect relationship between the land exchange and effects to water quality because no change in land use is anticipated as a result of this land exchange (refer to section 2.4.2.2.2).



Chapter 4 -- Consultation and Coordination

4.1 FOREST SERVICE IDT MEMBERS

Kay Beall, Botany Biological Evaluation, Boise National Forest, South Zone
Jane Beaulieu, Team Leader (2003-2005), NEPA Coordinator, Mountain Home Ranger District
Jeff Cook, Wildlife Analysis, Mountain Home Ranger District
Larry Donohoo, Wildlife Analysis, Mountain Home Ranger District
Bart Lander, Team Leader (2005-2007), NEPA Coordinator, Mountain Home Ranger District
Clayton Nalder, Fisheries Analysis, Mountain Home Ranger District
Sarah Peterson, Hydrologic Analysis, Mountain Home Ranger District
Tina Ruffing, Range Analysis, Mountain Home Ranger District

4.2 FOREST SERVICE IDT CONSULTANTS

Lori Blickfeldt, Realty Specialist, Region 4
Rich Christensen, Engineering and Lands Officer, Boise National Forest
Jim Curtis, Mining Engineer, Boise National Forest
Sue Douglas, Realty Specialist, Idaho/Wyoming Land Adjustment Zone, Region 4
Tom Ellison, Special Projects Leader, Region 4
Donald Fuller, Realty Specialist-Zone Leader, Idaho/Wyoming Land Adjustment Zone, Region 4
Jack Haddox, Realty Specialist, Idaho/Wyoming Land Adjustment Zone, Region 4
Randy Hayman, Forest Planner, Boise National Forest
Jim Keller, Recreation Program Manager, Boise National Forest
Lisa Nutt, Wildlife Biologist, Boise National Forest
Susie Osgood, Archaeologist, Boise National Forest
Dan Schlender, Landscape Architect, Boise National Forest
Larry Tripp, District Ranger, Mountain Home Ranger District
Cyd Weiland, Land Management Planning Specialist, Boise National Forest

4.3 NON-FEDERAL PARTY

Casa Del Norte, LP, acting through ARD Trading, Inc. General Partner, John B. McCallum, President

4.4 TRIBES CONSULTED

Shoshone-Bannock Tribe
Shoshone-Paiute Tribe

4.5 AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND BUSINESSES WHO SUBMITTED SCOPING COMMENTS OR COMMENTS DURING THE 30-DAY NOTICE AND COMMENT PERIOD

Carl Bloomquist, Idaho ATV Association
Jim Chambers, Half Moon Ranch LLP

Jeff Cook, Idaho Department of Recreation
 Holly Endersby, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
 Steve Frisbie, Treasure Valley Trail Machine Association
 Brian Hawthorne, Blue Ribbon Coalition
 Jeff Juel, Wild West Institute, formerly The Ecology Center/Alliance for the Wild Rockies
 Christopher Krupp, Western Lands Project
 Jon Marvel, Western Watersheds Project
 Robert L. Meinen, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
 Robert Minter, Ada County Fish and Game League
 David Parrish, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Magic Valley Region
 John Robison, Idaho Conservation League
 Jay Sila, Idaho Department of Lands
 Scott Stouder, Trout Unlimited
 John R. Wilson, JD Aldecoa & Son, Inc.

4.6 INDIVIDUALS WHO SUBMITTED SCOPING COMMENTS OR COMMENTS DURING THE 30-DAY NOTICE AND COMMENT PERIOD

James Ackerman	Dennis Laib
Tim Alderman	Joanne Lanham, Mayor, Glens Ferry
Michael Baird	Lyndel Leahmann
Dave Barnes	Jesse A. Lee
Jeff Barney	Dusty McGhehey
Bill Beatty	Craig Ogden
Steven A. Bend	Amanda Okelberry
Jim Burk	Matt Reed
Bill Chisholm	Scott Rudel
Jack Coon	Matt Schweiger
Terry Daron	Jim Scouten
Jim Dillard	Amos Shenk
Michael Flanagan	Dick Shenk
Mary Garcia	Charles Shenk
Robert German	Jessie Shenk
Robert K. Hall	Ivan Shetler
Buck Hamilton	Judith Stockham
Martha Hamilton	Ron Stricklin
Rhonda Hanley	Roger Todd
Robert Hart	Jack Walborn
Emery Haydal	Carlene M. Waller
Herry Hochstein	Joe Ward
Julie Jeffrey	Chuck Whipple
Andy Johnson	Scott Wickstrom
Philip V. Jones	Rich Wills, State Representative

Appendix A – Legal Descriptions and Encumbrances of Exchange Parcels

Private Land Proposed for Acquisition

The following is a list of property that the non-Federal party would consider exchanging, which includes surface and mineral estate, except for the minerals in T. 2 N., R. 5 E., Sec. 17, Lot 1; and Sec. 20, Lot 1, which the United States already owns:

Acquisition Parcel	Acres
Acquisition Parcel 1 – Little Fiddler Flat	484.10
T. 2 N., R. 6 E.	
▪ Sec. 14, E½ of the SE¼	80.00
▪ Sec. 23, E½ of the E½	160.00
▪ Sec. 24, Lot 9, NW¼ of the SW¼	84.10
▪ Sec. 26, NE¼ of the NE¼, W½ of the NE¼, SE¼ of the NW¼	160.00
Acquisition Parcel 2 – Devil’s Hole	79.98
T. 1 N., R. 6 E.	
▪ Sec. 1, Lot 1, SE ¼ of the NE ¼	79.98
Acquisition Parcel 3 – Packsaddle Creek	601.95
T. 1 N., R. 6 E.	
▪ Sec. 3, W½ of the SW¼	80.00
▪ Sec. 4, lots 1, 2, and 3, S½ of the NE¼, W½ of the SE¼, SE¼ of the SE¼	321.95
T. 2 N., R. 6 E.	
▪ Sec. 33, SE¼ of the SW¼, SE¼	200.00
Acquisition Parcel 4* – Bender Creek	265.23
T. 2 N., R. 5 E.	
▪ Sec 17, Lot 1	25.84
▪ Sec. 19, NE¼	160.00
▪ Sec. 20, Lot 1, NW¼ of the NW¼	79.39
Acquisition Parcel 5* -- Wood Creek	25.37
T. 2 N., R. 5 E.	
▪ Mineral Survey 2002 (Patent No. 44189) within Sec. 18	25.37
Acquisition Parcel 6* -- Three Point Mountain	85.11
T. 2 N., Rs. 4 and 5 E.	
▪ Mineral Survey 2001 (Patent No. 44188), within Sec. 18 and 19 of Range 5 E, and within Secs. 13 and 24 of Range 4 E.	85.11
Total Area (Acres)	1,541.74

*Parcels 4, 5 and 6 must be acquired by using conveyance parcels originally acquired by the Forest Service under the Weeks Law.

All legal descriptions are with reference to the Boise Meridian.

There are no encumbrances to be conveyed to the United States on the acquisition parcels.

Federal Land Considered Available for Conveyance

The legal descriptions of the land that would be considered available for conveyance are shown below. Only as many acres of NFS land determined to be roughly equal in appraised market value to the private land to be acquired would be exchanged.

Parcel Considered for Conveyance	Acres
Conveyance Parcel 1 – Bennett Mountain	2041.64
T. 1 S., R. 9 E.	
▪ Sec. 35, all	640.00
T. 2S., R. 9E.	
▪ Sec. 2, Lots 1, 2, and 3, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$	281.64
▪ Sec. 11, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$	320.00
▪ Sec. 14, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$	280.00
▪ Sec. 23, E $\frac{1}{2}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$	440.00
▪ Sec. 26, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$.	80.00
Conveyance Parcel 3 – Little Camas	120.00
T. 1 S., R. 9 E.	
▪ Sec. 9, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ (Weeks Law)*	120.00
Conveyance Parcel 4a – Un-named	350.00
T. 1 S., R. 9 E.	
▪ Sec. 17, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ (Weeks Law)*	40.00
▪ Sec. 20, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$	280.00
▪ Sec. 21, W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$	30.00
Conveyance Parcel 4b – Un-named	40.00
T. 1 S., R. 9 E.	
▪ Sec. 17, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ (Weeks Law)*	40.00
Conveyance Parcel 5 – Un-named	636.34
T. 1 S., R. 9 E.	
▪ Sec. 31, Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, E $\frac{1}{2}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the W $\frac{1}{2}$	636.34
Total Area (Acres)	3,187.98

*Conveyance Parcel 3, a portion of Conveyance Parcel 4a, and all of Conveyance Parcel 4b were acquired and added to the NFS under Weeks Law Authority. These lands would be used to acquire mineral lands identified as acquisition parcels 4, 5 and 6 as needed (see section 1.5.2. of this EA).

All legal descriptions are with reference to the Boise Meridian.

Reservations to the United States on Conveyed Parcels

1. Right-of-way for Road No. 194D1, located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 14, T.2S., R.9E., Boise Meridian. This would be a reservation in the Patent to the United States along with an outstanding right based on a grant prior to closing issued to the BLM to secure their access.
2. Right-of-way for U.S. Highway 20, located in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the S $\frac{1}{2}$, Section 20; N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 21, T.1S., R.9E., Boise Meridian. This encumbrance would show up as a public road reservation in the Patent.
3. Right-of-way for Road No. 194C, located in the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ and the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 11; and the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 2, T2S, R9E, Boise Meridian. Reservation in the Patent ONLY for the portion in Section 11, T. 2 S., R. 9 E., this is to protect public access and the State's access rights.

4. Right-of-way for Road No. 194, Canyon Creek Road, located in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 11; the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 23, the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 26, T. 2 S., R. 9 E., Boise Meridian. This encumbrance would be a public access reservation in the Patent. Also an easement will be granted by the United States to the Glens Ferry Highway District, which currently manages the road, prior to closing.
5. Road No. 194D, Hill city road, located in the S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 14; the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the N $\frac{1}{4}$ and the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 23, T. 2 S. R. 9 E., Boise Meridian. This encumbrance would be a public access reservation in the Patent to preserve BLM access and also an easement would be granted by the United States to the Glens Ferry Highway District, prior to closing.
6. Right-of-way to an unnamed road north of U.S. Highway 20, located in the S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20, and the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 19, T. 1 S., R. 9 E., Boise Meridian.
7. A right-of-way for County Road No. 160, Camas Reservoir Road. This would be a reservation in the Patent to the United States along with an outstanding right to protect future public access. This affects the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 9, T. 1 S., R. 9 E., Boise Meridian.

Easements to Private Entities on Conveyed Parcels

1. The United States currently has issued an easement for the private user of Road No. 177, located in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20, T. 1 S., R. 9 E., Boise Meridian. At closing, this easement would be terminated, changed to a right-of-way easement granted by the non-Federal party to the private user, and recorded at the time of closing.
2. The United States currently has issued special use permits to Idaho Power and Qwest Communications for rights-of-way in the conveyance parcels. These special use permits would be terminated, changed to right-of-way easements granted by the non-Federal party to the private user, and recorded at the time of closing.

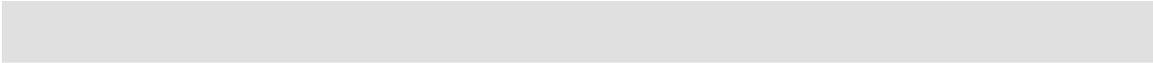
Water Rights on Conveyed Parcels

1. Water Rights No. 63-9566/63-30630 would be conveyed to the non-Federal party. The points of diversion and use for this right are in Conveyance Parcel 1, T2S, R9E, Section 2, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$.
2. Water Permit No.37-8524 would be conveyed to the non-Federal party. The points of diversion and use for this right are in Conveyance Parcel 1, T2S, R9E, Section 23, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$.
3. Water Right 63-10825 would be conveyed to the non-Federal party. The point of diversion for this right is in Conveyance Parcel 3, T1S, R9E, Section 9, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$.. The place of use for this right is in Conveyance Parcel 3, T1S, R9E, Section 9, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$..

Outstanding Rights

The non-Federal party's ownership of Federal lands would be subject to the following existing rights:

1. Rights-of-way for all constructed ditches and canals would be listed as encumbrances, when included in conveyance parcels, in the Exchange Deed.

2. A Highway Easement Deed by and between the Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the State of Idaho, dated October 20, 1993, for a right-of-way for U.S. Highway 20 in Elmore County. This affects the N ½ of the S ½ of Section 20; the N ½ of the SW ¼ of Section 21, T.1S., R.9E., Boise Meridian.
 3. National Historic Trail Reservation that affects the NW ¼ and the N ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 20; and the N ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 21, T.1S., R.9E., Boise Meridian.
 4. A Forest Road and Trial Act Public road easement from the United States of America to Mountain Home Highway District, Elmore County, for Road No. 160, Camas Reservoir Road. This affects the E½ of the E½ of the SW¼ of Section 9, T. 1 S., R. 9 E., Boise Meridian.
 5. A Forest Land Policy Management Act Forest Road Easement (66 feet wide) from the United States of America to Joseph Richard Cornell, Jr. and Dixie Lee Cornell, for existing Road No. 177. This affects the N½ of the SE¼ of Section 20, T. 1 S., R. 9 E., Boise Meridian.
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Appendix B – Comments Received and Responses

Process

<i>Comment</i>	Without disclosing the values of the parcels of public land, and identifying which ones will actually be offered for trade, the public is being taken out of the decision making process.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in section 2.2 of the EA, the Forest Service intentionally carried forward for detailed study a “pool” of Federal parcels that could be considered in the final exchange decision. This pool provided flexibility to include, or not include, all or portions of Federal estate parcels as needed to most effectively address the multitude of factors that must be weighed. Chapter 3 describes the effects of the conveyance of these parcels, while the decision will identify the specific parcels that would be offered in the exchange.
<i>Comment</i>	Scoping is to identify issues around which alternatives and/or analysis levels are formed. On the other hand, the process you've adopted is clearly one to justify your already adopted decision, instead of fostering genuine dialogue with the public.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Public involvement conducted for the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange is described in section 1.7 of the EA. The public has been involved in this process since it was first proposed in 2005. In response to concerns expressed, the proposal was revised and resubmitted to the public for comment in 2006. The proposal identified the private land to be acquired and the public land considered available for conveyance.
<i>Comment</i>	Too many interested parties might not know about the proposal because of limited publication of the legal notice. I request an extension of comment period and publication in the Wood River and Magic Valley areas.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Public involvement conducted for the Danskin-Camas Land Exchange is described in section 1.7 of the EA. As described in that section, the required legal notices were published in the newspaper of record.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should prepare an environmental assessment to determine if the proposal may result in significant impacts to the environment.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	An environmental assessment (EA) is being prepared for this project. Based on the analysis documented in the EA, the Responsible Official will determine whether or not potential significant impacts might occur, and an EIS is required. That determination will be disclosed in the decision document.

Purpose and Need

<i>Comment</i>	The EA should disclose whether any boundary surveys were planned for the affected lands prior to the disposal. Otherwise the Forest Service has identified a largely fictive future expense as a means of selling this proposal to the public.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Although boundary surveys are not currently planned on these conveyance parcels, boundary surveys are often done when an unauthorized encroachment on Federal land occurs. The likelihood of such encroachments increases with the existence of outlying NFS parcels whose boundaries meander between a variety of other public and private ownerships. It is difficult for anyone to establish the location of these boundaries in this situation without a survey. This land exchange would eliminate the need to consider boundary surveys in the future on conveyed parcels.

<i>Comment</i>	If the government wants to dispose of land, they should do it on the open market so everyone can have the same opportunity to buy it. I oppose all land exchanges the government enters into.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The Forest Service has very limited and specific authority for sale or conveyance of NFS land or facilities. The Federal lands proposed for this exchange qualify for conveyance only under exchange regulations. As stated in section 1.4.1 of the EA, the Forest Service may exchange land when such an exchange is found to be in the public interest.
<i>Comment</i>	The private landowner in the Danskin Mountains is not blocking access to OHVs.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Although access is not currently blocked, efforts to date to obtain easements from the private landowner have been unsuccessful, placing future public access in jeopardy.
<i>Comment</i>	I have deep concerns with the land exchange.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The concern is relevant to the proposed exchange but too general to assist in determining the scope of the EA. However, most respondents who raised this concern went on to provide more specific concerns, which are discussed under other headings in this section.
<i>Comment</i>	I oppose the land exchange.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The concern is relevant to the proposed exchange but too general to assist in determining the scope of the EA. However, most respondents who raised this concern went on to provide more specific concerns, which are discussed under other headings in this section.
<i>Comment</i>	There are serious questions about what the result of the exchange will mean in the long run.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The concern is relevant to the proposed exchange but too general to assist in determining the scope of the EA. However, most respondents who raised this concern went on to provide more specific concerns, which are discussed under other headings in this section.
<i>Land Configuration and Administrative Costs</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	Disposal of parcel 4 will further fragment public land by splitting one contiguous NFS parcel into two isolated parcels, create more irregular borders by adding several additional miles of boundary and a number of additional property corners, and decrease the size of the remaining NFS parcels by approximately 970 and 760 acres respectively.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The effects on land configuration and administrative costs are disclosed in section 3.2.1 of the EA. Conveyance of Parcels 4a and 4b would increase the amount of NFS boundary to maintain by 0.24 mile and increase the number of corners to maintain by 2. The Responsible Official will weigh these consequences, along with the benefits of including these parcels, in determining whether or not to include these parcels in the exchange.
<i>Comment</i>	We request the EA disclose the administrative costs of managing contiguous vs. non-contiguous NFS lands. In addition, we request that you provide a detailed cost breakdown to administer the lands identified in the EA over the past 10 year period.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The Responsible Official has decided on the most effective way to disclose the effects of the land exchange on management efficiency. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on land management efficiency are disclosed in section 3.2.1 of the EA. The Forest Service has developed its proposed action to address compelling needs. Satisfying these needs is consistent with moving toward goals, objectives, and desired conditions specified in the Forest Plan. One of the Forest Plan's goals is to "identify and seek adjustments to land ownership, National Forest boundaries, and interior exclusions to effectively meet a public need, protect and enhance important resources, to consolidate NFS land, and to improve management efficiency" (Forest Plan, p. III-52). One of the Forest Plan's objectives is to "use purchase, donation, conveyance, exchange, rights-of-way acquisition, transfer, interchange, and boundary adjustment to accomplish" the goal (Forest Plan, p. III-53). In the present case, the Forest Service has identified a specific need to adjust interior exclusions. The Forest Service has been presented with an opportunity to satisfy that need and fulfill that objective by using one of those available tools (land exchange) to accomplish the goal.
<i>Range of Alternatives</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	The proposal does not describe the priority of the NFS parcels for exchange. We propose the priorities for exchange, in order, as parcel 5, parcel 6, parcel 4 and parcel 1.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Section 2.4.2.2 of the EA discloses the private party's priorities in acquiring Federal land. Some satisfaction of those priorities is necessary for the land exchange to take place. The Forest Service's priorities are to acquire the desired parcels by conveying some amount of NFS land that is roughly equivalent in market value to the lands acquired, while including the conveyance of the necessary amount of Weeks Law land to acquire selected parcels.
<i>Comment</i>	The EA should consider an alternative that would acquire different property than the in-holdings within the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in section 1.5.1 of the EA, the Forest Plan calls for using land exchange opportunities to acquire scattered inholdings to improve forest management efficiency, and acquiring lands that enhance recreation opportunities, public access, and protection of aesthetic values. Only land in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area has been offered by the private non-Federal party in this exchange. The non-Federal party has only expressed interest in the land considered by the Forest Service as available for conveyance. No other alternatives exist that would satisfy the need to acquire the land offered to the Forest Service by the non-Federal party.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should focus on acquisition of land of more important uses than motorized recreation. The EA should consider an alternative that would acquire different property than the in holdings in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in section 1.5.1 of the EA, the Forest Plan calls for using land exchange opportunities to acquire scattered inholdings to improve forest management efficiency, and acquiring lands that enhance recreation opportunities, public access, and protection of aesthetic values. Only land in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area has been offered by the private non-Federal party in this exchange. The non-Federal party has only expressed interest in the land considered by the Forest Service as available for conveyance. No other alternatives exist that would satisfy the need to acquire the land offered to the Forest Service by the non-Federal party.
Effects Analysis	
<i>Comment</i>	The unconsolidated parcels should be exchanged to consolidate NFS parcels around Camas Reservoir or elsewhere on the Boise National Forest in accordance with Objectives 0161 and 0162. However, disposing of lands in the NFS would be an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources, which would have to be analyzed in an EIS.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	No private entity has offered parcels around Little Camas Reservoir to the Forest Service. NEPA and the Forest Service NEPA Handbook direct the agency to prepare an EA if the need for an EIS has not been determined (FSH 1909.15.41). Based on the analysis documented in the EA, the Responsible Official will determine whether or not an EIS is required. That determination will be disclosed in the decision document.
<i>Comment</i>	The difficulty in implementing your ATV sacrifice zone, which leads to the exchange purpose and need, reveals the folly of creating such motorized zone on public land in the first place. In contravention of NEPA, you are piecemealing the analyses needed to disclose impacts of this ATV zone.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The potential effects of OHV use in the Danskin Mountains have been analyzed and disclosed in the Decision Memo for the Danskin Mountains Trail Designation and Reconstruction Project (2001), and the EA, Decision Notice, and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Danskin Trails Management Plan (1995).
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should describe the trade-offs of obtaining improved OHV use while at the expense of other values that would be lost.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Chapter 3 discloses the effects of Alternative 1, the No-Action Alternative, in which the land exchange would not occur, with Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) and Alternative 3 (Elimination of the Portion of Conveyance Parcel 1 that includes the North Little Camas and Cat Creek Allotments). Table 2-5 summarizes these effects, and the differences between alternatives, including the effects on the Danskin area trail system. The Responsible Official will review these effects, and weigh the tradeoffs, when making her decision. In addition, the NEPA process is designed to provide the Responsible Official with the information relevant to making an informed decision relative to the overall public benefit. A Public Interest Determination must be made in each land exchange the Forest Service executes. This determination will be disclosed in the Decision Notice accompanying the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The agency needs to adequately and honestly address mitigation for the net acreage loss of these lands to the public prior to the exchange.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The attributes inherent in the land, rather than net acreage, determine how much land would be transferred into private ownership. The Forest Service acknowledges that it would no longer have the long-term assurance inherent in Federal ownership of conveyed lands that any future actions taken and changes made would be done under Federal rules. However, the conveyance parcels are currently used for grazing and there is little likelihood that use would change after conveyance.
<i>Comment</i>	The EIS must disclose cumulative impacts on soil productivity.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Because land use on the parcels to be exchanged is unlikely to change (section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA), the analysis of impacts to soil productivity are considered outside of the scope of this analysis. There is no cause-effect relationship between the exchange of parcels and effects to soil productivity.
<i>Comment</i>	The EIS must disclose cumulative impacts on water quality.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Because land use on the parcels to be exchanged is unlikely to change (section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA), the analysis of impacts to water quality are considered outside of the scope of this analysis. There is no cause-effect relationship between the exchange of parcels and effects to water quality.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should ensure preservation of water quality in each alternative.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Because land use on the parcels to be exchanged is unlikely to change (section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA), the analysis of impacts to water quality are considered outside of the scope of this analysis. There is no cause-effect relationship between the exchange of parcels and effects to water quality.
<i>Comment</i>	The EIS must include a full description of the condition of the lands proposed for trade, including forest seral stages, habitat qualities, and restoration needs. The EIS must disclose how much restoration or maintenance is needed, and at what cost. Restoration costs and other economic considerations must be disclosed.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The EA includes sufficient description of the condition of the lands proposed for exchange. It is not necessary to describe the lands in terms of forest seral stages, habitat qualities, or restoration needs because the exchange would not affect these attributes. No change in the use of the exchanged lands is expected in the foreseeable future (see sections 2.4.2.1.2 and 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA). The condition of lands proposed in the exchange is reflected in the appraised value, which determines how much land would be conveyed in exchange for the acquisition parcels.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should ensure preservation of timber reserves in each alternative.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Because land use on the parcels to be exchanged is unlikely to change (section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA), the analysis of impacts to the resource parameters mentioned in the concern is considered outside of the scope of this analysis. As disclosed in section 3.5.3 of the EA, there is no prime forest land on parcels included in this land exchange, and the photographs in Appendix C indicate that relatively small, isolated and patchy forested areas are included in both the acquisition and conveyance parcels. There is no cause-effect relationship between the exchange of parcels and effects to the resource parameters mentioned in the concern.
<i>Regional Economic Impacts</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	The exchange would cause an economic loss due to lost hunting and other outdoor recreation opportunity on the exchanged parcels.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities in high interest areas, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The revenue generated by tourists and sportsmen that visit Bennett Mountain would be lost to Elmore County.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities in high interest areas, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I oppose the land exchange. Glenns Ferry is a small town that draws lots of business from hunting and fishing opportunities in the Bennett Hills. People come from all over the country to hunt and fish in the Bennett Hills, and they use local businesses during times when, otherwise, business would be very slow (fall and winter).
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities in high interest areas, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Elmore County and the State of Idaho will lose thousands of dollars generated by the public when more "No Trespassing" signs are posted and gates are locked.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities in high interest areas, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Grazing Privileges</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	Grazing permittees and third-party permit holders should make arrangements to resolve land disposal effects to livestock grazers.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Grazing permittees are aware of this opportunity
<i>Comment</i>	Half Moon Ranch has permit on the Little Camas Allotment -- part of this exchange. Concerned that the Forest Service is trading away my allotment and the NOEP letter I received in early July (2006) was the first I heard of it.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As disclosed in sections 3.3.2 and 3.5.5 of the EA, and as required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, section 402(g), and 36 CFR 222.4(a)(1), affected grazing permittees were sent 2 years' notice that their grazing privileges might be cancelled. Affected grazing permittees were sent written notification to inform them of the proposed land exchange, and the effects such an exchange might have on their grazing privileges, in January 2004. An additional grazing permittee was sent written notification of the proposed land exchange in October 2004. However, the allotment affected by this later notification was included in lands removed from the pool of conveyance parcels when the proposed action was revised in 2006.
<i>Comment</i>	Part of my allotment is included for disposal in the exchange. The exchange would have a dramatic effect on the viability of the balance of the grazing allotment if I were to lose those grazing rights in the disposal.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on grazing allotment viability are disclosed in section 3.3.2 the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I have constructed and maintained a fence on the south and west sides of the lands being considered for disposal. This fence would have to be rebuilt. Who would pay for the new fence?
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	If these lands were included in the exchange, it would be the responsibility of the non-Federal party to exclude the permittee's livestock from privatized grazing land. Alternatively, the grazing permittee and the non-Federal party would be free to enter into an agreement for the continuation of the permittee's grazing of these lands with the fence in place.
<i>Comment</i>	If the land in my allotment is needed in the exchange, I request the opportunity to purchase the land directly from the Forest Service or the recipient of the lands.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The Forest Service has very limited and specific authority for sale or conveyance of NFS land or facilities. The Federal lands proposed for this exchange qualify for conveyance only under exchange regulations. The purchase of land from the Forest Service would not serve the purpose and need of the land exchange. The commenter may contact the recipient/non-Federal party to purchase land from the recipient.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should ensure preservation of grazing opportunities in each alternative.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on grazing allotment viability are disclosed in section 3.3.2 the EA.
<i>Historic Resources</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	A portion of the Old Oregon Trail exists on the public land being considered for exchange. This proposal is inconsistent with preserving the purpose of this historic trail remaining trail on public lands.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As discussed in section 3.4.1 of the EA, the segment of Goodale's Cutoff in Conveyance Parcel 4a, which is associated with the Oregon Trail, is not considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Developments have altered important aspects of the trail's integrity that convey its significance to the American public, thus precluding eligibility for the Register. These developments include several decades of construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of State Highway 20. The available historical evidence points to State Highway 20 as the primary alignment for the historic Cutoff, although local contacts also describe various alternate routes in the immediate area. The potential effects on historic properties is described in Chapter 3 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The proposed disposal parcels include portions of the Oregon Trail.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As discussed in section 3.4.1 of the EA, the segment of Goodale’s Cutoff in Conveyance Parcel 4a, which is associated with the Oregon Trail, is not considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Developments have altered important aspects of the trail’s integrity that convey its significance to the American public, thus precluding eligibility for the Register. These developments include several decades of construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of State Highway 20. The available historical evidence points to State Highway 20 as the primary alignment for the historic Cutoff, although local contacts also describe various alternate routes in the immediate area. The potential effects on historic properties is described in Chapter 3 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The land exchange will cause adverse effects to the Centennial Trail and the Oregon Trail. These parts of these trails should not be privatized.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on the Oregon Trail are disclosed in section 3.4.1 of the EA. The trail segment in the area of the land exchange is not considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The segment of the Centennial Trail in Section 11 (T2S, R9E) is on County Road 194. As it passes through the land considered for conveyance (Conveyance Parcel 1), County Road 194 would be reserved for public use.
<i>Comment</i>	A portion of the Old Oregon Trail exists on the public land being considered for exchange. The EA should disclose how privatization of this resource would affect it.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As discussed in section 3.4.1 of the EA, Goodale’s Cutoff, which is the Oregon Trail segment in the area of the land exchange, is not considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on the Oregon Trail are disclosed in section 3.4.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Apparently, the State Historic Preservation Office is also willing to negotiate with you and release that section where the "Old Oregon Trail" lies.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As discussed in section 3.4.1 of the EA, Goodale’s Cutoff, which is the Oregon Trail segment in the area of the land exchange, is not considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on the Oregon Trail are disclosed in section 3.4.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The exchange will adversely affect Native American historical sites.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	This issue was resolved through a mitigation measure in each action alternative considered in detail that would prohibit conveying areas that contain historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in the exchange (refer to sections 2.4.2.2.3 and 2.4.3.2.4). Archeological investigations of the conveyance parcels have not identified any evidence of burials.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should ensure preservation of cultural resources in each alternative.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on cultural resources are disclosed in section 3.4.1 of the EA.

<i>Comment</i>	There are Native American burial sites in this area (disposal parcels) which you and the tribes are willing to concede by trespassing on sensitive areas, and give up part of our history.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	This issue was resolved through a mitigation measure in each action alternative considered in detail that would prohibit conveying areas that contain historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in the exchange (refer to sections 2.4.2.2.3 and 2.4.3.2.4). Archeological investigations of the conveyance parcels have not identified any evidence of burials.
<i>Land Uses</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	The EA must identify why the Forest Service believes that current land uses would not be expected to change as a result of the exchange. Also, even if the Federal lands identified for trade would not have a different use when in private ownership, the intensity of use might be quite different.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA describes the anticipated management of the lands proposed for conveyance (Elmore County Zoning: General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest), which is similar to the current condition and management of these lands, as described in Chapter 3. The non-Federal party grazes livestock on land in the vicinity of the conveyance parcels. Based on the non-Federal party's stated intentions, and knowing the land patterns and uses in the area, there is nothing that suggests that any land uses other than livestock grazing, at similar intensities, are likely to occur within the foreseeable future on the lands considered available for conveyance. Conveyance parcels are approximately 45 air miles from Boise, 25 air miles from Glens Ferry, and 20 air miles from Mountain Home. These are the nearest concentrations of population according to the U.S. Census data. Land uses would be regulated by Elmore County and would be expected to remain agricultural. The population density in rural Elmore County is about 5 people per square mile.
<i>Comment</i>	The analysis must disclose the Boise NF management allocations that would be assigned to potentially acquired lands. The analysis must fully describe the anticipated uses of the lands to be traded.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Management allocations of acquired lands are disclosed in section 2.4.2.1.2 of the EA. The anticipated uses of lands to be conveyed are disclosed in section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I oppose the exchange of hunting lands for the benefit of motor bikers.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The market value of the hunting lands and OHV lands will be determined by the appraisal and the land to be acquired in this land exchange would have approximately the same market value as the land that would be privatized. The comparison of the non-monetary value of one land use with the non-monetary value of another is beyond the scope of this analysis. Chapter 3 discloses the effects of Alternative 1, the No-Action Alternative, in which the land exchange would not occur, with Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) and Alternative 3 (Elimination of the Portion of Conveyance Parcel 1 that includes the North Little Camas and Cat Creek Allotments). Table 2-5 summarizes these effects, and the differences between alternatives, including the effects on the Danskin area trail system and on hunting access. The Responsible Official will review these effects, and weigh the tradeoffs, when making her decision

<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service is misguided in stating current land uses are not expected to change if the public tracts are traded. The Forest Service should discuss alternatives to ensure retention of existing land use, once the public lands become private. One alternative should be a conservation easement to retain existing land uses in perpetuity.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Section 2.3 of the EA discloses the Forest Service's consideration of such strategies as deed restrictions and conservation easements as alternatives to the Proposed Action.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service believes the private land owners do not have any intent to develop the lands. I am not totally convinced or assured that ultimately any exchanged lands that become private lands had have accessibility will not be developed.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Section 2.4.2.2.2 describes the anticipated management of the lands proposed for conveyance (Elmore County Zoning: General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest), which is similar to the current condition and management of these lands, as described in Chapter 3. The non-Federal party grazes livestock on land in the vicinity of the conveyance parcels. Based on the non-Federal party's stated intentions, and knowing the land patterns and uses in the area, there is nothing that suggests that any land uses other than livestock grazing, at similar intensities, are likely to occur within the foreseeable future on the lands considered available for conveyance. Conveyance parcels are 45 air miles from Boise, 25 air miles from Glens Ferry, and 20 air miles from Mountain Home. These are the nearest concentrations of population according to the U.S. Census data. Land uses would be regulated by Elmore County and would be expected to remain agricultural. The population density in rural Elmore County is about 5 people per square mile.
<i>Comment</i>	There should be some written and documented language in the agreement that the exchanged lands will not be developed in perpetuity. All exchanged lands should remain at their current land use (range, forage, and grazing) and OHV use on any exchanged land and surrounding Federal land should be prohibited or restricted.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Section 2.3 of the EA discloses the Forest Service's consideration of such strategies as deed restrictions and conservation easements as alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Federal Government does not regulate land use on private land. The non-Federal party involved in the exchange operates a large ranch. The non-Federal party grazes livestock on land in the vicinity of the conveyance parcels. Based on the non-Federal party's stated intentions, and knowing the land patterns and uses in the area, there is nothing that suggests that any land uses other than livestock grazing, at similar intensities, are likely to occur within the foreseeable future on the lands considered available for conveyance. Although FSH 5409.13 section 31.11 directs that "Partial interest in land may be acquired or conveyed when it is in the public interest to do so," in general, it is in the public interest to convey land with as few as restrictions as possible. This allows the maximum value to be placed on the land conveyed in order to minimize the amount of land conveyed.

Land Valuation

<i>Comment</i>	The proposal includes no land value information and proposes to offer several hundred more acres of public lands disposed in the exchange than acquired. How would this benefit public land management in the area?
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in section 2.2 of the EA, the Forest Service intentionally carried forward for detailed study a "pool" of Federal parcels that could be considered in the final exchange decision. This pool provided flexibility to include, or not include, all or portions of Federal estate parcels as needed to most effectively address the multitude of factors that must be weighed. Chapter 3 describes the effects of the conveyance of these parcels, while the decision will identify the specific parcels that would be offered in the exchange. As disclosed in the EA, the Forest Service would only convey an amount of land that is equal to the value of the lands acquired, with an allowance for a cash equalization payment of 25 percent of the value of the Federal lands. The purpose and need describes why the Forest Service is considering this exchange proposal at this time. The parcels conveyed in the transaction, which will be selected based on the environmental analysis and on the appraised values for the parcels, will be identified in the Decision Notice accompanying this EA. The decision will include the justification for the parcels selected for conveyance as well as the required public interest determination.
<i>Comment</i>	Appraisals should be fair and accurate.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The appraisals are required to be compliant with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions, 2000 Ed. (UASFLA) as well as the most current edition of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). This compliance is determined by the assigned FS Review Appraiser's technical review of each appraisal, prior to its approval. The appraisals were completed by independent appraisers qualified to develop opinions of market value for properties of these types.
<i>Comment</i>	The criteria for defining how disposal parcels would be selected for exchange, if values are not equal, should be disclosed.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The Responsible Official will consider several factors, including approved market values, analysis disclosed in the EA, and preferences revealed in final negotiations with the non-Federal party, in making her decision. The Decision Notice will report the market values and final acreages to be exchanged.
<i>Comment</i>	Appraisals in land exchanges are frequently skewed to favor the private landowner.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The appraisals are required to be compliant with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions, 2000 Ed. (UASFLA) as well as the most current edition of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). This compliance is determined by the assigned FS Review Appraiser's technical review of each appraisal, prior to its approval. The appraisals were completed by independent appraisers qualified to develop opinions of market value for properties of these types.

<i>Comment</i>	OIG audits have recently found flaws in appraisals that have resulted in high values to private lands and low values to public lands. The EIS must disclose (1) detailed appraisal methodology, including the assumptions used in the valuation of all lands involved, timber value, and discount rates, (2) the identity of the appraisers and by whom they were selected, and (3) the qualifications and experience of Forest Service staff participating in the appraisal process.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The appraisals are required to be compliant with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions, 2000 Ed. (UASFLA) as well as the most current edition of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). This compliance is determined by the assigned FS Review Appraiser's technical review of each appraisal, prior to its approval. The appraisals were completed by independent appraisers qualified to develop opinions of market value for properties of these types.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should make the full appraisal reports available for public scrutiny 60 days before the execution of the final exchange agreement.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	FSM 5412.11 states: <i>"Unless the responsible official documents a sound legal basis for denial of access, the final approved appraisal report(s) and appraisal review report(s) for Federal and non-Federal lands in land exchange transactions shall be made available, upon written request, to all interested parties when:</i>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="493 909 1414 1050">1. <i>An environmental assessment or draft environmental impact statement is released for public comment identifying a preferred alternative, and the appraisal report(s) have been reviewed and approved for agency use, or;</i> <li data-bbox="493 1071 1414 1140">2. <i>The National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321) decision to approve an exchange is made, and public notice given."</i>
	The Responsible Official will make the appraisal reports and appraisal review reports available to all interested parties when the Decision Notice for this land exchange is issued.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service has not completed the appraisal of the land values for this exchange, yet it is proceeding as if the Federal and Non-Federal properties are of equal value.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	An exchange proposal is developed with the general intent of acquiring all of the non-Federal lands in any transaction. With this general guideline in mind, the size of the Federal lands is normally made large enough to accomplish this objective with the knowledge that it may be reduced in size when the final appraisal information is available. The actual "price" of the acquired land, in terms of land to be conveyed, will be based upon the appraised market value of all lands involved in the exchange. The Forest Service would only convey an amount of land sufficient to be approximately equal the value of the land to be acquired. As described in section 2.2 of the EA, the Forest Service intentionally carried forward for detailed study a "pool" of Federal parcels that could be considered in the final exchange decision. This pool provided flexibility to include, or not include, all or portions of Federal estate parcels as needed to most effectively address the multitude of factors that must be weighed. Chapter 3 describes the effects of the conveyance of these parcels, while the decision would identify the specific parcels that would be offered in the exchange. As disclosed in the EA, the Forest Service would only convey an amount of land that is roughly equal to the market value of the lands acquired, with an allowance for a cash equalization payment of 25 percent of the market value of the Federal lands, should creating reasonable, locatable boundaries of the exchanged parcels result in less than an equal market value exchange.
<i>Comment</i>	The value difference between these lands are not equal, which in itself should stop this exchange.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As disclosed in section 1.2 of the EA, this land exchange would be a "land-for-land exchange" involving the acquisition of non-Federal land, or interests in land, by the United States in exchange for NFS lands, or interests in land. Land would be exchanged on an equal appraised value basis. Land would be exchanged on a value for value basis, based on current market value appraisals, with a goal of creating reasonable, locatable, and manageable boundaries. In such an exchange, a modest amount of cash equalization may be used to equalize values. The amount of cash used to equalize the values between the Federal and non-Federal lands in a land exchange cannot exceed 25 percent of the value of the Federal lands conveyed. Forest Service policy further directs that the exchange should minimize the amount of cash equalization paid to the United States.
<i>Comment</i>	The lands to be disposed and acquired are not of equal value.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As disclosed in section 1.2 of the EA, this land exchange would be a "land-for-land exchange" involving the acquisition of non-Federal land, or interests in land, by the United States in exchange for NFS lands, or interests in land.. Land would be exchanged on a value for value basis, based on current market value appraisals, with a goal of creating reasonable, locatable, and manageable boundaries. In such an exchange, a modest amount of cash equalization may be used to equalize values. The amount of cash used to equalize the values between the Federal and non-Federal lands in a land exchange cannot exceed 25 percent of the market value of the Federal lands conveyed. Forest Service policy further directs that the exchange should minimize the amount of cash equalization paid to the United States.

<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service dropped the least valuable lands for wildlife and recreation from the original proposal.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Although these lands could have remained in the proposal, they likely would not have been included in the decision because of the preferences of the non-Federal party. Consequently, when the original proposal was revised in July 2006 to reflect more accurate conditions, these lands were included in the 2,012 acres eliminated from the list of NFS land considered available for conveyance. The revised exchange proposal was developed to best meet the needs of all parties involved.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service is being played a pawn by private property interests at the expense of publicly held National Forest system lands. Private property interests are utilizing their own interest to obtain more value for what their land is actually worth and are not doing it in a manner that is fair, honorable, or in good negotiation.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The appraisals will determine the market values of the lands involved in the exchange and how much land would be necessary to acquire the desired parcels.
<i>Comment</i>	The appraisals should be accurate.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The appraisals are required to be compliant with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions, 2000 Ed. (UASFLA) as well as the most current edition of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). This compliance is determined by the assigned FS Review Appraiser's technical review of each appraisal, prior to its approval. The appraisals were completed by independent appraisers qualified to develop opinions of market value for properties of these types.
<i>Minerals</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	The EA must state whether the proposed exchange includes both the surface and sub-surface (mineral) estates for the offered private parcels or only the surface estates. Future mineral exploration or extraction could cause serious environmental damage to the public's surface estate.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As disclosed in section 1.5.2 and Appendix A of the EA, the acquisitions would include both surface and subsurface estates, except on parcels where the U.S. Government already owns the subsurface estate. Lands to be acquired are mineral in character, but any unforeseen future mineral exploration and extraction that might cause surface disturbance on these acquired lands would be subject to separate environmental analysis. Additionally, as disclosed in section 1.5.2 of the EA, parcels exchanged under Weeks Law authority would not be open to "hard rock" mineral entry under the General Mining Law of 1872.
<i>Comment</i>	A split estate would also leave the Forest Service susceptible to leveraged trades in the future, with mineral estate owners threatening to mine unless the agency met their requests.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As disclosed in section 1.5.2 and Appendix A, the acquisitions would include both surface and subsurface estates, except on parcels where the U.S. Government already owns the subsurface estate. No split estate would result.
<i>Comment</i>	The analysis must identify the mineral potential of both the Federal and non-Federal parcels to aid the public in determining whether the proposed trade is in its interest.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As disclosed in section 3.5.6 of the EA, the Forest's Mineral Examiner has concluded that the lands considered available for conveyance in the Proposed Action are non-mineral in character (Project Record, Mineral Resource Evaluation). No public lands with more than nominal mineral value would be privatized as a result of this land exchange.
Recreation	
<i>Comment</i>	The District should work to insure public ownership of the Centennial Trail, which runs through Section 11 in Figure 3b of the July 2006 Proposed Action Report.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The segment of the Centennial Trail in Section 11 (T2S, R9E) is on County Road 194. As it passes through the land considered for conveyance (Conveyance Parcel 1), County Road 194 would be reserved for public use
<i>Comment</i>	The EIS must disclose cumulative impacts on recreational uses and other resource values.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities in high interest areas, and other resource values, are disclosed in Chapter 3 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should ensure preservation of recreation in each alternative.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The purpose of the land exchange is to preserve recreational opportunities through improved trail management in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities in high interest areas are disclosed in sections 2.5 and 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Closure of significant percentages of OHV opportunities in the Payette and Sawtooth National Forests, due to implementation of new travel plans, increase the importance of the Danskin area for OHV opportunities.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Comment</i>	The project would enhance opportunities to access trails on the east side of the Danskin system and to better facilitate access to the trail system at Three Point Mountain.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest service needs to insure that OHV use does not result in additional user-created routes in an area with an already extensive network of motorized trails available for motorized enthusiasts.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	No additional OHV routes are included in the Proposed Action. Acquisition of private land in-holdings would enhance the Forest Service's ability to enforce motorized use restrictions in the Danskin Mountains.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should continue to utilize the extensive motorized trail system in the Danskin Mountains as a mitigation measure to insure that other, less-impacted Inventoried Roadless Areas on the Boise National Forest are not subjected to the same proliferation of user-created routes that occurred in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.

<i>Comment</i>	We support the land exchange due to escalating use of OHVs in Idaho.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Comment</i>	We support the project. Securing ownership in the Danskins will alleviate the present situation of trespassing and allow the Forest Service to finally promote, develop, and advertise loop opportunities for OHV recreationists across these parcels.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on Danskin Mountain OHV Area trail management are disclosed in section 3.2.2 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	We are concerned about the Forest Service's inability to enforce the rules in the Danskin Mountains OHV system if more trails are built as a result of this exchange.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	No additional OHV routes are included in the Proposed Action. As described in section 3.2.2 of this EA, acquisition of private land in-holdings would enhance the Forest Service's ability to enforce motorized use restrictions in the Danskin Mountains. Indiscriminate cross-country travel is currently not regulated on these private land parcels.
<i>Comment</i>	There are enough OHV trails in the Danskin Mountains, we don't need any more.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	No additional trails are proposed once the acquisition parcels become Federal lands.
<i>Comment</i>	I support the proposal. My family and I enjoy riding in the Fiddler Flat area of the Danskins and would like continued access to that area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Comment</i>	I support keeping ATV trails in the Danskin Mountains open, and adding more.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Comment</i>	I support the land exchange to keep trails open in the Danskin OHV Area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Comment</i>	I ride the trails in the Danskin area and I don't think it needs to be changed by a land swap.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in the Purpose and Need for this project (Chapter 1 of the EA), the acquisition of lands in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area would enhance the Forest Service's ability to manage the area in a more sustainable manner than the current ownership pattern allows.
<i>Comment</i>	Acquisition of parcel 1 would help ensure some fantastic loop opportunities. It will also provide the managing agencies with enforcement authority where it is currently prohibited. By providing the opportunity that the Danskin Mountains OHV Area does, it helps provide the challenge and experience that keeps people on the trail rather than making their own illegal ones.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on Danskin Mountain OHV Area trail management are disclosed in section 3.2.2 of the EA.

<i>Comment</i>	Acquisition of the other parcels in the area will help assure continued access to this national class OHV area. It will also provide the managing agencies the enforcement options needed to help keep the criminal few on the trail or out of the system. Failure to approve this proposed exchange will potentially harm a fantastic example of managed multiple use. Its close proximity to Idaho's largest metropolitan area provides recreationists a quality experience without driving great distance.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on Danskin Mountain OHV Area trail management are disclosed in section 3.2.2 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The access problems in the Danskins should have been discussed in the 1995 Danskin Trail Management Plan.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	In 1995, cooperators involved in developing the Danskin Trail Management Plan believed that it would be possible to secure easements from private land owners. However, efforts to date have proven unsuccessful, placing future public access in jeopardy.
<i>Comment</i>	If OHV use is the cause of the underlying conflict, OHV use on exchanged lands should be prohibited so these conflicts do not happen again.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Roads/Transportation</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	I am concerned that the exchange will close the road from Glens Ferry to Highway 20.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	None of the alternatives would close the road identified in this concern (County Road 194). As stated in Appendix A, County Road 194 would be reserved for public use in the land exchange.
<i>Roadless Areas</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	The current level of motorized use in the Danskin Mountains IRA compromises the area's roadless values. The Forest Service should continue to utilize the extensive motorized trail system in the Danskin Mountains as a mitigation measure to insure that other, less-impacted Inventoried Roadless Areas on the Boise National Forest are not subjected to the same proliferation of user-created routes that occurred in the Danskin Mountains OHV Area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on the Danskin Mountains IRA are disclosed in section 3.4.2 of the EA.
<i>Access</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	Disposal parcel 3 does not comply with the Boise National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan because it borders Camas Reservoir, which are the exception in Forest Plan Objective 0162.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Conveyance Parcel 3 complies with the Forest Plan because land between County Road 160 and Little Camas Reservoir would remain in the NFS. Additionally, if included in the exchange, County Road 160 would remain open to the public by the existing easement to the Mountain Home Highway District

<i>Comment</i>	Any restriction of public access through parcel 1 would effectively “land-lock” all public land in T2S, R9E, Sections 1, 13, 24, and 25; T2S, R10E, Sections 16, 17, 18, and 19; and T1S, R9E, Section 36. Disposal of public lands identified in this proposal have the potential to limit the Department’s ability to meet deer and elk harvest objectives and significantly reduce public access for hunting.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	All land parcels that are mentioned by the respondent would remain accessible to the public. Although “land-locked,” all of this area would remain accessible from existing roads and rights-of-way reserved to the public in the land exchange agreement (section 2.4.2.2.1 and Figure 2-2). In each case, there is continuous linkage of public land between a public road and the parcels mentioned in the comment. Public land in T. 1 S., R. 9 E., Section 36 would be accessible from County Roads 194A and 194. Public land in T.1 S., R.9 E., Section 36 would be accessible from County Roads 194A and 194. Public land in T.2 S., R. 9 E., Section 1 would be accessible from County Road 194, and from County Road 194A via the public land in T.1 S., R.9 E., Section 36. Public land in T.2 S., R.9 E., Section 13, and T.2 S., R.10 E., Sections 16, 17, and 18 would be accessible from the unimproved right-of-way for Forest Road 194D1, which runs north from the Hill City Road. Public land in T.2 S., R. 9 E., Sections 24 and 25 would be accessible from the Hill City Road.
<i>Comment</i>	Several state endowment parcels will become landlocked by the exchange. The Department of Lands requests that the Forest Service work with us to obtain access, through easement or otherwise, to all parcels of Endowment Land that will be affected by this exchange. There would be 340 acres of land completely isolated by the exchange. An additional 120 acres which would have their traditional and most accessible routes terminated. Road 194C is currently used for all or part of the access to these State parcels.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	All state endowment parcels that are mentioned by the respondent would remain accessible to the public. Although “land-locked,” all of this area would remain accessible from existing roads and rights-of-way reserved to the public in the land exchange agreement (Appendix A and Figure 2-2). In each case, there is continuous linkage of public land between a public road and the parcels mentioned in the comment. State Trust Lands in T2S, R9E, the E½ of Section 2 and the NE¼ of the NE¼ of Section 3, would remain accessible via Forest Road 194C. State Trust Lands in T2S, R9E, SE¼ of the NE¼ of Section 2; the SE¼ of the SE¼ of Section 2; and the NW¼ of the SW¼ of Section 1, would remain accessible via either County Road 194 or County Road 194A, crossing BLM-administered land and State Trust Lands.
<i>Comment</i>	If this land were to be exchanged, it would ruin Bennett Mountain.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on access to the Bennett Hills are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA. The Responsible Official will weigh these effects, along with other trade-offs, in making the decision.
<i>Comment</i>	In the case of the Bennett Hills land, I believe it is a huge mistake to lose this little known treasure which is a native Idaho secret.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on access to the Bennett Hills are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The reduced hunter access will increase depredation in and around Units 44 and 45.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Loss of access for hunting reduces recreational opportunities and makes it more difficult to harvest an adequate number of deer to control population size and minimize depredation problems.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	IDL and BLM-administered lands in the Bennett Mountain and Camas Reservoir area are landlocked by private property with no trespass, creating additional public lands recreational use limitations.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The Bennett Mountain area is a controlled hunt area for elk and trophy mule deer and given the current limitations of public hunting access the exchange will compound the problem of hunter access.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Disposal parcel 3, which lies adjacent to Little Camas Reservoir, provides an important public access for anglers and lies adjacent to IDL administered lands. All public lands adjacent to the reservoir should remain public.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	All NFS lands adjacent to Little Camas Reservoir would remain in the NFS. This includes all NFS land to the east of County Road 160, which accesses the west side of the reservoir.
<i>Comment</i>	Maintain public access to all public and State Trust lands remaining in the area following the proposed exchange.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in Chapter 2, Access to BLM-administered and State Trust lands in the vicinity of the conveyance parcels would be maintained through the reservation of roads and rights of way under either action alternative.
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service needs to make an accurate determination the proposed exchange might have on access to public land for hunting within BGU 45 and Bennett Mountain.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.

<i>Comment</i>	A change in ownership of up to 3,188 acres of public land will result in a major loss of public access and lands for hunting in a major big game management unit, hindering IDF&G's ability to meet wildlife harvest objectives and recreational demands. This would further exacerbate existing wildlife management and public access challenges in Units 44 and 45.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Proposed public access reservations may not be maintained in perpetuity.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Reservations for public access are kept in the name of the United States. The United States may grant reserved rights to other entities, however the United States holds the senior right and the reservation remains in the name of the United States.
<i>Comment</i>	The exchange should secure public access for hunting and camping on the disposal parcels in perpetuity.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	Reservations for public access are kept in the name of the United States. The United States may grant reserved rights to other entities, however the United States holds the senior right and the reservation remains in the name of the United States.
<i>Comment</i>	The loss of public access to the Bennett Mountain area for hunting and other access is not acceptable.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I'm concerned about the effects to public access for hunting and recreation of the Federal land is converted to private land.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I'm concerned about access to Little Camas Reservoir if the lands adjacent to it are exchanged.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	All NFS lands adjacent to Little Camas Reservoir would remain in the NFS. This includes all NFS land to the east of County Road 160, which accesses the west side of the reservoir.
<i>Comment</i>	The land exchange would prohibit public access to BLM and Forest Service land in the Bennett Hills.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	It is a shame to close access to such a great hunting area (Bennett Mountain) to the public.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I'm concerned that the exchange would privatize an access point to a public hunting area.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Bennett Hills is a public treasure and should not be lost to private interest. The area has live streams, a lake, and almost all of the wildlife of the state of Idaho, including wolves, moose, elk, deer, sage grouse, songbirds, and small game. The area is close to a major population center of the Boise area. Bennett Hills is readily accessible by public roads to the majority of the Idaho population. Bennett Hills land has been used continuously by my family and our neighbors since 1892.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA. The effects to Threatened, Endangered, Potential and Candidate species, including the gray wolf, is included in section 3.4.3 of the EA, while the effects to sage grouse and other sensitive wildlife species are disclosed in section 3.4.4. In addition, as described in section 2.4.2.2.2, management of the conveyed parcels is anticipated to remain similar to what currently occurs.
<i>Comment</i>	I oppose the land exchange. It's a bum deal for the sportsman. Mr. McCallum will not allow sportsman access to the hunting areas, and Mr. McCallum already has gates up to prevent public access to National Forest Land.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Bennett Mountain is too great a gift to be enjoyed by only a select few that can afford to "own" her. Please leave the small area that we have left to be enjoyed by all. This land belongs to all of us and it would be an irrevocable mistake to just give it away. There is little left in the Bennett Mountain area for the public to enjoy and it would be a shame for this to just be handed over and blocked to the public forever. By giving away a part of our mountain, the Forest Service would be denying us access to these pleasures (hunting and angling) close to home.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Public lands should stay open to the public. FS should not close off public lands in my part of the county to get land in another part. The private party has tied up too much land already and shouldn't be allowed to tie up more land to exclude more sportsmen's access.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Privatization of land around the Bennett Mountain area will be trouble for the future. The public will not be able to access the public lands in the Bennett Mountain area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.

<i>Comment</i>	Sportsmen/sportswomen, and outdoor enthusiasts will lose access to thousands of acres if this exchange is approved.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Privatization of land around the Bennett mountain area will cut off access to BLM land for hunting in BGU 45. Once privatized, the private landowner will not allow the public to cross their land to hunt in these areas.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	There is not enough land in the Bennett Mountain area for recreation and the sportsman. This exchange would reduce it more. The agencies should keep as much access as possible and not privatize lands currently open to public access. The private landowner would not allow public access to the disposed land for public hunting.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I am concerned about the loss of hunting opportunities in the Bennett Mountain area that would result from the exchange.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Bennett Mountain is tough for public access now. We don't want it to get any worse.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I oppose the trade. The rancher receiving the Federal lands has enough ground tied up. The trade will tie up the rest of the FS ground in the area, as well as the BLM land. The rancher already does not allow anyone to cross his land to hunt on the adjacent hunting areas, and if the rancher gets more public land, it will be even more difficult to get into these hunting areas.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I enjoy the Bennett Hills year-long for hunting and other recreational activities. The area is already mostly closed off by private landowners. The exchange would close it off even more, if not completely. Exchanging hunting lands for motor biker land is not a fair trade.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA. Section 3.2.2 describes the effects on the Danskin Mountain OHV Area trail system. The Responsible Official will review these effects, and weigh the tradeoffs, when making her decision.
<i>Comment</i>	The Bennett Hills are closed off to hunting and other recreational activities by private landowners already. This proposal would worsen the problem.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	This exchange would cause the loss of all access to Bennett Mountain, forever.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	If the private landowner threatens to cut off motorcycle access in the Danskins, why would the same landowner allow public access across lands he acquires in the Bennetts?
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in Chapter 2, access to BLM-administered and State Trust lands in the vicinity of the conveyance parcels would be maintained through the reservation of roads and rights of way under either action alternative.
<i>Comment</i>	There is far too much private land on Bennett Mountain. The landowners are very greedy about access already. This is not a good deal for hunters and the people who just like to see wildlife.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Proposals like this have ruined hunting in Oregon. It would be a shame if my son doesn't get to hunt a portion of the Bennett Range (when he draws a tag) because a Californian is charging a toll to cross the last mile of his land just to get to our BLM land.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Public access to the disposal parcels must be guaranteed in perpetuity. This would include Road 194 and 194C in Disposal Parcel 1; Road 194C, 163, and 152 in Disposal Parcel 2 (if re-instated in the proposal); Road 160A in Disposal Parcel 3; the un-named road connecting SH20 to 134B that passes through Disposal Parcel 4; and Road 134C in Disposal Parcel 6 (if re-instated in the proposal). It would be nice if the recipients of the disposal parcels would allow continued access for hunting.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA. Appendix A of the EA identifies roads what would be reserved for public access.

<i>Comment</i>	I am concerned that the exchange will preclude sportsmen from accessing the only available public lands on the east side of Bennett Mountain Road. Mr. McCallum would preclude access to BLM and State land. Although it appears small, when Mr. McCallum gets this land, he will be the only individual that has access to any of the other public land in the area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The proposal would effectively land-lock the public lands behind the Bennett Hills parcel which would create a de facto private ownership, and I believe subsequent neglect of these landlocked public lands.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The multitude of people that will be making the sacrifices of losing their public opportunities and accessibility to resources they value, for the benefit of OHV users, never had anything to do with creating the conflict between OHV users and the private landowner in the Danskin Mountains.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The private landowner should maintain traditional uses of the disposed lands in perpetuity and could also benefit by becoming a part of IDF&G's "Access Yes" program to ensure that areas that were traditional hunting areas will continue to remain open and accessible for such opportunities.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Public access to Unit 45 for all types of recreation is difficult and the proposal will most certainly further limit the public's access to our public lands. This will put additional pressure on access and compress hunting pressure into a smaller acreage.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I am a former Glenns Ferry resident and have hunted the Bennetts all my life. I am concerned that Mr. McCallum has already "tied up" much of the land out there and does not allow the public to hunt on his land, or cross his land. Putting 3000 more acres in McCallum's hands would make that much more land inaccessible to hunters.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I am concerned that the land exchange will eliminate public access to the Bennett Range.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	John McCallum will lock us out.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I have never been lucky enough to draw one of the coveted hunting permits (in the Bennetts), but I would like to have a chance in the future.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Public lands in the Bennett Mountain and Camas Reservoir are already insufficient in quantity for hunters and anglers.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	This exchange is a land grab employed by those with political connections, money and power to obtain premium land at rock bottom prices at a loss to the original landowners, thus eventually using the purchase of the land for their own private/personal gain making the wealthy richer and the poor poorer.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The comment is noted.
<i>Comment</i>	Forest Service ground was not meant to be used in a swapping game where private landowners benefit and the general public has their rights to use this land taken from them.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	We have hunted and enjoyed these forestlands for many years. If this exchange goes through, we will NEVER be able to set foot on them again.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	If this plan goes through, only a few guys with a lot of "bucks" will be able to afford to benefit. If Bennett winds up under private ownership, only the very wealthy, select few, will be allowed the privilege of hunting there.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	The Bennett Mountain area is the finest deer hunting in the world. The private landowner will tie it up for himself. The land in the Danskins is nowhere near as valuable as the land at Bennett Mountain.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.

<i>Comment</i>	Landowners would get too many Landowner Appreciation Program tags in the area to hunt elk. They already receive 25 percent of them.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The proportion of Landowner Appreciation Tags that are allocated to landowners is a policy set by the State of Idaho, and the Proposed Action would not affect this allocation.
<i>Comment</i>	Hunting in the Bennetts, specifically BGU 45, as a result of the proposal, would be limited to those willing to pay the private landowner for access to and through the private lands.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Three of the five parcels scheduled for disposal in the Bennett Hills represent some of the best and last remaining opportunity to access public land for big game hunting in Unit 45. Landowners covet the available Landowner Appreciation Tags which reportedly sell for upwards of \$6,000. There is little incentive to provide public access.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	I value the Bennett Mountain area for public hunting.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Comment</i>	Once we lose our public property it is gone for good. And so will the access.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA.
<i>Wildlife Habitat</i>	
<i>Comment</i>	Impairing or trading quality native mule deer habitat is unacceptable.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	As described in section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA, conveyed lands would be zoned by Elmore County as Ag B – General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest, once privatized. This zoning would be similar to current management of the parcels to be conveyed. Because no change in management is anticipated, the conveyance parcels would remain mule deer habitat after the exchange.
<i>Comment</i>	The change in landownership will impact wildlife habitat and the use of the parcels for wildlife.

<i>Forest Service Response</i>	There is no cause-effect relationship that would link the exchange of wildlife habitat with decreases in habitat quality. As disclosed in section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA, the conveyance parcels are currently used for livestock grazing and it is anticipated that they would continue to be grazed by livestock after the exchange. There is no reason to expect a change in grazing management of the conveyance parcels after the exchange. All conveyance parcels included in the exchange would be zoned by Elmore County as Ag B – General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest, once privatized. " <i>The purpose of the Ag B District is to preserve and protect this land for multiple land uses that are compatible with farming, ranching, grazing, forest products, and limited mining. Residential land use is allowed in the Ag B zone subject to site development standards and compatibility with agricultural operations</i> " (Elmore County Zoning and Development Ordinance, Amended 1995, page 22).
<i>Comment</i>	The EIS must disclose cumulative impacts on wildlife habitat.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	There is no cause-effect relationship that would link the exchange of wildlife habitat with decreases in habitat quality. As disclosed in section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA, the conveyance parcels are currently used for livestock grazing and would continue to be grazed by livestock after the exchange. There is no reason to expect a change in grazing management of the conveyance parcels after the exchange. All conveyance parcels included in the exchange would be zoned by Elmore County as Ag B – General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest, once privatized. " <i>The purpose of the Ag B District is to preserve and protect this land for multiple land uses that are compatible with farming, ranching, grazing, forest products, and limited mining. Residential land use is allowed in the Ag B zone subject to site development standards and compatibility with agricultural operations</i> " (Elmore County Zoning and Development Ordinance, Amended 1995, page 22).
<i>Comment</i>	Shifting these parcels to private ownership places important wildlife habitat at risk.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	There is no cause-effect relationship that would link the exchange of wildlife habitat with decreases in habitat quality. As disclosed in section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA, the conveyance parcels are currently used for livestock grazing and would continue to be grazed by livestock after the exchange. There is no reason to expect a change in grazing management of the conveyance parcels after the exchange. All conveyance parcels included in the exchange would be zoned by Elmore County as Ag B – General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest, once privatized. " <i>The purpose of the Ag B District is to preserve and protect this land for multiple land uses that are compatible with farming, ranching, grazing, forest products, and limited mining. Residential land use is allowed in the Ag B zone subject to site development standards and compatibility with agricultural operations</i> " (Elmore County Zoning and Development Ordinance, Amended 1995, page 22).
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service is exchanging prime wildlife habitat for motorcycle trails.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and one additional action alternative on public hunting opportunities, including hunter access, are disclosed in section 3.3.1 of the EA. Section 3.2.2 describes the effects on the Danskin Mountain OHV Area trail system. The Responsible Official will review these effects, and weigh the tradeoffs, when making her decision.

<i>Comment</i>	Given the history of private ownership in the area, managing the area for sage grouse and mountain quail will likely remain increasingly difficult on the disposed lands if this proposal is allowed proceed.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on sage grouse and mountain quail are disclosed in section 3.4.4 of the EA. This analysis concluded there would be no impact to any sage grouse population or individuals.
<i>Comment</i>	This exchange will put the Idaho Sage Grouse in serious danger of extinction.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on sage grouse are disclosed in section 3.4.4 of the EA. This analysis concluded there would be no impact to any sage grouse population or individuals.
<i>Comment</i>	Portions of the public lands proposed for exchange are considered important wildlife habitats and their losses could further limit the IDF&G efforts to maintain game and non-game populations in the area.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	There is no cause-effect relationship that would link the exchange of wildlife habitat with decreases in habitat quality. As disclosed in section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA, the conveyance parcels are currently used for livestock grazing and would continue to be grazed by livestock after the exchange. There is no reason to expect a change in grazing management of the conveyance parcels after the exchange. All conveyance parcels included in the exchange would be zoned by Elmore County as Ag B – General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest, once privatized. “ <i>The purpose of the Ag B District is to preserve and protect this land for multiple land uses that are compatible with farming, ranching, grazing, forest products, and limited mining. Residential land use is allowed in the Ag B zone subject to site development standards and compatibility with agricultural operations</i> ” (Elmore County Zoning and Development Ordinance, Amended 1995, page 22).
<i>Comment</i>	The Forest Service should ensure preservation of endangered species in each alternative.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, and an additional action alternative on endangered species are disclosed in section 3.4.3 of the EA. This analysis concluded that there would not effects to any endangered species.
<i>Comment</i>	Each year, the public loses more prime bull elk and duck hunting habitat to housing and private ownership, and the exchange would worsen that problem.
<i>Forest Service Response</i>	The non-Federal party grazes livestock on land in the vicinity of the conveyance parcels. Based on the non-Federal party’s stated intentions, and knowing the land patterns and uses in the area, as well as the Elmore County Zoning (General Agriculture/Grazing/Forest) that would be applied to the conveyed parcels (section 2.4.2.2.2 of the EA), there is nothing that suggests that any land uses other than livestock grazing, at similar intensities, are likely to occur within the foreseeable future on the lands considered available for conveyance.

Appendix C – Parcel Photographs

 Indicates approximate camera position and direction of ground photos of exchange parcels.

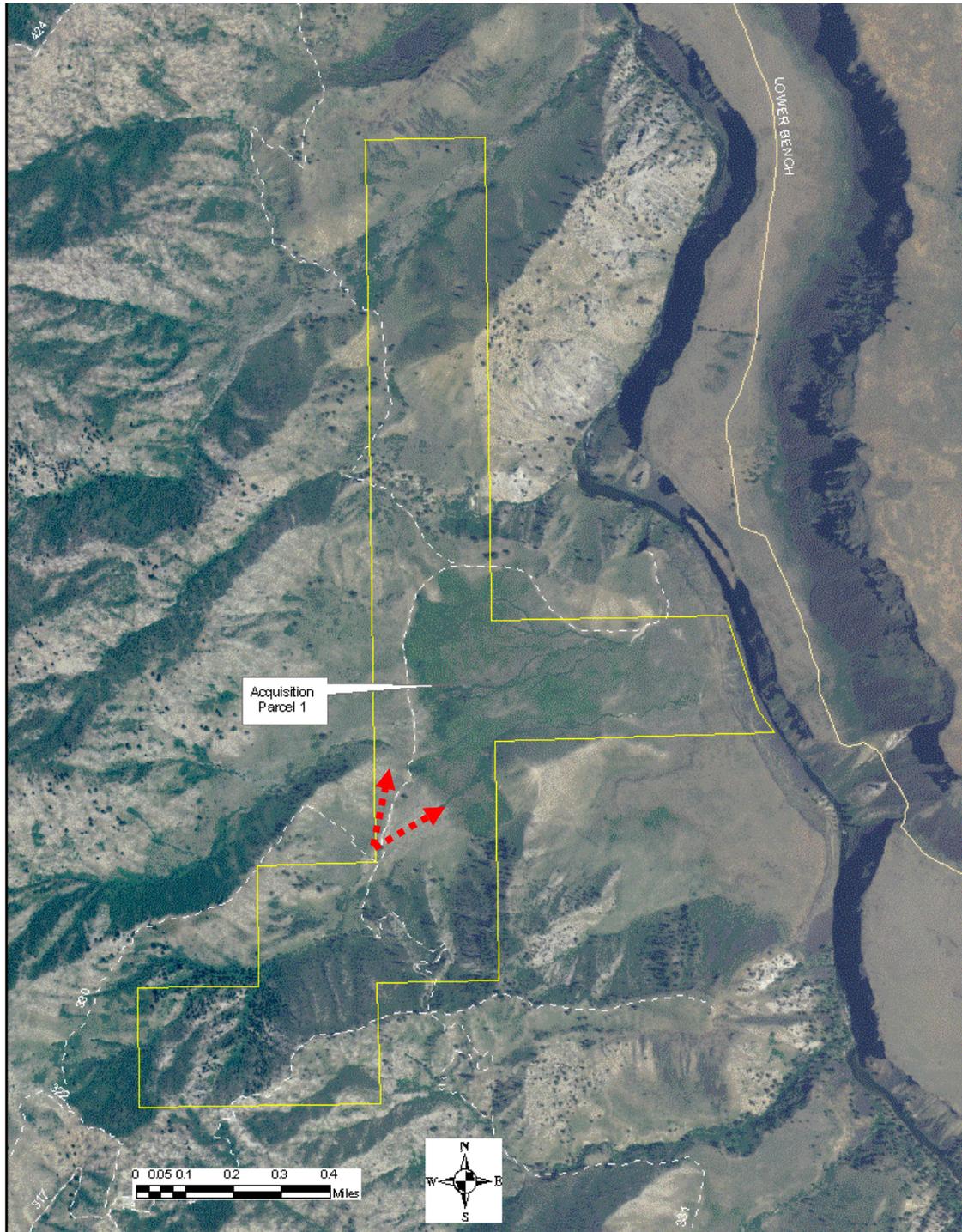


Figure C-1. Air photo of Little Fiddler Flat parcel (Acquisition Parcel 1).



Figure C-2. View of Fiddler Flat area (Acquisition Parcel 1) proposed for Forest Service acquisition. Motorized trail located on private land is seen in center of photo.

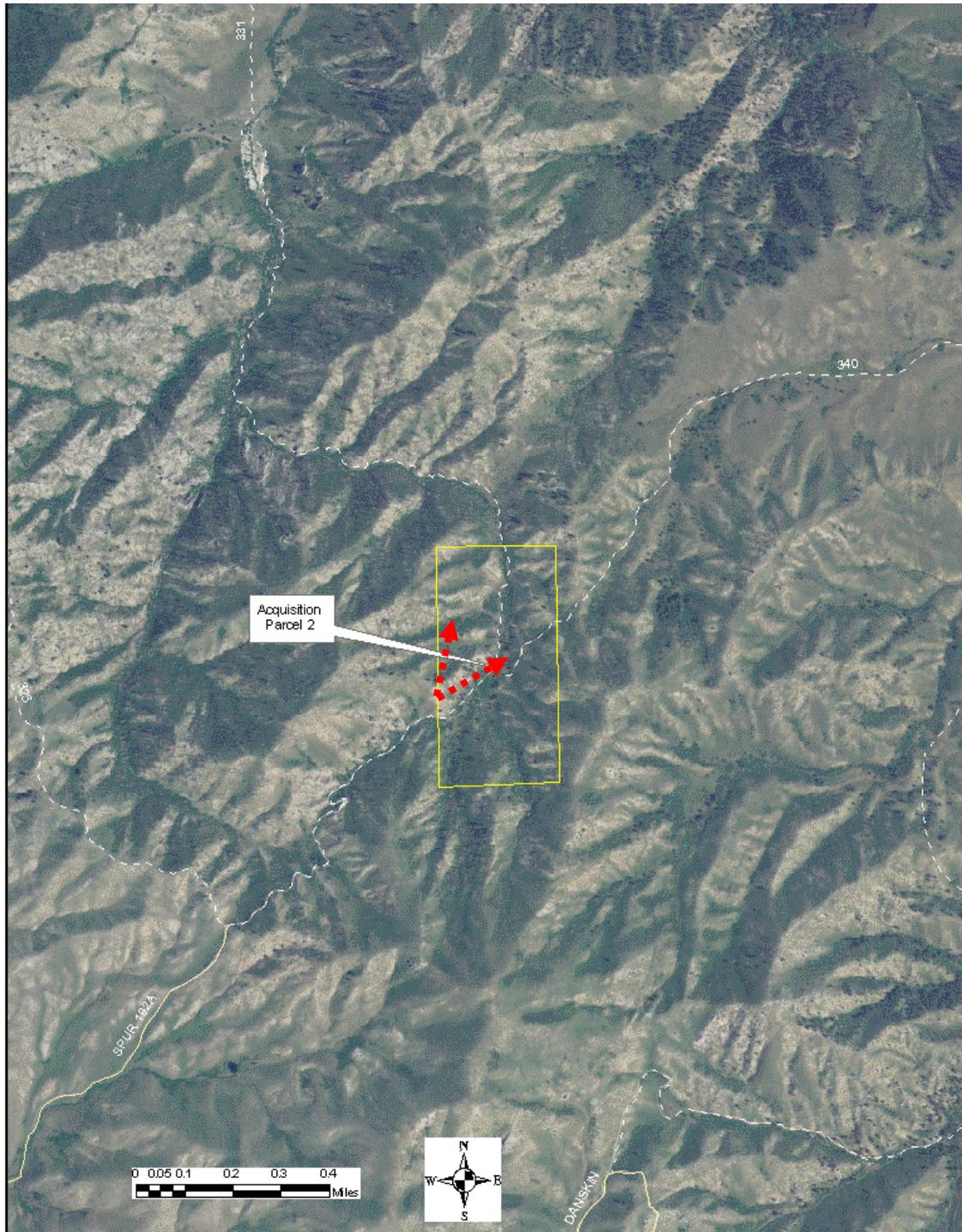


Figure C-3. Air photo of Devil's Hole Parcel (Acquisition Parcel 2).



Figure C-4. View of Devil's Hole parcel proposed for Forest Service acquisition (Acquisition Parcel 2).

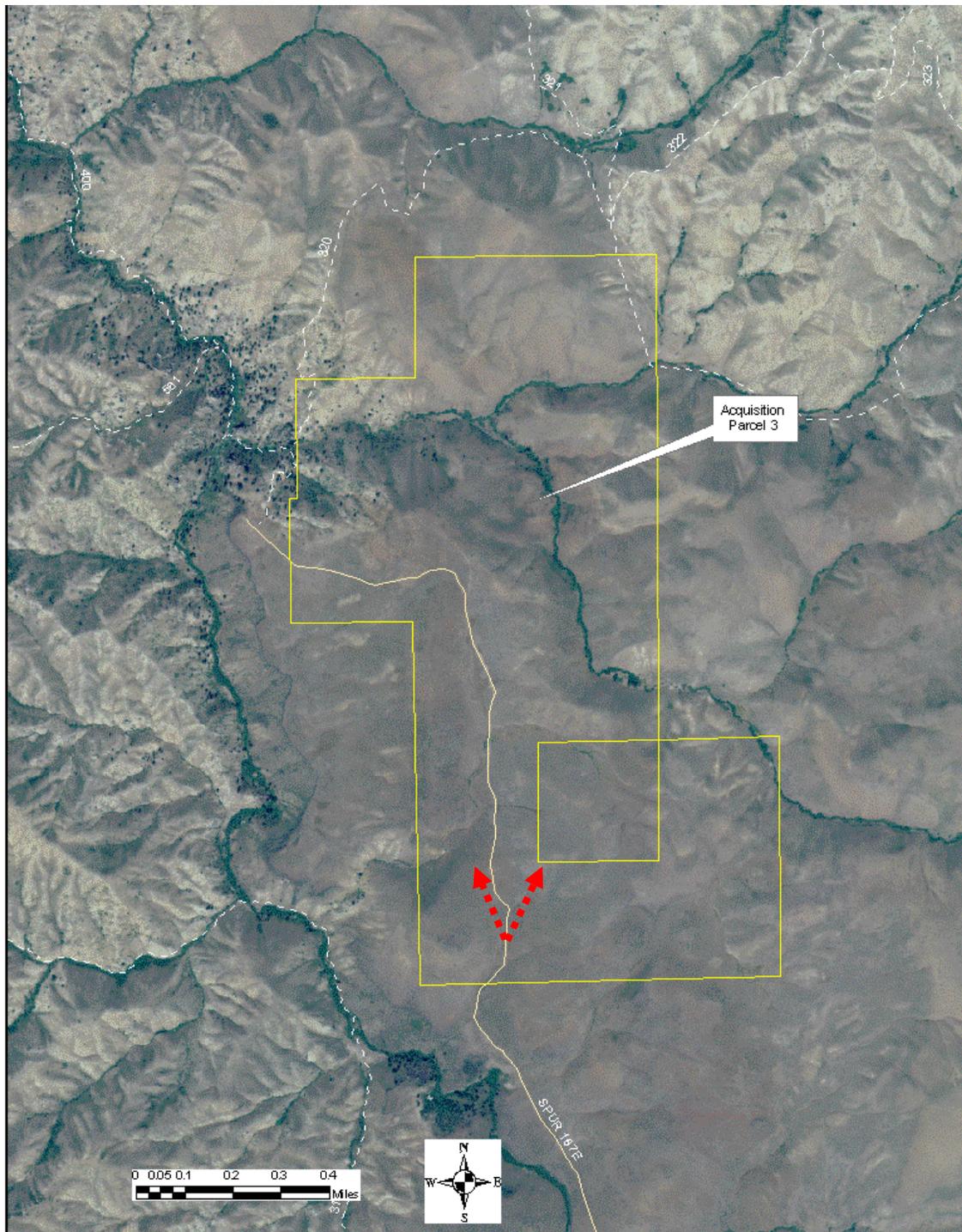


Figure C-5. Air photo of Packsaddle Creek parcel (Acquisition Parcel 3).



Figure C-6. View of Packsaddle Creek parcel proposed for Forest Service acquisition (Acquisition Parcel 3).

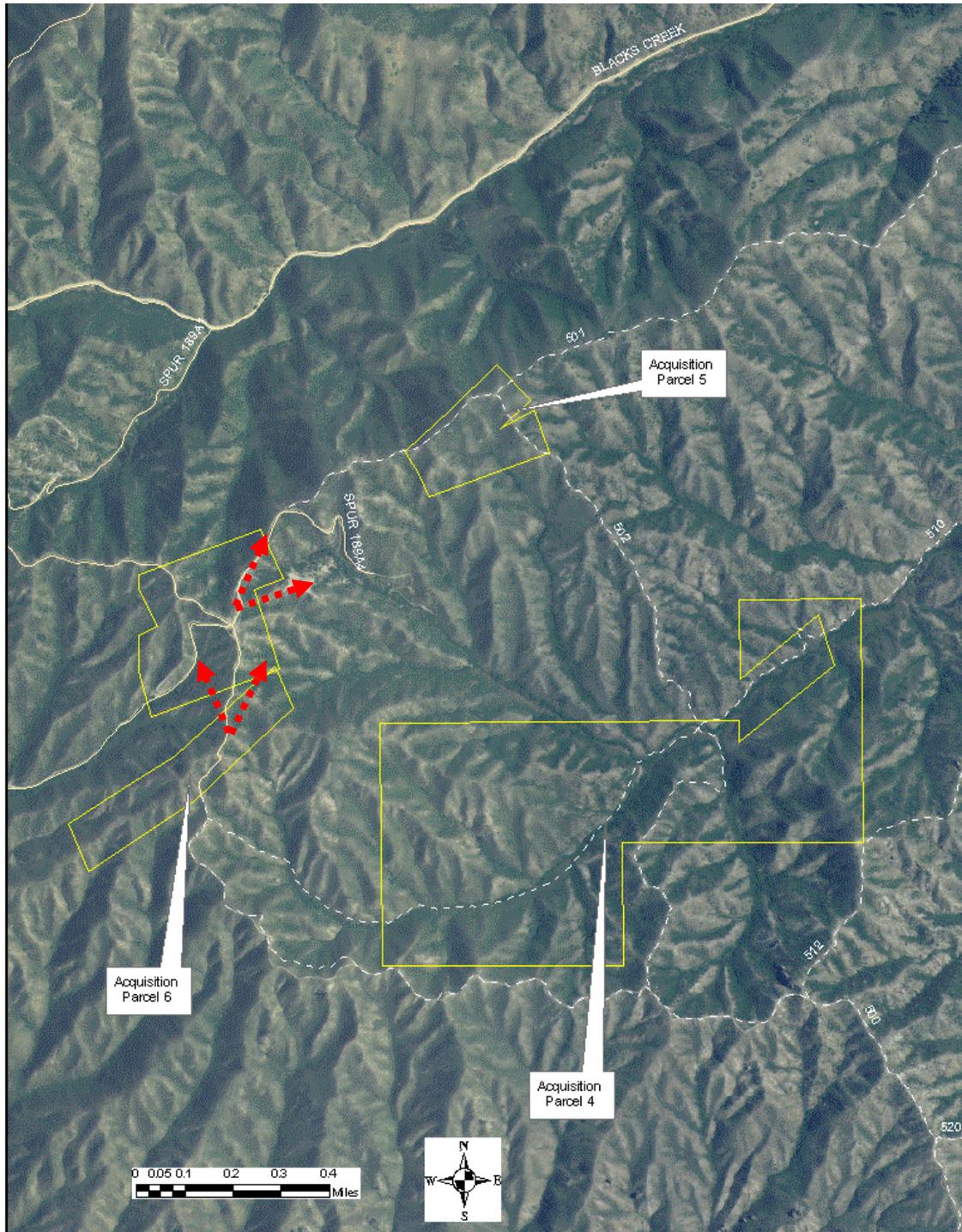


Figure C-7. Air photo of Bender Creek, Wood Creek, and Three Point Mountain parcels (Acquisition Parcels 4, 5 and 6).



Figure C-8. View of Wood Creek parcel proposed for Forest Service acquisition (Acquisition Parcel 5 (in middleground)).



Figure C-9. View of Three Point Mountain parcel proposed for Forest Service acquisition (Acquisition Parcel 6).

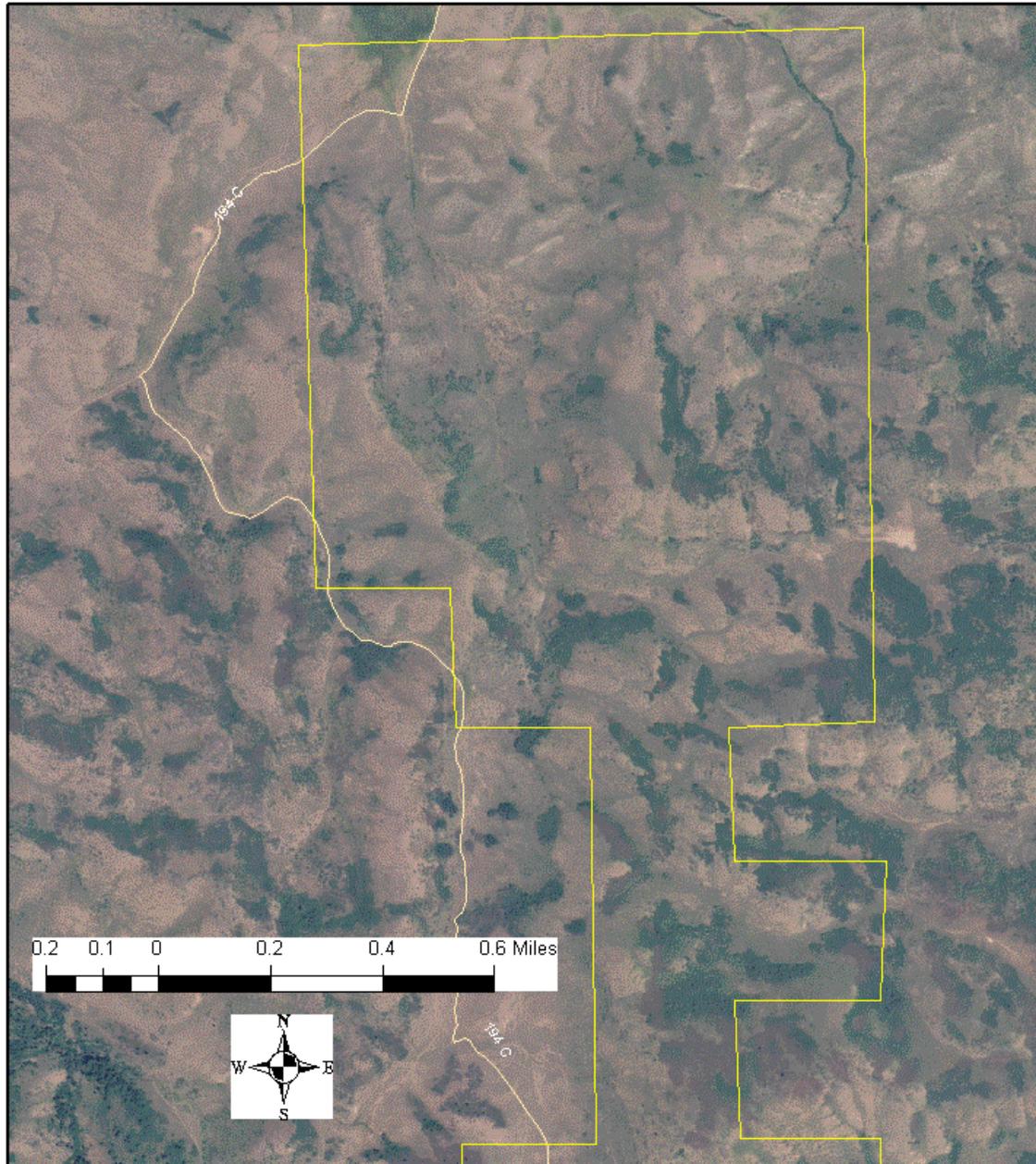


Figure C-10. Air photo of northern portion of Bennett Mountain parcel (Conveyance Parcel 1).

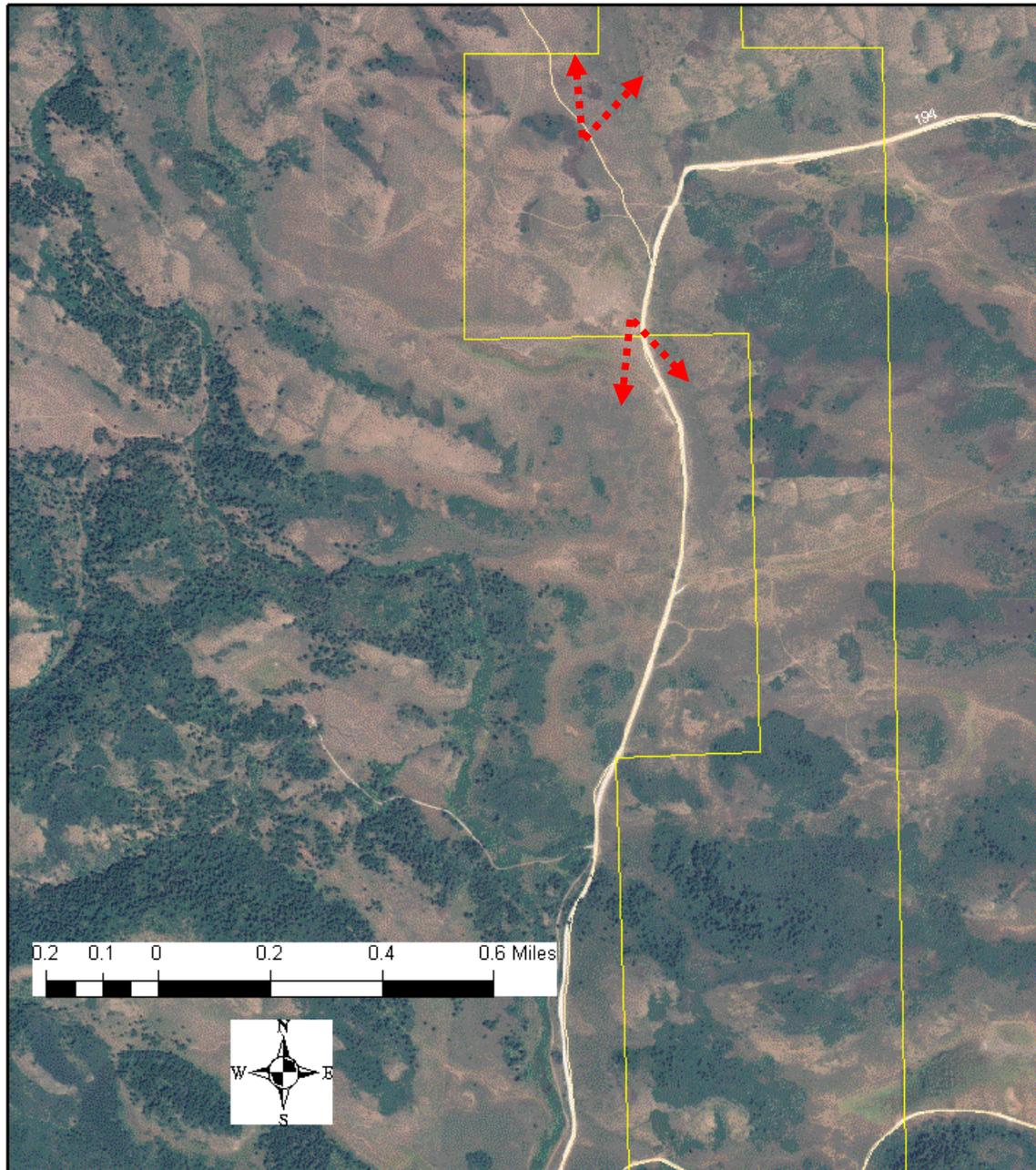


Figure C-11. Air photo of central portion of Bennett Mountain parcel (Conveyance Parcel 1).



Figure C-12. View of Northern portion of Bennett Mountain Parcel (Conveyance Parcel 1) from Road 194C.



Figure C-13. View of middle portion of Bennett Mountain parcel (Conveyance Parcel 1) from Road 194.

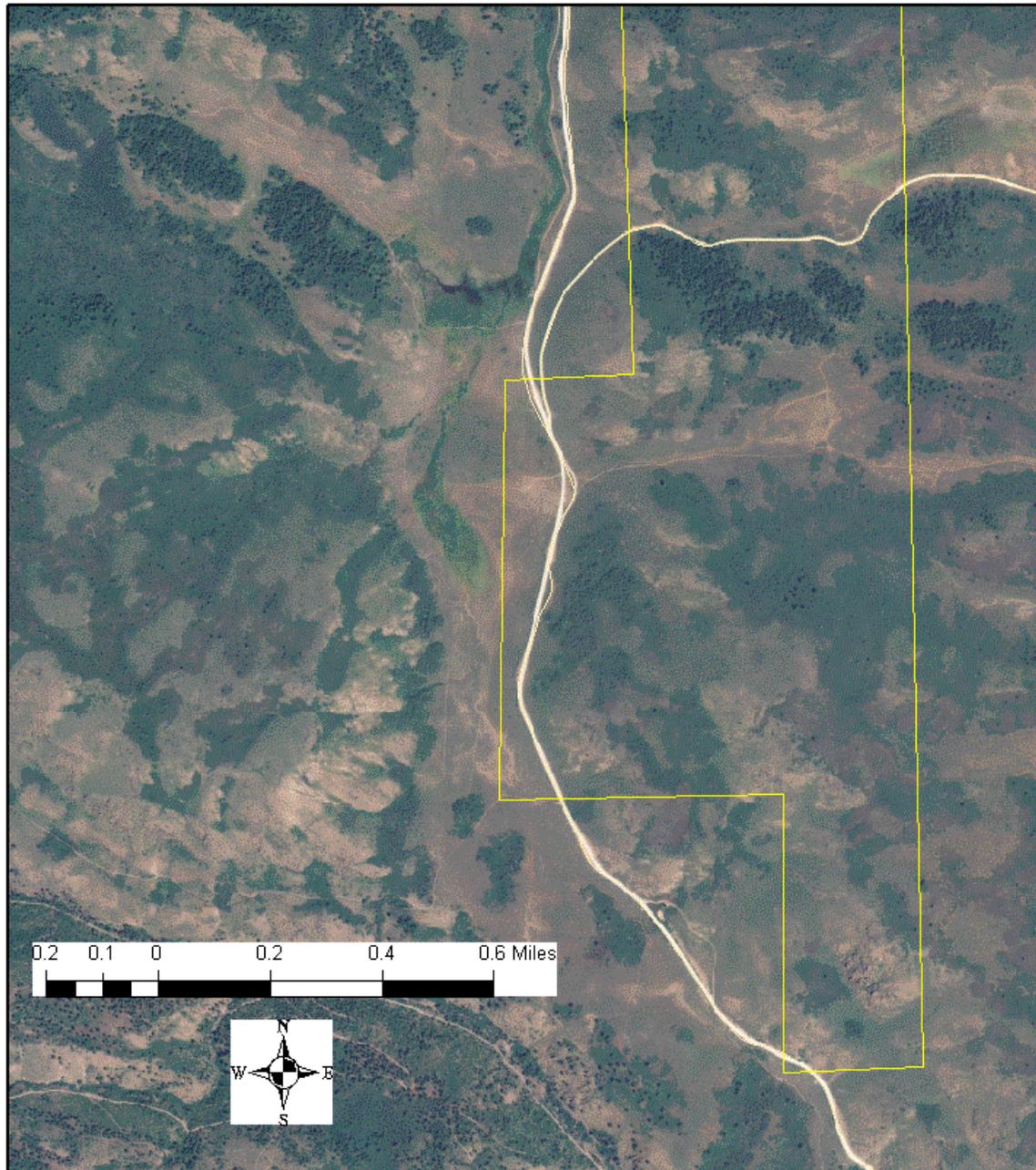


Figure C-14. Air photo of southern portion of Bennett Mountain parcel (Conveyance Parcel 1).

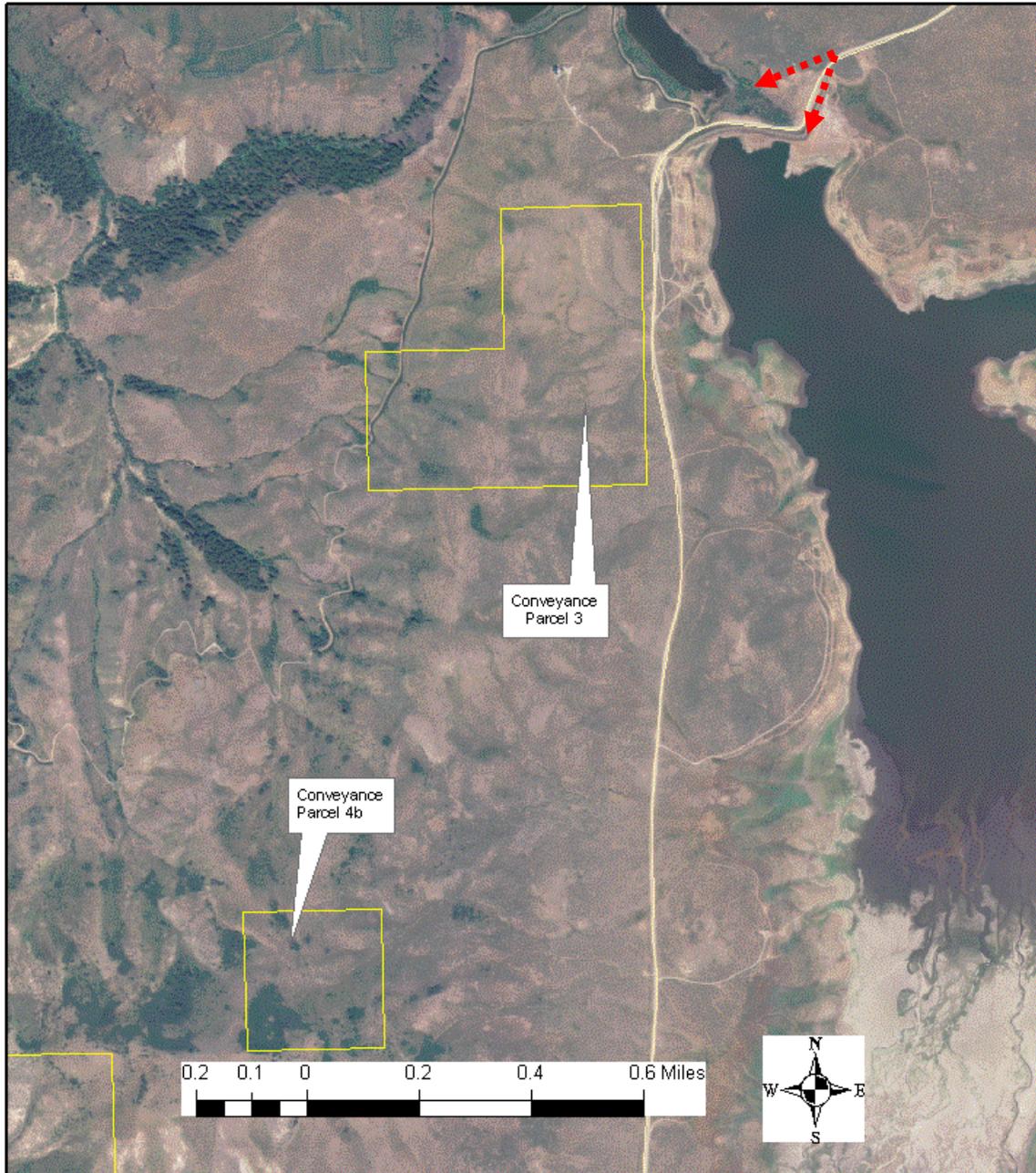


Figure C-15. Air photo of Conveyance Parcels 3 (Little Camas) and 4b (no name).



Figure C-16. View of Little Camas parcel (Conveyance Parcel 3) which includes the nearest hills in the background.

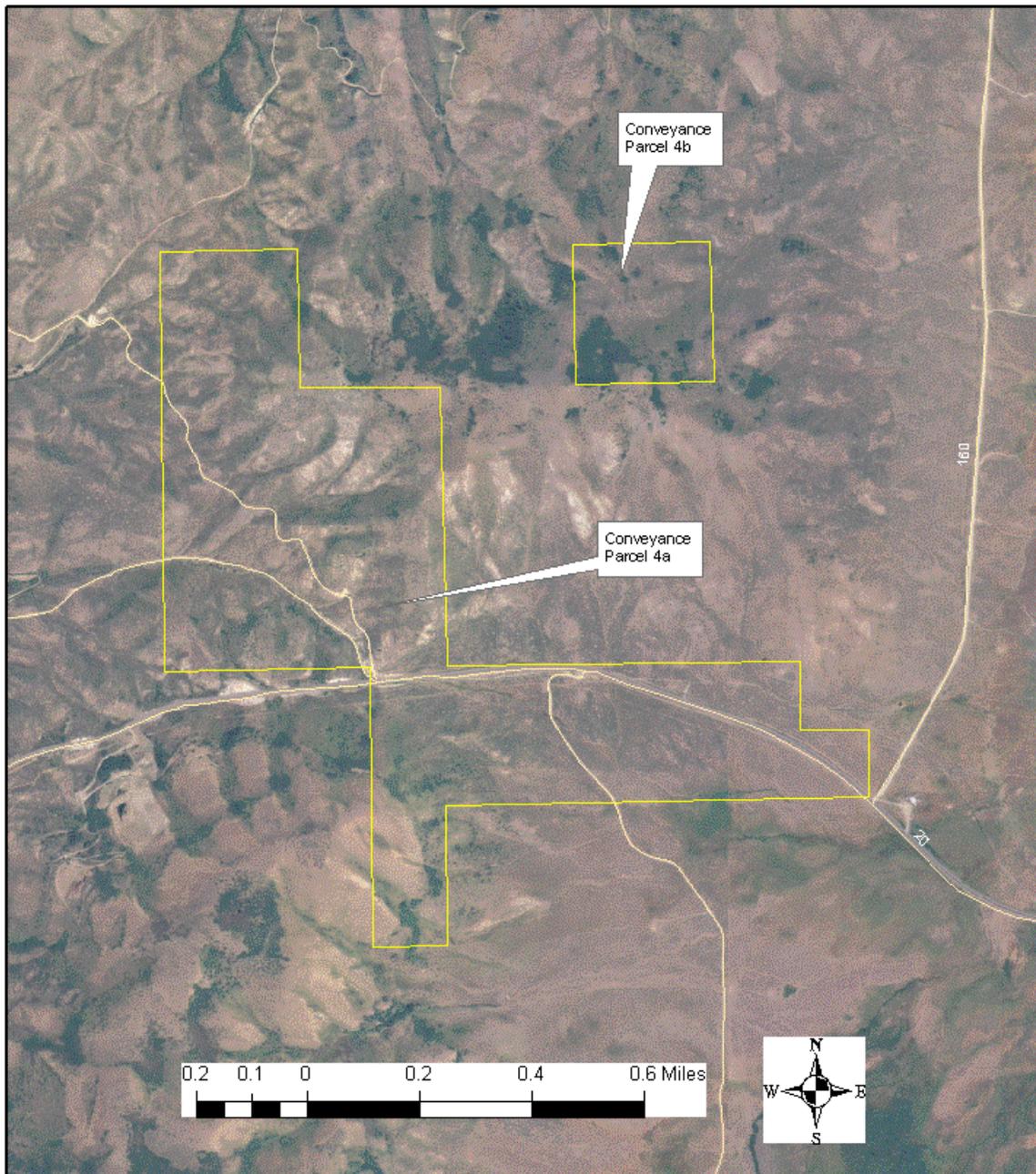


Figure C-17. Air photo of Conveyance Parcels 4a and 4b (no name).



Figure C-18. View of Conveyance Parcel 4a (in background) from Highway 20, approximately 1.5 miles east of the parcel.

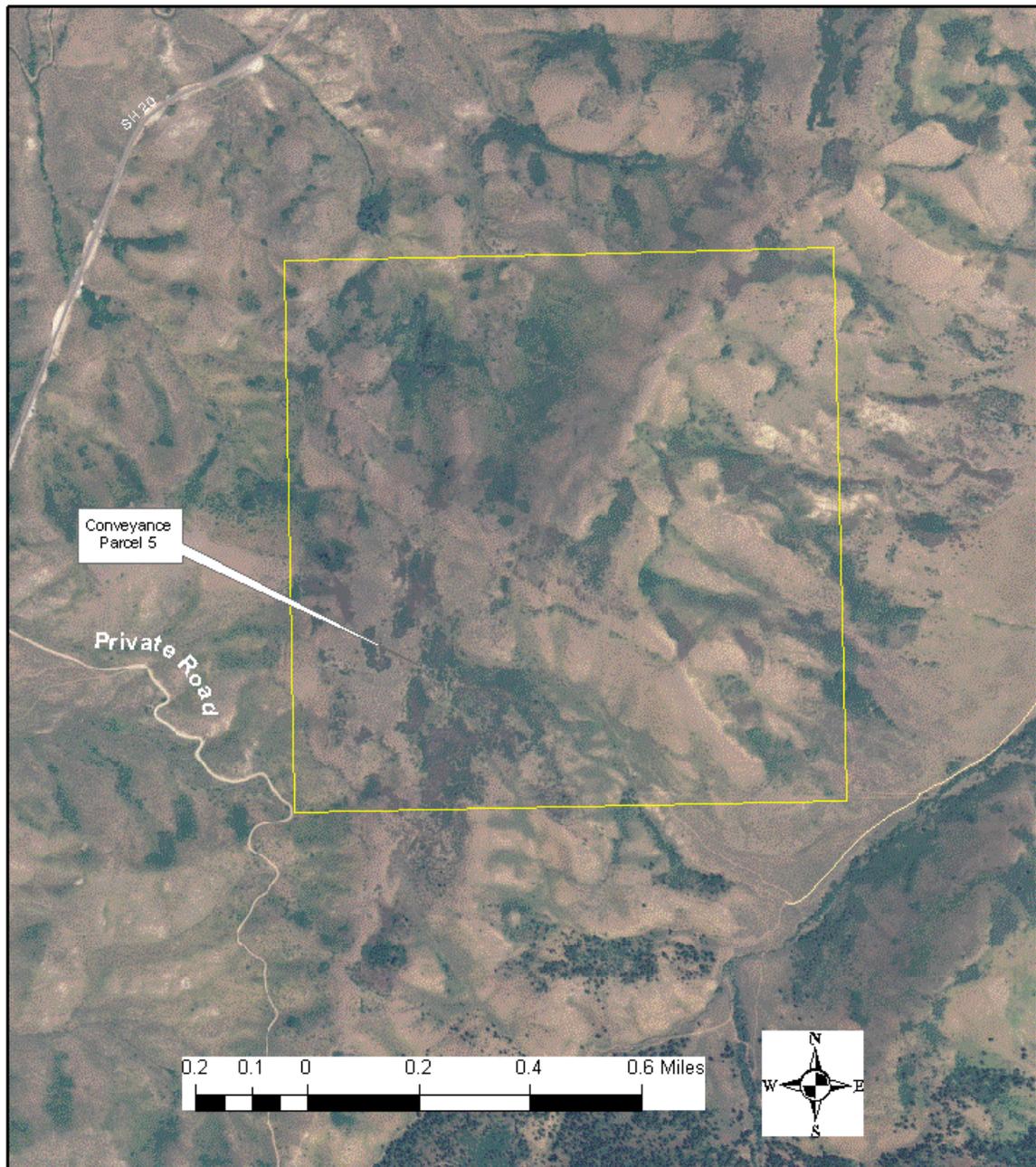


Figure C-19. Air photo of Conveyance Parcel 5 (no name).



Figure C-20. View of Conveyance Parcel 5 (in background) from Highway 20, approximately 1 mile to the west of the parcel.