

SAWTOOTH NATIONAL FOREST INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREAS**Blackhorse Creek
Roadless Area No. 0414039
7,709 acres****DESCRIPTION**

This area includes the small northwestern portion of what was the Buttercup Mountain IRA (Roadless Area No. 14018) in the 1987 Sawtooth National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). During the Forest Plan Revision roadless area inventory update, the Buttercup IRA was divided into three separate areas because the existing roads that separate them were considered to be too highly developed to meet wilderness standards.

The Blackhorse Creek IRA is located in Camas County, within the Fairfield Ranger District, about 13 miles north of Fairfield, Idaho. It is bordered on the north and west by the Ketchum-Featherville Road (Forest Road 227), and on the southwest and southeast by the Little Smoky Creek Road (Forest Road 015).

The topography is very steep over much of the area. Precipitation averages from 16 to 20 inches. The elevations range from around 6,200 feet to over 8,400 feet. The slopes are generally vegetated up to the ridgelines with Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, and some lodgepole pine on the northern and eastern slopes. The southern and western slopes are vegetated with mountain shrub-sagebrush-grass communities. The brush communities include snowberry, bitterbrush, and sagebrush. Aspen is present but it is in decline due to fire exclusion and conifer encroachment.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Natural integrity and apparent naturalness are rated low because of mining activities, improved and unimproved roads along the borders, interior exclusions, and range management activities. The area includes 0.5 mile of unclassified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are moderate, due primarily to the area's small size. The Ketchum-Featherville and Little Smoky Creek Roads can be seen from portions of the area. The distances from the center of the area to the boundary is generally less than 2 miles. Topographic relief, with numerous small and steep draws, does provide some opportunity for solitude. Opportunities for primitive recreation and challenging experiences are both rated moderate.

Special Features: Numerous old cabins exist from past mining activities.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundary, as inventoried, would be difficult to manage because of many road intrusions, adjacency to numerous roads and timber sale areas, and irregular private land property boundaries. Although boundaries could be established that would improve overall wilderness qualities, an acreage reduction would occur.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: The predominate recreation uses are motorized trail bike riding, mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, big-game hunting and snowmobiling. Motorized use comprises about 60 percent of the overall recreation use. There is one system motorized trail (280) within the roadless area, which is about 6 miles in length. Fishing opportunities are poor. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	29%	0%
Roaded Modified	7%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	64%	97%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized	0%	3%

Fisheries: A few tributaries to Little Smoky Creek are thought to provide habitat for threatened bull trout. Occupied or historic habitat for redband trout may exist over most the area. Isolated pockets of brook trout are also present. No streams are considered strongholds for any fish species of concern.

Wildlife: Deer and elk are relatively common. Known nesting areas of northern goshawk, a Region 4 sensitive species, lie within the area. Habitat for threatened Canada lynx occurs in 1,851 acres (24 percent of the IRA). Habitat exists for other Region 4 sensitive species, including wolverine, boreal owl, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, flammulated owl, northern three-toed woodpecker, and spotted frog. Probable sightings of gray wolves have been reported. Grey wolves are considered an experimental non-essential population in this area. Black bear, cougar, bobcat, and pine martin are also present.

Water: Primary drainages within this area include tributaries to Little Smoky Creek, Blackhorse Creek, and Carrie Creek. Water from this area is used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation. There are no lakes within the area.

Range: One sheep allotment covers about 25 percent of the grazed area and one cattle allotment covers the remaining 75 percent. Both allotments are managed under deferred rotation systems. There is a high level of structural grazing improvements on the cattle allotment, and a low level on the sheep allotment. Of the current allotments, 1,842 (23.6 percent of the IRA) acres are considered capable for cattle grazing, and 127 acres (less than 1 percent) are considered capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is 30,099,000 board feet, equivalent to 56,711 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 3,000 acres of the IRA are tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 1,205 acres of the IRA are considered to have low timber productivity; 2,765 acres have moderate productivity; and 200 acres have high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There are 19 registered mining claims, no leases, and no withdrawals within the roadless area. Two semi-active mines, some patented mining properties, and numerous mining prospects exist on the edge of the highly mineralized northern half of the area. The potential for energy or leasable minerals is low.

Heritage: The area contains some historic sites associated with mining activities. A small number of American Indian cultural sites have also been identified within the area.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private or state lands within the roadless area. Two special use permits have been issued for outfitter and guide services within the roadless area. Short-term special uses within the area have been increasing.

Disturbances: Wildfire has not been a significant factor within the roadless area. Dwarf mistletoe infections in Douglas-fir are common throughout the area.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS plant species present. Aspen is in decline due to a lack of fire, encroachment of conifers, and disease. There are no inventoried sites of noxious weeds in this IRA.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Sawtooth Wilderness, 20 miles to the northwest. A Blackhorse Creek Wilderness would serve primarily the Boise, Mountain Home, Wood River Valley, and Twin Falls areas, and smaller communities in and near the Snake River Valley, including Fairfield.

Biological: This IRA lies within the Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe – Coniferous Forest – Alpine Meadow Province (M332), which is well represented in existing wildernesses.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public demand for this area to become wilderness. It was, however, recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act, when this area was a part of the larger Buttercup IRA. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Moderate
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 3,000 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 30,099 MBF or 56,711 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. Portions of the area are highly mineralized. The existing motorized trail use would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wilderness. Only one concerned individual suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	7,709	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	7,709	0	0	7,709
Available for a full range of development	7,709	7,709	7,709	0	7,709	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Acres of Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	2,233	0	0	0	2,233	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	2,304	2,304	2,304	0	0	2,304
Total	2,233	2,304	2,304	2,304	2,233	0	2,304

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	L	L	L	L	N	L	L

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Blackhorse IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Black Pine
Roadless Area No. 0414003
43,970 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Black Pine Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) is located about 45 miles southeast of Burley, Idaho in Cassia County. The primary access includes Interstate 84, Idaho State Highway 81 from I-84 to Malta, Idaho; Utah State Highway 42 from I-84 on the south to the Utah-Idaho state line; and Raft River Highway District Highway 30 (formerly U.S. 30) from the Utah-Idaho state line to Malta. Several developed roads penetrate the area from all four sides. This area includes much of the Black Pine Division of the Minidoka Ranger District.

The major physiographic feature is the Black Pine Mountain Range. This range extends north and south through the area for about 17 miles and is comprised of limestones, calcareous sandstones, shales, and quartzites. Topography ranges from gently sloping lands around the base of the mountains to steep dissected slopes at the higher elevations. The flatter foothills occur primarily below 5,800 feet. The valley soils are deep alluvium and loess deposits that vary in depth and productivity. The mountain slope soils also vary from shallow, droughty soils to deep, moist soils. The soils in general are quite erodible. Elevations range from 4,960 feet at the southwest corner to 9,385 feet atop Black Pine Peak.

Vegetation types are sagebrush, juniper, aspen, mountain shrub, and conifer. The sagebrush type generally occurs on south and west exposures and extends from the boundary to the top of the mountain. The juniper type occurs on the foothill lands. The browse type occurs on the northeast and southwest edges. Conifer timber (Douglas-fir and subalpine fir) is generally confined to the north and east exposures and has experienced extreme insect mortality. There are scattered small patches of aspen and mountain mahogany.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Natural integrity and apparent naturalness are low. There are numerous intrusions into the area from unimproved roads, and there are livestock water developments, fences, and revegetation projects. There is evidence of past mining activities in upper Black Pine Canyon. The large open pit of Black Pine Gold Mine now exists in the Black Pine Division just southeast of the roadless area. The area includes 12.3 miles of unclassified and 19.3 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are moderate. Overall topographic screening is moderate and vegetative screening is low. The distance from perimeter to core of the area is less than 2 miles in most places. There are many off-site intrusions, primarily roads and highways. The unit is clearly visible from Interstate 84 on the north and east sides, and the Raft River Highway District Highway 30 on the west. The opportunities for primitive recreation experiences are low except for the higher elevations. There are few opportunities for challenging experiences.

Special Features: The Pole Canyon Research Natural Area is located within the area.

Manageability and Boundaries: The location of the boundaries would make this area difficult to manage. Some of the boundary coincides with the Forest boundary, but most of it follows no distinct features. Although there is some opportunity to improve manageability through changes to boundaries, acreage would be substantially reduced and intrusions would likely still occur.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use of the area is minor and primarily limited to big game and small game hunting in the fall. Fishing in this area is considered to be poor because of the small number of streams containing trout and because of the small size of the trout. There are no permanent recreation developments, and there is little opportunity for any intensive development of recreation sites. The trail system in the area consists of about 20 miles of old, unmaintained trails and stock driveways, all of which are open to motorized travel. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	4%	0%
Roaded Modified	58%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	38%	63%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized	0%	3%
Primitive	0%	34%

Fisheries: Yellowstone cutthroat trout populations are considered to be strong in Eight Mile Creek, and present but depressed in Six Mile Creek. The Eight Mile Creek population is thought to be the most pure strain on the Sawtooth National Forest. Both of these streams are on the west side of the roadless area. Six Mile Creek also contains rainbow trout. No threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. Habitat exists for Region 4 sensitive species, including Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, northern goshawk, flammulated owl, and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse. This area is important summer range for mule deer. Large numbers of deer winter at lower elevations in the southern one-third of the area. There is habitat for other common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawk, golden eagle, badger, cougar, bobcat, and coyote. This undeveloped area provides important connectivity between lower-elevation winter ranges for deer and the timbered areas in the high country. This is one of the few places on the Forest used by ferruginous hawks and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse. Grey wolves are considered an experimental, non-essential population in this area.

Water: The roadless area includes portions of all drainages of this mountain range. This area contributes small quantities of water for down stream irrigation. Eight Mile and Six Mile Creeks are the only perennial streams. Other drainages run water seasonally from snow melt and summer storms. Water quality is considered high in approximately 1,300 acres of the area, and fair over most of the remaining area. Water quality in Eight Mile and Six Mile Creeks is fair during periods of low flow and poor during high flows.

Range: This entire roadless area is allocated to livestock grazing. It contains portions of six cattle allotments and one sheep allotment, which are managed under deferred rotation systems. Numerous range improvements are present, including fences, corrals, water developments, and pipelines. Livestock range revegetation projects have occurred within the area. An estimated 10,398 acres (23.6 percent of the IRA) are classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 73 acres (less than 1 percent) and considered capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 56,010 thousand board feet, equivalent to 109,114 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 5,800 acres of the IRA are tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 373 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; 5,532 acres have moderate productivity, and no acres have high productivity.

Minerals: The southern two-thirds of the Black Pine Range has been explored for gold deposits since the late 1800s. The area has high potential for occurrence and development of low-grade gold deposits. There is little or no potential for the occurrence of leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate), mineral materials (sand, gravel, and building stone), and geothermal resources. The roadless area has in the past been leased for oil and gas but has not been explored. The area has a low potential for development of oil and gas resources.

Heritage: There is a moderate level of prehistoric sites and historic mining sites within the area.

Landownership and Special Uses: There is one 120-acre parcel of private land within the roadless area boundary. A number of other parcels of private land adjoin the boundary. One outfitter and guide operation is permitted within the area.

Disturbances: Fire activity has been minimal in this area. Through the late 1980s and early 1990s, a Douglas-fir bark beetle epidemic killed much of the Douglas-fir in the Black Pine Division. One large sale and several smaller sales removed salvage timber from approximately 1,500 acres. Helicopters were used to remove salvage timber from the roadless area.

Botanical: The Region 4 sensitive plant, Desert Buckwheat (*Eriogonum desertorum*), is known to exist in this area. No other threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive (TEPCS) species are known. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of black henbane, whitetop, and Canada thistle, and Dyers Woad have been identified within the IRA. Their combined acreage is less than 1 percent of the IRA. Virtually no old forest remains due to past wildfires, insect damage, and logging.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Mount Naomi Wilderness in Utah, 70 air miles to the southeast. The Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada is about 105 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is 140 air miles to the north. A Black Pine Wilderness would serve Burley, Twin Falls, and the many small communities in the Magic Valley, including nearby Malta, Idaho and Snowville, Utah. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological Representation: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public support for designation of this area as wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness bills have included it.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 5,800 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 56,010 MBF or 109,114 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. The IRA has high potential for gold development, but relatively low potential for other minerals or energy development. A limited amount of motorized or mountain bike use would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Only one concerned individual suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	43,801	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	168	168	168	168	168	43,970	168
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	0	0	0	43,801
Available for full range of development	43,801	43,801	43,801	0	43,801	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	2,128	930	0	0	4,799	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	2,772	3,984	4,914	0	0	0	4,915
Total	4,900	4,913	4,915	0	4,799	0	4,915

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	M	M	M	N	N	N	M

N= No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact: 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Black Pine IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development, except for the Pole Canyon RNA, which would maintain its undeveloped character. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the IRA, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Boulder/White Cloud
Roadless Area Nos. 0414920 and 06920
462,822 Acres (322,732 Sawtooth NF Acres, 140,089 Salmon-Challis Acres)

DESCRIPTION

Most of the Boulder/White Cloud IRA is within the Sawtooth NRA of the Sawtooth National Forest. A large portion is on the Ketchum Ranger District of the Sawtooth National Forest, and on the Lost River and Yankee Fork Ranger Districts of the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The Sawtooth is the lead Forest for the roadless area evaluation. The Boulder/White Cloud IRA is also commonly known as the “White Clouds.”

This IRA is adjoined by three Bureau of Land Management (BLM) roadless areas, known as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). They all adjoin the eastern portion of this roadless area. The Boulder Creek WSA is 1,930 acres in size; the Jerry Peak WSA is 46,150 acres; the Jerry Peak West WSA is 13,530 acres. The total BLM acreage adjoining this IRA is 61,610 acres.

This large IRA is located north of Ketchum, Idaho, east of the upper Big Wood River Valley, east of the Sawtooth Valley, south of the Salmon River, and west of the East Fork Salmon River. The boundary is 3 miles north of Ketchum, 2 miles east of Stanley, and 28 miles south of Challis, Idaho. This area is located in Blaine and Custer Counties. Primary access is by way of State Highway 75 from Ketchum to Stanley and east down the Salmon River, the East Fork Salmon River Road, U.S. Highway 93 in the Big Lost River Valley, and Trail Creek out of Ketchum. From these highways and roads, which are mostly adjacent to the roadless area, access is provided on numerous developed roads of various standards, many of which were originally constructed for mining purposes.

This area consists mostly of high, steep, rugged ridges and peaks that make up the mountain ranges, the U-shaped valleys, and over-steepened slopes. Elevations range from 6,200 feet along the Salmon-Challis National Forest boundary at Herd Creek to 11,815 feet atop Castle Peak. A majority of the area is over 8,000 feet and several other peaks exceed 11,000 feet. The mountain ranges of the White Cloud Peaks and Boulder Mountains are rocky, barren, and very steep. Soils across the area vary from moderately to highly erodible.

The northwestern portion of the area has long, steep, bisected slopes that have not been glaciated. The eastern portion of the area on the Salmon-Challis National Forest receives little moisture, being in the rain shadow of the major peaks. Slopes are more rolling and stable with a vegetative cover of grass and sagebrush. Trees occur only in the more moist north slopes and higher elevations.

Vegetation on the remaining area is typical of mountain slopes in central Idaho. South slopes at lower elevations are generally sagebrush and grass. As elevations increase, the tree density increases. Above 8,000 feet, tree stands become a mixture of Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce (limited to the creek bottoms), and whitebark pine. Patches of aspen are scattered throughout. Limber pine and whitebark pine are found in the high cirque basins and near timberline. North slopes tend to have solid stands of trees except where soils are thin. The area contains many meadows, which are very important to wildlife.

Mountain peaks are spectacular and colorful, especially the White Cloud Peaks, which show the forces of nature with their folded and faulted strata. The White Cloud Peaks area has numerous cirque basins with high quality lakes and clear mountain streams.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: As a whole, the area has very high natural integrity, showing little impact by man. The apparent naturalness is extremely high. The Big Lost River drainage portion, outside of the main high peaks area, has a moderate level of natural integrity and appearance. Past activities have included sagebrush spraying, prescribed burning, historic logging, historic mining, and the construction of fences and water developments to better manage livestock. Long-term campsites occur in some locations. The area includes 12.4 miles of unclassified and 19.6 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are very high. The rugged mountains provide a high degree of topographic screening. Vegetation, though not dense, also provides good screening. An exception to these screening factors is the rolling non-timbered slopes in the eastern portion of the area. In these areas, there is little tree cover to provide screening, but there are some long, V-shaped canyons. Distances from the center of the area to the perimeter provide outstanding opportunities for solitude, as does the fact that there are no permanent off-site intrusions. Opportunities for solitude are reduced on the Big Lost River portion of the area due to the ease of public access and high hunter use in the fall.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are also outstanding. Numerous activities can take place with little impact on other users. The screening by both vegetation and topography enhances primitive recreation potential. Self-reliance and challenge are found in many activities. More than 150 peaks are over 10,000 feet in elevation. The mountains are precipitous and many areas are devoid of trails, making access more challenging.

Special Features: Castle Peak, the Boulder Peaks, the White Clouds Peaks, and numerous high mountain lakes are special features to the area. Segments of the North Fork Big Wood River (5.5 miles), West Fork North Fork Big Wood River (4.3 miles), Little Boulder Creek (7.0 miles), Boulder Chain Lakes Creek (4.4 miles), Germania Creek (12.5 miles), South Fork East Fork Salmon River (5.9 miles), West Fork East Fork Salmon River (5.4 miles), Warm Springs Creek (21.4 miles), West Pass Creek (6.0 miles), Salmon River (0.4 mile), East Fork Salmon River (4.4 miles), and Trail Creek (10.0 miles) are eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. An estimated 28,004 acres will be established as a special management corridor to protect the outstandingly remarkable values.

Some old mining cabins, the remains of an old fire lookout site, and other old developments are of historic interest. Horton Peak and Lookout Mountain are two historic fire lookouts in the area.

Manageability and Boundaries: That portion of the roadless area within the Sawtooth NRA is managed to protect and preserve the natural, scenic, historic, pastoral, and fish and wildlife values, and enhance their associated recreational values. Management options are, therefore, limited.

As inventoried, the area would be difficult to manage. Boundaries are complex and irregular, with many indentations and sections that run across slopes and drainages. Boundary modifications would be necessary to enhance manageability and form logical boundaries should the area become wilderness. One section of state-owned land is located on the Big Lost River portion of the area. Other than that, there are only a few very small parcels of private land within the boundary that could complicate wilderness management. The boundary could be changed slightly to exclude them.

There are numerous access locations available due to the area's large size. Historic and current patterns of motorized use would present some difficulty in enforcing a non-motorized use policy. Approximately half of the designated roads and trails on the Big Lost River side are open to motorized vehicles, and most of this portion is open to snowmobile use. The majority of this portion of the area is also open to the retrieval of legally-taken game with motorized vehicles.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Portions of this area receive heavy recreation use, including both non-motorized and motorized dispersed activities. These activities include hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, motorbike riding, snowmobiling, camping, big game hunting, and fishing. Fishing opportunities are good in some areas. Some recreation sites could be developed if road access were provided. The access, however, would be difficult and expensive.

The developed trail system consists of 54 trails for a total of 323 miles. All but about 15 miles are open to mountain bikes. Trails currently open to motorized cycles total 118 miles. If the area became wilderness, these trails would be closed to motorized uses. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	5%	2%
Roaded Modified	8%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	35%	86%
Semi-primitive Non-motorized	52%	7%
Primitive	0%	5%

Fisheries: Fish species present in the Salmon River and Wood River portions of the area include chinook salmon, steelhead trout, bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, Wood River sculpin, rainbow trout, and brook trout. Spring and summer spawning runs of chinook salmon, and spawning runs of steelhead trout occur in some of the tributaries to the Salmon River. Bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout occur as both resident populations, and as adults moving up some of these streams from the Salmon River to spawn. Sockeye salmon move up the Salmon River, which adjoins the roadless area. The salmon and steelhead travel approximately 900 miles from the mouth of the Columbia River to spawn in these waters. Sockeye salmon are listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout are listed as threatened. Wood River sculpin is on the Region 4 sensitive species list.

The Big Lost River portion fisheries is primarily a hatchery rainbow trout population. Some natural rainbow trout reproduction occurs; however, this is supplemented throughout the summer with catchable hatchery fish. Brook trout, whitefish, and shorthead sculpin are also found in streams. Whirling disease, prevalent in the Big Lost River and its tributaries, is having an impact on natural production. There are no threatened, endangered or Region 4 sensitive species in the Big Lost River drainage.

Wildlife: Sixty species of mammals have been reported within the area. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area and are known to occur here. The area is within the range of the Canada lynx, a threatened species, and 127,893 acres of habitat exists, more than 40 percent of the area. Habitat also occurs for bald eagle (454 acres, <1 percent the area), fisher (5,035 acres, or 2 percent), northern goshawk (13,802 acres, 4 percent), boreal owl (22,567 acres, 7 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (20,115 acres, 9 percent), and great gray owl (3,872 acres, 1 percent). Habitat for

wolverines, spotted bat, and spotted frogs may also occur here. Both Canada lynx and wolverine have been sighted here. Big game animals are common and include elk, mule deer, moose, mountain goat, antelope, bighorn sheep, black bear, and cougar. The East Fork Salmon River drainage contains key big game winter habitat.

Water: The area contains numerous mountain lakes and large streams, which drain into the Salmon River, the East Fork Salmon River, the Big Lost River, or the Big Wood River. This water supports important fish, wildlife, and recreation resources on the Forest. It provides for aquatic habitat, irrigation, hydropower, and other important uses off the Forest. Water from streams on the Big Lost River side is stored in Mackay Reservoir for irrigation use in the lower valley. Water quality is generally very high.

Range: Approximately 80 percent of the roadless area is grazed by livestock. The area contains all or portions of eight cattle allotments and one cattle/horse allotment (primarily on the eastern side and at the lower elevations), and ten sheep allotments (one is inactive). They are grazed in deferred rotation systems. There are a moderate number of grazing facilities in the eastern portion of the area, consisting primarily of fences and water developments. There are 14,847 acres of land (32.1 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 12,715 acres (2.7 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 1,821,121 thousand board feet, equivalent to about 3,536,126 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 112,200 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. There are 143,907 acres considered to have low timber productivity; 83,637 acres, moderate productivity, and 35 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is high potential for the occurrence of locatable resources, specifically gold, silver, lead, zinc, tungsten, and molybdenum. Development potential is rated as moderate due to the remote location, present environmental permitting climate, and volatility of the market for these metals. There are approximately 100 mining claims located primarily within the Sawtooth NRA portion of the roadless area. The Sawtooth NRA is Congressionally withdrawn from mineral entry subject to valid existing rights. Activity on the mining claims has been limited to assessment work in the 1990s, due to low metals prices. There is low potential for the occurrence and development of leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate) and oil and gas resources. There is also low potential for the development of mineral materials (sand, gravel, and building stone) and geothermal resources.

Heritage: Some prehistoric American Indian campsites have been identified from the lithic scatters left after tool making. Some of the old mining cabins, the remains of one old fire lookout site, and other old developments are of historic interest. Horton Peak and Lookout Mountain are two existing historic fire lookouts within the area. The probability of finding new archaeological sites is moderate.

Landownership and Special Uses: There is one state-owned section of land in the northwest portion and a few other small parcels of private land within the roadless area. Permitted special uses consist of nine outfitter and guides engaging in summer pack trips, day rides, big-game hunting, fishing, backcountry skiing, and snowmobiling.

Disturbances: There have been no large fires in recent years. Some past sagebrush burning has occurred in the east side of the White Cloud Mountains, north of the North Fork Big Lost River Road. Douglas-fir beetle and mountain pine beetle infestations have occurred within the area. High intensity thunderstorms and high spring floods often impact drainages. Landslides are rare but they also cause some damage.

Botanical: The candidate species, Slender Moonwort (*Botrychium lineare*), is found here. The Region 4 sensitive species, White Cloud milkvetch (*Astragalus vexilliflexus nubilus*), has also been found here. Proposed sensitive plants known to occur here include prairie moonwort, (*Botrychium campestre*),

Brewer's sedge (*Carex breweri* var. *paddoensis*), Mt. Shasta sedge (*Carex straminiformis*), pointed draba (*Draba globosa*), Farr's willow (*Salix farriae*) and wedge-leaf saxifrage (*Saxifraga adscendens* var. *oregonensis*). No TEPCS plant species have been found in the Big Lost River portion of the area.

In the Salmon River and Big Wood River portions of the area, spotted knapweed is present on an estimated 160 acres, and yellow toadflax on 33 acres. In the Big Lost River portion, localized populations of noxious weeds include leafy spurge, diffuse knapweed, and spotted knapweed. Unique pockets of whitebark pine occur here. The whitebark pine in this area is still free of white pine blister rust, which has infested most other areas in the West.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Sawtooth Wilderness which is only 3 miles across the Sawtooth Valley at the closest point. The Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness is 10 miles to the north. A Boulder/White Cloud wilderness would attract a nation-wide and international clientele. It would serve the nearby metropolitan areas of Missoula, Boise, Twin Falls and Salt Lake City, as well as local smaller communities, including nearby Stanley, Sun Valley, Ketchum, and Challis.

Biological Representation:

This IRA lies within the Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe – Coniferous Forest – Alpine Meadow Province (M332), which is well represented in existing designated wilderness.

Public Interest: There has been very high public interest in making this area wilderness. Ten public comments, expressing various opinions, were received in response to the DEIS. In the Notice of Decision for the 1987 Sawtooth Forest Plan, the Forest Service recommended that 190,350 acres of this area be designated wilderness. The area was also recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	High
Opportunity for Solitude	High
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	High
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 112,200 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 1,821,121 MBF or 3,536,126 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, the Sawtooth NRA is already congressionally withdrawn from mineral entry subject to valid existing rights. This IRA has high potential for locatable minerals development, but low potential for other minerals or energy development. Substantial levels of motorized and mechanized trail uses, and snowmobile use would be foregone if the area were designated wilderness.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wilderness. There has been very high public interest in making this area wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	221,338	219,647	219,647	358,006	35,274	219,647	219,647
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	138,360	0
Potential low levels of development	167,901	241,353	241,353	104,815	237,007	104,815	242,463
Available for full range of development	73,583	1,821	1,821	0	190,540	0	712

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	0	0	0	0	715	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	23,509	27,530	45,665	0	65,769	0	40,090
Total	23,509	27,530	45,665	0	66,483	0	40,090

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	M	M	M	N	M	N	M

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative recommends approximately 55 percent of the Sawtooth NF portion, and 25 percent of the Salmon-Challis NF portion, for a cumulative 47.5 percent of the complete Boulder/White Cloud IRA for wilderness, while managing the remainder primarily for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Buttercup Mountain
Roadless Area No. 0414038
56,654 Acres

DESCRIPTION

The Buttercup Mountain IRA includes the large eastern portion of what was the Buttercup Mountain Roadless Area No. 14018 in the 1987 Sawtooth Forest Plan. That area has been broken into three separate areas. Existing roads that separate these areas are considered to be too highly developed to meet wilderness standards.

This roadless area is located in Blaine and Camas Counties, and is within both the Fairfield and Ketchum Ranger Districts. It is located about 3 miles southwest of Ketchum and 9 miles northeast of Fairfield, Idaho. It is bordered on the north by the Ketchum-Featherville Road (Forest Road 227), and on the west by the Little Smoky Creek, Liberal Creek and Willow Creek Roads (Forest Roads 015, 096, and 017). The southern and eastern borders are the Forest boundary with the exception of the area south of Greenhorn Creek and east of the North Fork of Deer Creek and Kinsey Creek.

The area around Buttercup Mountain is rugged terrain, and in other parts of the area, the topography is often very steep. The elevations range from around 5,800 feet to over 9,000 feet.

The slopes are generally vegetated up to the ridgelines with Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, and some lodgepole pine on the northern and eastern slopes. The southern and western slopes feature mountain shrub-sagebrush-grass communities, including snowberry, bitterbrush, and sagebrush. Some aspen is present but it is in decline due to conifer encroachment and lack of fire.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Natural integrity and apparent naturalness are rated low because of mining activities, range management activities, and improved and unimproved roads along the borders and interior exclusions. The area includes 9.9 miles of unclassified and 4.7 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are moderate. The Little Smoky, Willow Creek and Ketchum-Featherville Roads can be seen from many parts of the area. Due to the road intrusions, the distances within the roadless area to roads is generally less than 2 miles. Topographic relief, with numerous small and steep draws, does provide some opportunity for solitude. Primitive recreation opportunities are moderate, and opportunities for challenging experiences are moderate.

Special Features: Buttercup Mountain (9,075 feet in elevation) and Mahoney Butte (7,904 feet) are prominent features within this area. There are other special geological, scenic, or cultural resource features throughout the area. Some old cabins exist from past mining activities.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundary, as inventoried, would be difficult to manage because of the many road intrusions and the adjacency to numerous roads and timber sale areas. Numerous boundary changes could be made that would improve overall wilderness qualities; however, acreage reductions would occur.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: The predominant recreation uses are motorized trail bike riding, mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, big game hunting, backcountry skiing and snowmobiling. A few miles of groomed snowmobile trail lie within the roadless area. Motorized use comprises about 60 percent of the overall recreation use. The non-motorized uses are more predominant in the east end of the area. There are 15 system trails within the roadless area, comprising about 37 miles. All of these trail miles are open for motorized use. Access across private lands on the southern flank is limited. Fishing opportunities are fair. Inventoried ROS classes are as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	13%	1%
Roaded Modified	10%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	77%	88%
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized	0%	11%

Fisheries: Wood River sculpin, a Region 4 sensitive species, are thought to be present in most of the area streams. Occupied or historic habitat for redband trout may exist over most the area. Isolated pockets of brook trout are also present.

Wildlife: Big-game winter range exists in Deer Creek and Willow Creek. Deer and elk numbers are relatively high. Moose have been transplanted to Willow Creek and have spread throughout the area. Upper areas of Buttercup Mountain provide nesting sites for the peregrine falcon. Known nesting areas of the Region 4 sensitive species, northern goshawk, lie within the area. Habitat for other sensitive species include boreal owl, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, flammulated owl, boreal owl, northern three-toed woodpecker, wolverine, and spotted frog. Habitat for Canada lynx, listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, exists over 21,938 acres or an estimated 39 percent of the area. Probable sightings of gray wolves, considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area, have been reported. Black bear, cougar, bobcat, and pine martin are also present.

Water: Major drainages within this area include Little Smoky Creek, Willow Creek, Greenhorn Creek, and Deer Creek. Runoff from this area provides an important source for water for irrigation on the Camas Prairie and the Wood River Valley. It also supplies storage water for local reservoirs. Water quality is considered high in only about 400 acres of the area. There are no lakes within the area.

Range: Six sheep allotments cover about one-third of the roadless area, and two cattle allotments cover the remaining two-thirds. Of the IRA's 56,655 acres, 1,925 acres (3.4 percent) are considered capable for cattle grazing; and 9,015 acres (15.9 percent), are capable for sheep grazing. The sheep allotments are managed under a deferred rotation grazing system, while the cattle allotments are managed under a deferred rotation system. There is a high level of structural grazing improvements on the cattle allotments, and a low level on the sheep allotments. Some established sheep trails used for grazing allotment access exist within the roadless area.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 308,391 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to 580,954 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 35,700 acres are classified as tentatively suited for timber harvest. An estimated 1,675 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; 35,026 acres, moderate productivity; and 380 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There are 21 registered mining claims, no leases, and no withdrawals within the roadless area. Two semi-active mines, some patented mining properties, and numerous mining prospects exist in the highly mineralized areas around Buttercup Mountain, Dollarhide Summit, Carrie Town, and Deer Creek. The potential for energy or leasable minerals is low.

Heritage: The area contains some historic sites associated with mining activities. A small number of American Indian cultural sites have also been identified within the area.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private or state lands within the roadless area. Eight special-use permits have been issued for outfitter and guide services within the roadless area. Short-term special uses within the area have been increasing

Disturbances: Wildfire has not been a significant factor within the roadless area. Only a small area, 66 acres, has been burned by wildfire since 1960. Two prescribed burns, totaling 1,050 acres, have been conducted. Douglas-fir mistletoe is common throughout the area. Deer Creek has been damaged by major floods several times, most recently in the spring of 1984.

Botanical Characteristics: This area is within the geographic range of Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*), listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, but no individuals of the species have been found in or near the area. Bugleg goldenweed (*Haplopappus insecticruris*), a Region 4 sensitive species, is found here. Aspen is in decline due to a lack of fire, encroachment of conifers, and disease.

Noxious weed infestations of spotted knapweed (about 9 acres), diffuse knapweed, and Canada thistle occur in the area, but less than one percent of the area acreage is affected. Noxious weed populations are thought to be decreasing on the west side of the area, and static or increasing on the east side. Cheat grass has been increasing in recent years on the lower, drier sites, especially after disturbances. Areas of old forest are scattered throughout the area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Sawtooth Wilderness, 22 miles to the northwest. A Buttercup Mountain Wilderness would serve primarily the Sun Valley, Ketchum, Twin Falls, and Boise areas, and small communities in and near the Snake River and Wood River Valleys.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been no particular public demand for this area to become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. This area was, however, recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Moderate
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 35,700 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 308,391 MBF or 580,954 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. This IRA has localized high potential for locatable minerals development, but low potential for other minerals or energy development. The predominant recreation use, motorized travel, would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wilderness. Only one concerned individual specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	56,654	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	56,654	0
Potential low levels of development	0	27,329	7,872	0	7,872	0	56,309
Available for full range of development	56,654	29,325	48,782	0	48,782	0	345

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	18,208	0	0	0	25,231	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	11,337	30,810	30,810	0	3,829	0	30,810
Total	29,546	30,810	30,810	0	29,061	0	30,810

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Buttercup IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Cache Peak
Roadless Area No. 0414007
26,541 Acres

DESCRIPTION

The Cache Peak IRA is located 26 air miles southeast of Burley, Idaho in Cassia County. The primary access is by the Independence Lake and Almo Park Roads (Forest Roads 728 and 727). The IRA comprises much of the southern portion of the Albion Division of the Minidoka Ranger District.

The topography in some of the canyons is steep, rough, and rocky, with slopes varying from 10 to 70 percent. The higher reaches of the range have been glaciated. Cache Peak is the highest peak south of the Snake River in Idaho and is composed of metamorphic gneisses, mica schists, and quartzites. These are some of the oldest rocks in the state, age-dated at 2.4 billion years.

Four mountain lakes range in size from 4 to 15 acres. The soil is quite erodible. Elevations range from 5,800 to 10,339 feet. The area supports a variety of vegetation types, including pinyon-juniper, sagebrush, mountain brush, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, aspen, and mixed conifer/aspen types.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is good, with only a small percentage of the area affected by livestock grazing and associated facilities. The natural appearance of most of the area is high. The area includes 9.3 miles of unclassified and 10.1 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are low due to limited topographic and vegetative screening. The opportunities for primitive recreation are moderate. There are few opportunities for challenging experiences.

Special Features: The area contains a small portion of Castle Rocks, a noted formation associated with the City of Rocks National Historic Reserve. Cache Peak is the highest mountain in Idaho south of the Snake River, and Independence Lakes are the only example of pater noster lakes this far south in the state.

Manageability and Boundaries: The eastern and southern boundaries of the IRA are the Forest boundary. The west side is located along a broad ridge. Less-defined boundaries exist on the north and northwest portions, cutting across drainages and ridges. Boundaries could be modified to create an area with manageable boundaries and still retain a suitable acreage. Incompatible proposed activities could be separated from areas with high wilderness attributes.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use is moderate, except in the lake basin, where it is heavy. Primary activities include big game and small game hunting, and fishing, hiking, and backpacking around Cache Peak. Fishing in Independence Lakes is considered good. Fishing opportunities throughout the rest of the area are marginal due to the small size of the trout. Both motorized and non-motorized recreation use occurs. About 2,000 acres around Cache Peak and Independence Lakes are closed to off-highway vehicle (OHV)

use except for snowmobiles. Some opportunity for developed campgrounds and new OHV trails exists. The area contains one minimally developed campground in conjunction with the developed trailhead to Independence Lakes. The trail system in the area consists of five trails totaling an estimated 36 miles, of which 22 miles are open to motorized travel. Inventoried ROS classes are as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	6%	0%
Roaded Modified	36%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	58%	100%

Fisheries: Some of the streams in the area contain Yellowstone cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout. Independence Lakes contain grayling and California golden trout. Mill Creek contains leatherside chub. The leatherside chub, a native species that has become more rare throughout much of its range, is considered a species of concern by the State of Idaho. No known threatened, endangered, or sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. This area provides habitat for the northern goshawk, Townsend's big-eared bat, and flammulated owl. The area is summer range for mule deer. There have been a number of elk sightings, and an occasional moose is sighted. The lower elevations on the south end provide winter range for mule deer and elk. There is habitat for common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, coyote, badger, and beaver. This undeveloped area forms an important corridor between lower-elevation winter ranges for deer and elk on the south and west slopes of the Albion Division and the timbered summer range in the high country. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area.

Water: This area includes the headwaters of Almo, Stines, Dry, Mill, Waterfall, Chokecherry, and Grape Creeks, and Green Canyon. The watershed value is moderate, providing relatively small amounts of water for irrigation off the Forest. Water quality is generally fair during periods of low flow, and fair to poor during high flows. Four natural lakes, the Independence Lakes, are located on the east side of Mount Independence. Water on the Forest is used primarily for fish, wildlife, and recreation.

Range: Portions or all of eight cattle allotments occur within the area. They are managed under rest and deferred rotation systems. There is a low level of livestock grazing facilities present, consisting primarily of fences and water developments. About 90 percent of the area is grazed; the area encompassing the lake basin is not grazed. An estimated 6,417 acres (24.2 percent of IRA) are classified as capable for grazing by cattle, and 1,893 acres (7.1 percent) are considered capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The area contains about 85,699 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber, equivalent to 166,262 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 9,400 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. About 8,514 acres are considered to have low productivity; 935 acres, moderate productivity; and no acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: The area has a moderate potential for the occurrence and development of locatable uncommon variety building stone, locally referred to as "Oakley stone." There is low potential for the occurrence and development of other locatable metal commodities such as gold, silver, copper and lead, or for mineral materials such as sand, gravel and other building stone. There is low to no potential for the occurrence of oil and gas, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate) or geothermal resources.

Heritage: The presence of cultural sites is moderate near springs. The potential for finding additional sites is probable. Views from the higher promontories include an overview of the City of Rocks National Historic Reserve, an area established to protect trail remnants and a significant camp area located on the historic Salt Lake to California Trail.

Landownership and Special Uses: There is no private land within the area. Several parcels of private land border the perimeter. There are two permitted outfitter and guide operations.

Disturbances: Only 144 acres have been affected by wildfire in recent times. Approximately 3,700 acres of prescribed burning to help revegetate livestock range have occurred, but this burning has not significantly changed the natural integrity. Moderate impacts to lodgepole pine stands have occurred from mountain pine beetles and dwarf mistletoe.

Botanical: The alpine community here includes the Region 4 sensitive plant, Davis' wavewing (*Cymopterus davisii*). No other TEPCS plant species are known to occur. Some introduced species of grasses and forbs have been seeded in conjunction with range revegetation projects and fire rehabilitation. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. Small populations (totaling less than 10 acres collectively) of spotted knapweed, musk thistle, Canada thistle, and leafy spurge have been identified within the IRA. This area contains many patches of old forest scattered throughout.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, 80 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is 140 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 110 air miles to the southeast. A Cache Peak Wilderness would serve primarily Burley, Twin Falls, and the many small communities in the Magic Valley including nearby Oakley, Almo, and Albion. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological Representation: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: This area has had some public support for designation as wilderness. Five public comments favoring designation were received in response to the DEIS. An attempt was made by members of the 105th Congress to designate it as wilderness when it was included in the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act of 1997.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	High
Opportunity for Solitude	Low
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 9,400 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 85,699 MBF or 166,262 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has generally low potential for minerals or energy development, with the exception of Oakley stone. While only a portion of the area is currently available to summer motorized travel, that activity and mountain biking and the current winter snowmobile use would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Five concerned individuals or organizations specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	26,541	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	26,541	0
Potential low levels of development	12,660	9,856	0	0	0	0	0
Available for full range of development	13,881	16,685	26,541	0	26,541	0	26,541

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	4,147	0	0	0	4,908	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	763	5,028	8,538	0	3,512	0	8,538
Total	4,910	5,028	8,538	0	8,419	0	8,538

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	M	M	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact: 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Cache Peak IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for a full range of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Clear Creek
Roadless Area No. 0414002
6,558 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Clear Creek IRA is located about 45 air miles southeast of Burley, Idaho in Box Elder County, Utah. The primary accesses are: south from Interstate 84 on Idaho State Highways 81 and 77 to Almo, Idaho and county roads to Stanrod, Idaho; and west from Interstate 84 near Snowville, Utah on Utah State Highway 30 to Park Valley, Utah. The IRA is located in the Raft River Division of the Minidoka Ranger District.

The geology of the area consists of steep canyon walls with plateaus on the ridges. The area is very rocky with quartzite ledges and overlying limestone and sandstone. Soils are fairly erodible. Elevations range from 6,200 feet where Clear Creek leaves the Forest boundary to 9,703 feet on Big Spring Peak. The vegetation on the northeast slopes consists of stands of Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce, and aspen. The south slopes and canyon bottoms are primarily pinyon pine and juniper. The non-timbered areas are primarily sage-grass and mountain brush.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is moderate to high, due to a low level of management activities. The natural appearance is moderate. A minor amount of mining activity has occurred in the area. The area includes 2.9 miles of unclassified and 3.6 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are moderate because of the area's small size and views of high levels of development outside the area from many locations within. Distances from the boundary to the center are only 1.5 to 2 miles. Many highways are visible in the valleys below. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also moderate due to the lack of diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: Alpine cirque basins occur at the head of Rosevere Fork.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundary would be difficult to manage in many places where it jogs around a number of parcels of private land. Portions of the boundary follow main ridges and the Forest boundary and would be quite easy to manage. The small size of the area and surrounding motorized uses would make it hard to prevent motorized use within the area.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use in the area is moderate to low. The major uses are associated with the trail system and big-game hunting. Motorized uses are limited due to the terrain. Fishing opportunities are considered moderate because of the small fish and the short lengths of fishable stream within the roadless area. The developed trail system consists of two trails totaling 9 miles. Both of these trails are officially open to motorized travel, but only a few miles can be safely traveled with motorized bikes. Inventoried ROS classes are as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	5%	2%
Roaded Modified	33%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	62%	98%

Fisheries: Clear Creek contains Yellowstone cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout. No threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist here.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. The area provides habitat for the northern goshawk, Townsend's big-eared bat, flammulated owl, and boreal owl. The area is summer range for mule deer. Grey wolf is considered an experimental/ non-essential population in this area. There is also good habitat for common species of wildlife such as forest grouse, hawks, cougar, bobcat, coyote, and badger.

Water: Most of the area is drained by tributaries to Clear Creek. Water from the Forest is important for irrigation of surrounding farms and ranches. Water quality is fair.

Range: The IRA includes portions or all of five cattle allotments managed under rest and deferred rotation systems. An estimated 1,884 acres (26.2 percent of IRA) are considered capable for grazing by cattle. Developments include a moderate number of fences and a low level of water facilities.

Timber: The IRA contains 28,512 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to 55,791 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 2,800 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 1,892 acres are considered to have low productivity; 1,208 acres, moderate productivity; and 37 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence and development of locatable minerals, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate), mineral materials (sand, gravel, and building stone), geothermal resources, and oil and gas resources. There is a moderate potential for the occurrence and development of an uncommon variety building stone locally referred to as "Oakley stone." One 200-acre area is withdrawn from mineral entry for a recreation site.

Heritage: The number of known cultural sites is low, as is the potential to find new sites.

Landownership and Special Uses: There is one section of private land within the boundary. There are no permitted special uses within the roadless area.

Disturbances: There has been little impact by fire since 1960. Only small fires of insignificant acreages have occurred, primarily in the fall. Douglas-fir bark beetles have caused heavy damage in the timber stands. The subalpine fir component is experiencing mortality from insect, disease, and other environmental factors.

Botanical: The Region 4 sensitive plant, Cottam cinquefoil (*Potentilla cottamii*), occurs here. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of Canada thistle have been identified within the IRA. This area contains old forest scattered throughout. Much of the aspen is in decline because of encroachment by conifers and the lack of fire.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah, approximately 75 air miles to the southeast. The Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada is about 90 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is approximately 155 air miles to the north. A Clear Creek Wilderness would serve primarily the large population centers of the Salt Lake and Ogden areas in Utah. It would also serve the Pocatello, Burley, and Twin Falls areas in Idaho, and many small local communities in nearby portions of Utah and Idaho.

Biological Representation: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas..

Public Interest: Interest by the public in making this area wilderness has been very low. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included this area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY**Capability Summary:**

Apparent Naturalness	Moderate
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	None

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 2,800 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 28,512 MBF or 55,791 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low potential for minerals or energy development, with the exception of Oakley stone. While no trails are currently being utilized to any degree for motorized/mountain bike use, potential use opportunities would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Only one concerned individual specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	6,558	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	6,558	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,558
Available for full range of development	6,558	6,558	6,558	0	6,558	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	0	0	0	0	462	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	2,499	2,499	2,499	0	2,017	0	2,499
Total	2,499	2,499	2,499	0	2,479	0	2,499

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Clear Creek IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Cottonwood
Roadless Area No. 0414010
11,338 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Cottonwood IRA is located about 30 air miles southeast of Twin Falls, Idaho, in Cassia County. The primary access is by Highway 30, and the Foot Hills Road from just east of Murtaugh, Idaho to Oakley, Idaho. It is located in the northeast corner of the Cassia Division of the Sawtooth National Forest, on the Minidoka Ranger District.

The area is composed of volcanic rhyolite ash flows that overlie older limestones and quartzites. The canyons contain some high, vertical rhyolite cliffs. The soil is moderately erodible. Elevations range from 7,200 feet at the southwest end of the area to 5,000 feet where Big Cottonwood Creek leaves the Forest boundary. The higher elevations on the west side contain a few stands of lodgepole pine with heavy grass-brush ground vegetation between stands. Lower elevations to the north and east support stands of sagebrush, juniper, and mountain mahogany.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is high. The natural appearance is moderate with the existence of livestock grazing facilities and some primitive roads now being used as trails. The area includes 0.6 mile of unclassified and 6.5 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are low because of the area's relatively small size, short distances from the perimeter, and the effects of highly used adjacent areas. A large number of people could be attracted to this area, as it is very accessible to a large population base, further reducing the feeling of solitude. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also moderate due to the lack of diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: Special features in this area include the bighorn sheep population that inhabit the cliffs of Big Cottonwood canyon.

Manageability and Boundaries: The topographic features would provide a manageable boundary for wilderness.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use is low but increasing, consisting primarily of hunting, fishing, and some OHV use. Horseback riding and mountain biking are increasing. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) has acquired the private land at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Creek, and has closed the lower trail access to motorized vehicles. Motorized vehicles can still access the area from Cave Canyon to the north and several trail accesses in the south and west portions of the area. All of the roadless area is open to motorized use. Portions of the trail in the bottom of Big Cottonwood Creek are difficult to ride with motorbikes. A number of undeveloped four-wheel drive roads exist on ridges and in canyon

bottoms. Many spectacular views of the Oakley Valley exist from some of the high ridges. Fishing opportunities are fair. The Big Cottonwood Creek trail system consists of one trail totaling about 8 miles. There are also a number of non-system trails, which are not maintained but receive extensive use. Inventoried ROS classes are as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	9%	8%
Roaded Modified	13%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	78%	92%

Fisheries: Big Cottonwood Creek and some tributaries contain Yellowstone cutthroat trout. Big Cottonwood Creek and Sawmill Creek provide important spawning habitat for the cutthroat trout. Trout habitat has improved significantly since 1988, when riparian systems were implemented in the lower portions of Big Cottonwood Creek, and since the total rest from livestock grazing in recent years. No known threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: The only known threatened or endangered species present is the wintering bald eagle. The area provides an estimated 461 acres (4 percent of the IRA) of eagle habitat. This area provides habitat for the northern goshawk, Townsend's big-eared bat, flammulated owl, and spotted frog. The area is summer range for mule deer, and for California bighorn sheep, introduced in this canyon beginning in 1986. The lower elevations also provide winter range for mule deer and bighorns. Rio Grande turkeys have been introduced into this canyon beginning in 1988. There is habitat for common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, and coyote. This unroaded area provides connectivity between low- elevation winter ranges and the higher timbered areas of cover for mule deer. It also provides connectivity for bighorns using adjacent ridges and canyons to the northwest and southeast. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area.

At the mouth of the canyon, the IDFG has established the Big Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA). They are managing this area to provide habitat for wildlife, especially bighorn sheep, turkey, mule deer, cutthroat trout, pheasant, and partridge. The WMA also controls access into the canyon at this point.

Water: This IRA includes most of the area draining into Big Cottonwood Creek. Big Cottonwood Creek provides water for irrigation, including the Big Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Management Area. Water quality is good and improving because of improved management practices in recent years. As much as 400 acres are considered as having high water quality. None of this water reaches the Snake River by way of the original channel to Dry Creek. Water not used for irrigation is intercepted by irrigation ditches and goes to the Murtaugh Reservoir.

Range: The entire area is within the Cottonwood cattle allotment. This allotment is now vacant because the use was waived back to the Forest Service by the former permittee. There is a moderate amount of remnant fence and a small number of water developments within this allotment. There are 4,964 acres (43.8 percent of IRA) classified as capable for grazing cattle.

Timber: The IRA contains an estimated 1,162 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to 2,334 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 300 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberland, and all IRA acres are considered to have low timber productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence and development of locatable minerals, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate) and geothermal resources. The area has moderate potential for development of mineral materials (rhyolite building stone). The IRA is potentially valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: This entire area was historically used by American Indians. Evidence of use exists throughout the area, consisting primarily of the lithic scatters left after tool making.

Landownership and Special Uses: There is no private or state land in the IRA. The only special use permitted within this area is one cougar-hunting guide.

Disturbances: Fire has played a moderate role in this area. The most significant fire since 1960 was the 1988 Poison Fire that burned 1,971 acres, across the canyon in the center of this area. Primarily grass and brush lands were burned.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS plant species present. Canada thistle is a problem in lower Big Cottonwood Creek, below the Forest boundary, but to date the IRA has been free of noxious weeds.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, approximately 70 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is approximately 135 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 125 air miles to the southeast. A Cottonwood Wilderness would serve primarily Twin Falls, Burley, and the smaller communities in the Magic Valley. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public interest in having this roadless area become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included this area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Moderate
Opportunity for Solitude	Low
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 300 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 1,162 MBF or 2,334 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has relatively low potential for minerals or energy development, with the exception of rhyolite building stone. The currently small amount of motorized/mechanized travel would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Only one concerned individual specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	11,338	0
Potential low levels of development	6,631	8,646	8,646	8,646	0	0	11,338
Available for full range of development	4,708	2,692	2,692	2,692	11,338	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	112	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	0	214	0	143	0	214
Total	112	0	214	0	143	0	214

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	L	N	L	N	L	N	L

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact: 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Cottonwood IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the IRA would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Elk Ridge
Roadless Area No. 0414019
9,335Acres**

DESCRIPTION

This roadless area is located in Camas County, about 8 miles north of Fairfield, Idaho, in the Fairfield Ranger District of the Sawtooth NF. It is bounded by the Couch Summit Road (Forest Road 094) on the west, Little Smoky Creek on the north, and the Wells Summit Road (Forest Road 095) on the east. The perimeter of the area is fairly accessible.

The granitic slopes are generally vegetated up to their crests with Douglas fir and lodgepole pine on the northern and eastern slopes, and with mountain brush-sagebrush-grass on the southern and western slopes.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Both the natural integrity and apparent naturalness rate as low because of the visibility of management activities and structural improvements that alter natural characteristics. The existence of some unimproved roads prevent a higher rating.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: The opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation are low. The topographic and visual screening rate is low to moderate, and the distance from the perimeter to the core is only around one mile in most places. The area's close proximity to roads and all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trails also diminish these opportunities. Opportunities for challenging experiences are limited.

Special Features: There are no notable special features in this IRA.

Manageability and Boundaries: Manageable boundaries would be very difficult to establish because numerous developed roads penetrate the unit. The combination of size and shape of the area does not provide an opportunity to establish definable boundaries.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: The area receives a minimal amount of dispersed recreation use, mostly in the forms of hunting, snowmobiling, and ATV riding. Motorized use comprises approximately 80 percent of the overall recreation use. There are no system trails within the roadless area but groomed snowmobile trails are used in the winter. Fishing opportunities are fair. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	38%	5%
Roaded Modified	14%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	48%	93%
Semi-Primitive Non-motorized	0%	2%

Fisheries: Threatened bull trout and Region 4 sensitive Wood River sculpin may occur in area streams. Rainbow trout are common in streams over most the area. Isolated pockets of brook trout are also present.

Wildlife: Mule deer, elk, and black bear are found within the area. Small mammals include beaver, muskrat, mink, badger, weasel, and red squirrel. Predators include cougar, coyote, and bobcat. The roadless area includes marginal winter range for deer and elk. It contains suitable habitat for peregrine falcon. Habitat for Canada lynx, a threatened species, is found on an estimated 1,788 acres, or 19 percent of the area. The area provides habitat for northern goshawk (798 acres or 9 percent of IRA), wolverine and fisher (318 acres, 3 percent), flammulated owl and boreal owl (45 acres, <1 percent), great gray owl (70 acres), northern three-toed woodpecker (823 acres, 9 percent), and spotted frog. Grey wolves are considered a experimental/non-essential population in this area.

Water: Runoff from this area provides an important source for water for irrigation on the Camas Prairie. Water also flows to the South Fork Boise River and is used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation.

Range: Portions of three cattle allotments, all managed under deferred rotation grazing systems, cover the entire roadless area. Sheep are allowed 10 days of use for travel to other sheep allotments. There are two cow camps within the IRA located near the eastern and southeastern boundaries. There is a high level of developed improvements (water) and fences within the area. There are 2,246 acres (24.1 percent of IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing.

Timber: The IRA contains an estimated 28,305 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to 54,321 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 4,400 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 515 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; 4,307 acres, moderate productivity; and 114 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There are no registered mining claims, no leases, and no withdrawals within the roadless area. Presently, there are no mining activities. The potential for locatable minerals is low. There is no potential for energy or leasable minerals.

Heritage: No cultural resources have been found.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no tracts of private land within the area. Permitted special uses within the IRA include two outfitter and guide permits and a Sheriff's Department communication site on Elk Ridge.

Disturbances: An estimated 45 acres have been affected by wildfire since 1960.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS plant species present. Spotted knapweed is known to occur on 1 acre, or less than 1 percent of the IRA. Old forest is scattered throughout.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Sawtooth Wilderness, 19 air miles to the northwest. An Elk Ridge Wilderness would serve primarily the Boise, Mountain Home and Twin Falls areas, and smaller communities in and near the Snake River Valley, including nearby Fairfield.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wilderness.

Public Interest: There has been little public demand for this area to become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. The area was, however, recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Low
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	None

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 4,400 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 28,305 MBF or 54,321 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low to no potential for minerals or energy development. While there are no system trails within the IRA, winter snowmobile opportunities would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. Only one concerned individual specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation in response to the DEIS.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	9,335	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	9,335	0	0	9,335
Available for full range of development	9,335	9,335	9,335	0	9,335	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	3,351	0	0	0	2,149	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	354	3,763	3,763	3,763	1,580	0	3,763
Total	3,704	3,763	3,763	3,763	3,729	0	3,763

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	H	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact: 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Elk Ridge IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the IRA would be available for low levels of development. Before any action is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the IRA, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Fifth Fork Rock Creek
Roadless Area No. 0414023
16,568 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Fifth Fork Rock Creek IRA is located about 18 miles south of Twin Falls, Idaho, in Twin Falls County. The primary accesses are by the Indian Spring Road, (Forest Road 544) south of Kimberly, Idaho, and by the Rock Creek Highway (County Road G-3) and west on the Oakley-Rogerson Road (Forest Road 500). The IRA is located in the Cassia Division of the Minidoka Ranger District.

The area is composed of canyons eroded in rhyolite flows, with surrounding mountains and bench lands. The IRA includes most of the area draining into the Fifth Fork, Little Creek, and Rock Creek. The soil is moderately erodible. Elevations range from 4,700 feet where Fifth Fork leaves the Forest boundary, to about 7,200 feet on the south end of the roadless area.

Mixed stands of lodgepole pine, subalpine fir and aspen dominate the higher elevations in the southern end of the roadless area, along with some open meadows. The lower elevation areas to the north are dominated by sagebrush-grass communities. Some juniper occurs in the northeast corner.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is moderate, due to the heavy livestock grazing and the presence of facilities for grazing. The natural appearance is low with high evidence of impacts from grazing, some primitive roads, and some evidence of past fire suppression and rehabilitation activity. The area includes 0.2 mile of unclassified and 12.2 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are good near the center of the area and moderate near the edges. Adjacent areas receive heavy use, including all kinds of motorized uses. Opportunities for primitive recreation are good. The area contains large, steep canyons, creating good diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: Fifth Fork contains the only known strong population of redband trout on the Forest.

Manageability and Boundaries: The topographic features would provide a manageable boundary for wilderness on the east, north and west boundaries. On the south end, much of the roadless area boundary crosses ridges and canyons, creating a less manageable boundary. Some adjustments from the inventoried boundary would be desirable.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use in the area is moderate. The major uses are OHV riding, upland bird hunting, and big game hunting. Horseback riding and mountain biking are also popular. Fishing opportunities are moderate in Rock Creek, but poor in Fifth Fork and Little Creek because of the small size of the trout. Most use occurs in the fringes of the area. The IRA contains three system trails totaling 9 miles, of which 6 miles are open to motorized travel. It also contains some wheel-track roads that are currently open to motorized use. Most of the perimeter of this roadless area is bordered by roads open to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	13%	13%
Roaded Modified	44%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	43%	87%

Fisheries: Fifth Fork contains redband trout and brown trout in the main creek and a few minor tributaries. Little Creek contains redband trout. Rock Creek contains redband, Yellowstone cutthroat, rainbow, and brown trout. Redband trout are currently being studied by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine whether they warrant federal listing. No currently designated threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: This area is mule deer summer range, and the north end of the area also provides mule deer winter range in low snow years. There is habitat for other common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, blue and ruffed grouse, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, coyote, badger, and beaver. Elk numbers are slowly building on the Cassia Division, and elk are seen occasionally in this and nearby areas. There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. This area provides habitat for northern goshawk (9,125 acres, 55 percent of the IRA), flammulated owl, and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area.

The area has bighorn sheep habitat. Mountain bighorn sheep were native to the area but were extirpated in the last century. Beginning in December 1986, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) made five California bighorn sheep introductions in the Big Cottonwood and Dry Creek drainages. Some of the sheep moved west and are now located in an area adjacent to this IRA.

This IRA provides connectivity between low-elevation winter ranges and the higher timbered areas of cover for mule deer and elk. Since the fall of 1993, the Forest has enforced a motorized vehicle travel closure during the buck hunting season, in cooperation with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, to reduce the ease of hunting and hopefully produce more large bucks. Motorized travel is not allowed on the trails within the roadless area nor on some roads on the perimeter during the deer hunting season.

Water: Fifth Fork contributes a significant quantity of water to Rock Creek, at a point about 1.5 miles below the Forest boundary. Little Fork contributes a relatively small quantity to Rock Creek 0.25 mile below the Forest boundary. Rock Creek leaves the Forest with a substantial flow of water. Water quality from Fifth Fork is fair during periods of low flow and poor during periods of high flow. Water quality from Little Creek and Rock Creek is generally good, with increased sediment during periods of high flow. Production of high-quality water from the Forest in Rock Creek is important, because water quality between the Forest boundary and the Snake River has been a matter of great concern for many years. Water from this area is used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation.

Range: The entire roadless area is allocated to livestock grazing. Most of the area is grazed by cattle and lies within two of nine deferred grazing units of one cattle allotment. There is a moderate amount of fence and a small number of water developments within the roadless area. The very eastern portion of the area lies within one sheep allotment used by bands of sheep rotating through this and other allotments to the south and east. There are 2,838 acres (17.1 percent of IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 7,495 acres (45.2 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The IRA contains an estimated 6,445 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to approximately 12,943 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 1,100 acres are tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 1,140 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; however, no acres are considered to have moderate or high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There has been no recorded mineral activity in this area. No precious or base minerals are known to exist. There is low potential for the development of mineral materials (building stone) due to the remote location. The roadless area is prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: This entire area was historically used by American Indians. Evidence of use exists throughout the area, consisting primarily of the lithic scatters left after tool making.

Landownership and Special Uses: No private or state lands occur in the IRA. The only special use permitted within this area is one cougar-hunting guide.

Disturbances: Fire has played a moderate role in this IRA, with three fires totaling an estimated 6,005 acres burned in recent years. About 1,000 acres burned in the Sagehen and Buckbrush Flats areas in 1981. Primarily grass, sage and bitterbrush were burned. An extensive bark beetle epidemic in the 1960s and 1970s killed large numbers of lodgepole pine trees.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS species present. Some introduced species of grasses and forbs have been seeded in small portions of burned areas after wildfires. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations (less than 1 acre) of Scotch thistle have been identified within the IRA. Very little old forest occurs within this area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, approximately 60 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is approximately 135 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 125 air miles to the southeast. A Fifth Fork Rock Creek Wilderness would serve primarily Twin Falls, Burley, and the smaller communities in the Magic Valley. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public interest in having this roadless area become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included this area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Moderate
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 1,100 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 6,445 MBF or 12,943 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low to no potential for minerals or energy development. The limited pattern of motorized/mechanized travel on 6 miles of trail would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Only one concerned individual or organization specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	16,568	0
Potential low levels of development	8,520	8,520	8,622	6,520	0	0	8,622
Available for full range of development	8,048	8,048	7,946	8,048	16,568	0	7,946

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	311	0	0	0	588	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	347	912	347	324	0	912
Total	311	347	912	347	911	0	912

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	L	L	M	L	M	N	M

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Fifth Fork Rock Creek IRA for wilderness. About half of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development, and the other half could see a full range of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Hanson Lakes
Roadless Area No. 0414915, 06915 and 0402915
71,101 Acres
(39,917 Sawtooth NF, 13,533 Salmon-Challis NF, 17,650 Boise NF)

DESCRIPTION

The Hanson Lakes IRA is located within the Sawtooth National Recreational Area of the Sawtooth National Forest, the Yankee Fork Ranger District of the Salmon-Challis National Forest, and the Lowman Ranger District of the Boise National Forest.

The Hanson Lakes IRA has also been previously known as the Sawtooth Addition and Ten Mile-East. It is contiguous to the north end of the Sawtooth Wilderness; lies south of and adjacent to State Highway 21; east of Canyon Creek; and north of the South Fork Payette River. It is 9 miles west of Stanley. It is entirely within Custer County. In addition to access from State Highway 21, there is access from the Grandjean, Stanley Lake, Elk Meadows, Trap Creek, Vader Creek, and Thatcher Creek Roads.

The Sawtooth Mountain Range runs southeast to northwest through the area, terminating near Highway 21. The landform is heavily glaciated, with steep mountain slopes, cirque basins, and U-shaped valleys. The area on the west side is strongly dissected and has heavily timbered V-shaped valleys, canyons, and moraines that drain steeply into Canyon Creek. The east side is a large morainal area of rolling terrain, wet meadows, small pocket lakes, and dry benches. Twelve high mountain lakes are found in the cirque basins. Elevations range from 5,000 feet at the mouth of Canyon Creek to 9,290 feet near Hanson Lakes on the Payette River-Salmon River divide. The east side has a colder environment than the west.

The lower slopes on the east side are dominated by lodgepole pine with intermixed Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce, and aspen. Higher elevations are dominated by whitebark pine and subalpine fir in open stands. On the west side, the lower elevations contain ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir and sagebrush-grass communities. The higher elevations have primarily lodgepole pine and subalpine fir. Except for a number of wet meadows and the areas above timberline, the area is predominantly tree-covered. The soils are generally moderately erodible.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: As a whole, the area has a very high natural integrity, showing little impact by man. Some cattle and sheep grazing occurs on low-elevation grassy areas. Some of the creeks and meadows have been degraded in the past by cattle grazing. However, changes in the grazing system have resulted in this area being rested from cattle grazing for a number of years, restoring most of the natural appearance.

The surrounding area is relatively undeveloped and natural appearing. Small timber harvests are located in the lodgepole pine periphery, and a larger cutting area is located on Elk Mountain. The area includes 3.3 miles of unclassified and 0.8 mile of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation experiences are outstanding. The area has high topographic and vegetative screening. The distance from the center to the perimeter is about 4 miles. Diversity and opportunities for challenge are

high. Much of the area is remote and contains few trails. Highway 21 can be seen and heard from those areas adjacent to the eastern boundary, and from nearby higher-elevation areas. Adjacency to the Sawtooth Wilderness enhances many of the IRA's attributes.

Special Features: High cirque basins and mountain ridges are prominent, as is the gorge of Canyon Creek along the southwest corner. Mt. Zumwalt at 8,812 feet is a special feature in the western portion. Elk Meadow is a special feature. Most of the Bear Creek Research Natural Area lies within the roadless area. Segments of Fishhook Creek (1.2 miles), Goat Creek (2.1 miles), Elk Creek (10.9 miles), Stanley Lake Creek (5.8 miles), Redfish Lake Creek (0.2 mile) are eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. An estimated 5,293 acres will be included in the special management corridors surrounding these stream segments.

Manageability and Boundaries: The area lacks definable boundaries on the east side; however, the large size would allow for boundary adjustments without much of an acreage reduction. The area between Redfish Lake and Stanley Lake lacks easily definable boundaries. The Wilderness boundary is now along a trail in that area. The western boundary would be a quite manageable offset from State Highway 21. In keeping with the legislated intent of the Sawtooth NRA, development options are limited. Management direction for the NRA is to preserve and protect the natural, scenic, and fish and wildlife values of the area, and enhance their associated recreational values.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use is light when compared to the Sawtooth Wilderness. Most use occurs on the Sawtooth NRA portion. A fair amount of use (primarily fall hunting) occurs along State Highway 21 and in the Grandjean area. Uses in the area consist primarily of hiking to Bridalveil Falls, Hanson, Bench, Martin, Elizabeth, Kelly, and Zumwalt Lakes for fishing and camping, and fall hunting. Several of the trails receive heavy use from people accessing the Sawtooth Wilderness. Mountain bike use is also popular on the Bench Creek and Elk Meadows Trails. Telemark skiing is popular in the Cooper Mountain area. Fishing opportunities are good. There are 16 developed trails totaling 53 miles; 19 miles are open to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	6%	1%
Roaded Modified	5%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	22%	98%
Semi-Primitive Non-motorized	61%	0%
Primitive	6%	1%

Fisheries: Fish species present include chinook salmon, steelhead trout, bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, redband trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout. Spring and summer spawning runs of chinook salmon, and spawning runs of steelhead trout, occur in some of the tributaries to Valley Creek and Marsh Creek. Bull trout occur as both resident populations, and as adults moving up some of these streams from the Salmon River, Middle Fork Salmon River, and the South Fork Payette River to spawn. The strong Canyon Creek bull trout population may provide an important source of colonizers to other areas of suitable bull trout habitat within the South Fork Payette River. Cape Horn Creek is considered a stronghold stream for bull trout. Salmon and steelhead travel approximately 900 miles from the ocean to spawn in these waters. Several of the alpine lakes have been stocked with westslope cutthroat trout and rainbow trout by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

Wildlife: Gray wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. This IRA provides 37,407 acres (65 percent of the IRA) of habitat for Canada lynx, a threatened species, 509 acres (1 percent) for fisher, 687 acres (1 percent) of habitat for bald eagle, 2,421 acres (4 percent) for northern goshawk, 211 acres (<1 percent) for white-headed woodpecker, 1,074 acres (2 percent) for flammulated owl, 6,992 acres (12 percent) for boreal owl, 8,386 acres (15 percent) for northern three-toed woodpecker, and 1,129 acres (2 percent) for great gray owl. Habitat is also available for other Region 4 sensitive species, including wolverine, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, and spotted frog. Lynx, bald eagle, wolverine, and fisher have been sighted in the area.

Big-game animals include elk, mule deer, mountain goat, moose, black bear, and cougar. Numerous other species of non-game animals and birds are present. The Boise Forest portion of the roadless area provides an estimated 1,560 acres of winter range for deer and elk along the lower elevations of the South Fork Payette River.

Water: This area contributes substantial quantities of water to Valley Creek, the Salmon River, the Middle Fork Salmon River, and the South Fork Payette River. Major drainages include portions of Fishhook, Meadow, Goat, Iron, Crooked, Stanley, Elk, Trap, Swamp, Cape Horn, Marsh, Bench, North Fork Canyon, South Fork Canyon, and Bear Creeks. This water provides for aquatic habitat, irrigation, hydropower, and other important uses off the Forest. Water quality is generally very good, with 9,500 acres noted as producing high quality; however, most drainages have excessive fine sediment from the naturally steep, erodible granite geology.

Range: Some sheep grazing occurs at lower elevations on the north end of the area, totaling about 5 percent of the area. The Boise National Forest portion of the area contains one active and one vacant sheep allotment. Much of the lower elevations along the southeast side are in a cattle grazing allotment. However, changes in the grazing system have resulted in this area being rested from cattle grazing for a number of years. Few grazing facilities exist in the area. There are 896 acres of land classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 3,577 acres for sheep grazing.

Timber: The IRA includes an estimated 347,535 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to 688,212 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 40,400 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 2,703 acres are considered to have low productivity; 12,172 acres, moderate productivity; and 393 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence of locatable minerals, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate), mineral materials (sand, gravel and building stone), oil and gas, and geothermal resources. The area within the Sawtooth NRA has been Congressionally withdrawn from mineral entry. No recorded mineral activity has occurred within this area.

The area around Cooper Mountain was actively explored in the 1960s and 1970s for gold. The claims were dropped in the early 1970s. There is a moderate potential for the occurrence of rare earth minerals along the South Fork Payette River but development potential is low.

Heritage: There are no known significant cultural resources present and the possibility of locating any is low.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no state or private lands within the area. One outfitter provides black bear and cougar hunting trips in the area and another provides deer and elk hunting trips, summer pack trips, and trail rides.

Disturbances: Recent fire activity has been negligible. Bark beetles are present in high levels. In Canyon Creek, an outbreak of spruce budworm has been followed by Douglas-fir bark beetles. During periods of high-intensity rain, extreme erosion and soil displacement occurs in the Canyon Creek, Bear Creek and Camp Creek drainages.

Botanical: The Region 4 sensitive plant, Stanley thlaspi (*Thlaspi idahoense aileenii*), the proposed sensitive plants pale sedge (*Carex livida*) and Idaho bitterroot (*Lewisia kelloggii*), and the watch plant, Buxbaum's sedge (*Carex buxbaumii*) are known to inhabit the area. Another Region 4 sensitive species, Idaho douglasia, (*Douglasia idahoensis*) may also occur here. A small infestation of rush skeletonweed (0.02 ac.) is known to exist within the IRA. Much of the timbered area is old forest.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: This area adjoins the northern end of the Sawtooth Wilderness. The Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness is one mile to the north. If designated wilderness, the Hanson Lakes roadless area would become an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness. In combination with the Sawtooth Wilderness, it would attract a national and international clientele. It would serve nearby metropolitan areas of Missoula, Boise, Twin Falls and Salt Lake City, as well as local smaller communities, including Lowman, Stanley, Sun Valley, Ketchum, and Challis.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wildernesses.

Public Interest: There has been very high public interest in making this area wilderness as an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness. Seven public comments favoring designation were received in response to the DEIS. In the Notice of Decision for the 1987 Sawtooth Forest Plan, the Forest Service recommended that this area be designated wilderness. It was also recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	High
Opportunity for Solitude	High
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	High
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 40,400 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 347,535 MBF or 688,212 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low to no potential for minerals or energy development, and the Sawtooth NRA has already been withdrawn from mineral entry. Motorized and mechanized travel on 53 miles of system trail would be foregone. Winter snowmobile use would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. There has been very high public interest in making this area wilderness as an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	32,077	32,113	32,113	57,375	0	32,113	32,113
Maintain undeveloped character	192	192	192	192	192	25,454	192
Potential low levels of development	17,533	34,010	34,010	13,533	42,889	13,533	37,882
Available for full range of development	21,299	4,785	4,785	0	28,019	0	914

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	0	0	0	0	143	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	19,076	15,824	15,824	0	43,916	0	15,824
Total	19,076	15,824	15,824	0	35,059	0	15,824

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative recommends approximately 45 percent of the Hanson Lakes IRA for wilderness. The Bear Creek Research Natural Area (192 acres) would retain its undeveloped character. Most of the remaining IRA would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Huckleberry Roadless Area No. 0414016 7,653 Acres

DESCRIPTION

The Huckleberry IRA is located within the Sawtooth NRA and is 8 miles south of Stanley, Idaho. This IRA lies west of the Sawtooth Valley between Hell Roaring Creek and Redfish Lake. It is bounded on the west by the Sawtooth Wilderness and on the east by private lands and the Decker Flats Road (Forest Road 210). The southern boundary is just north of the Hell Roaring Creek Road (Forest Road 315). Access is from State Highway 75 and the Hell Roaring Road, the Mays Creek Road, and the Decker Flats Road.

The area is in the Sawtooth Moraines Lands Group. It is dominated by prominent lateral moraines and undifferentiated morainal material. The lateral moraines have steep, benchy slopes, while the undifferentiated areas have gentle slopes with hummocky topography. Soils are deep, but contain high volumes of rounded cobble and are poorly defined. Erodibility is low. Productivity for timber and forage is low due mainly to climatic limitations and the rocky soils. The area contains portions of the Redfish Lake Creek, Decker Creek, and Hell Roaring Creek drainages. Elevations range from 6,600 feet at Redfish Lake to 7,800 feet.

Vegetation is primarily lodgepole pine. A few small parks and meadows are present. These openings are in wet creek bottoms or on the south side of the lateral moraines.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity is high. The construction and maintenance of about 20 miles of trail, and minor amounts of timber harvest (primarily firewood) along the Hell Roaring Creek Road, are the only physical developments or human-caused impacts in the area. To the visitor, after leaving the trailhead, lakeshore, or road, the area appears natural. In terms of natural integrity and appearance, there is no discernable difference between this area and the adjacent Wilderness, except that one gets closer to human activities on the eastern edge of the IRA.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude and primitive outdoor recreation are moderate to high. Distances to the core of the area are less than 2 miles. Vegetative screening is high due to the tree density. Topographic screening is low, with most screening occurring in the hummocky areas. Diversity is lacking and there is little challenge. Motorized use on Redfish Lake influences those on the north side of the moraine, which slopes to the lake. Within this area one can hear the sounds of vehicles traveling on the highway in the Sawtooth Valley.

Special Features: The area has a unique geology in that the morainal deposits represent two glacial periods, Early and Late Bull Lake. The scenic quality of the area is typical of the scenic Sawtooth Valley. The Huckleberry Fens area, located southeast of Redfish Lake, includes bog environments containing a number of rare plants. The Redfish Lake Moraine RNA (1,470 acres) was established on the east side of Redfish Lake to preserve a large alpine glacier lateral moraine that includes cold springs, rocky lakeshore habitat, and Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, and subalpine fir plant communities. Hell Roaring Creek (0.4 mile) is eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. A special management corridor (an estimated 331 acres) will be established to protect its outstandingly remarkable values.

Manageability and Boundaries: Boundaries would be quite manageable. The western boundary is the Sawtooth Wilderness. The northwest boundary is Redfish Lake. The eastern boundary follows roads most of the way. The southern boundary is the Hell Roaring Creek Road. There could be some difficulty controlling motorized use from the adjoining area in the areas with gentle terrain. Some of the area has historically been open to motorized use.

In keeping with the legislated intent of the Sawtooth NRA, development options are limited. Management direction for the NRA is to preserve and protect the natural, scenic, and fish and wildlife values of the area, and enhance their associated recreational values.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use is generally light. Other than big-game hunting, most use occurs from those traveling on trails to the Sawtooth Wilderness. Most use occurs on the Hell Roaring Trail on the south edge of the roadless area. One trail is open to motorized trail cycles but receives very little use. The trail system consists of five trails that pass through the area totaling 20 miles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	9%	0%
Roaded Modified	13%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	36%	100%
Semi-Primitive Non-motorized	42%	0%

Fisheries: Fish species present include Snake River sockeye salmon, chinook salmon, steelhead trout, bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, kokanee salmon, rainbow trout, and eastern brook trout. Spring and summer spawning runs of chinook salmon, and spawning runs of steelhead trout occur in Hell Roaring Creek, Lower Huckleberry Creek, and Bull Moose Creek. Bull trout occur as both resident populations and as adults moving up stream from the Salmon River to spawn in Upper Huckleberry Creek and Bull Moose Creek. Upper Huckleberry Creek and Bull Moose Creek also contain westslope cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout. Sockeye salmon spawn in Redfish Lake. Kokanee salmon are resident in Redfish Lake. Sockeye and chinook salmon, and steelhead, travel about 900 miles from the Columbia River mouth to spawn in these waters. Sockeye salmon are listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act, while chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout are listed as threatened. The westslope cutthroat trout is a Region 4 sensitive species.

Wildlife: Gray wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. This area provides habitat for threatened Canada lynx (6,137 acres, or 80 percent of the IRA), bald eagle (638 acres, 8 percent), fisher (37 acres, <1 percent), northern goshawk (305 acres, 4 percent), boreal owl (1,640 acres, 21 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (1,930 acres, 25 percent), and great gray owl (95 acres, 1 percent). Habitats also occur here for other Region 4 sensitive species, including wolverine, Townsend's big eared bat, spotted bat, and spotted frog.

The area contains deer and elk summer range. Due to the dense timber, there are few openings to provide summer forage. Black bear, cougar, and numerous species of non-game wildlife and birds are present. This IRA provides connectivity between areas on all sides for wildlife.

Water: This area contributes water to the Salmon River system. The watershed condition is excellent and water quality is good. This water provides for aquatic habitat, irrigation, hydropower, and other important uses off the Forest.

Range: No livestock are grazed within the area because of the dense timber stands.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 60,131 thousand board feet, equivalent to 119,039 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 5,900 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 5,787 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; 1,551 acres, moderate productivity; but no areas have high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence of locatable minerals, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate), mineral materials (sand, gravel, and building stone), oil and gas, and geothermal resources. The area has been Congressionally withdrawn from mineral entry. No recorded mineral activity has occurred within this area.

Heritage: No significant cultural resources have been found, and the potential to find sites is low to moderate.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private or state lands within the area. Some private lands border it on the east. Five outfitter and guides hold permits for day rides, hunting, scenic trips, and fishing trips.

Disturbances: Fire occurrence has been insignificant. Mountain pine beetles continue to kill increasing numbers of trees.

Botanical: A Region 4 proposed sensitive species, Blandow's helodium (*Helodium blandowii*), is known to be present in this area. This IRA contains the Huckleberry Fens portion of the Sawtooth Peatlands Research Natural Area. There are no known occurrences of noxious weeds in this IRA. The forested areas are almost entirely old forest.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: This area adjoins the eastern side of the Sawtooth Wilderness. The FC-RONR Wilderness is 19 miles to the north. If designated wilderness, the Huckleberry roadless area would become an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness. In combination with the Sawtooth Wilderness, it would attract a nation-wide and international clientele. It would serve the nearby metropolitan areas of Missoula, Boise, Twin Falls and Salt Lake City, as well as the local smaller communities, including nearby Stanley, Sun Valley, Ketchum, and Challis.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wilderness.

Public Interest: There has been high public interest in the past for making this area an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness. Two public comments supporting designation were received in response to the DEIS. It was recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	High
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 5,900 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 60,131 MBF or 119,039 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low to no potential for minerals or energy development, and the Sawtooth NRA has already been withdrawn from mineral entry. A minimal amount of motorized trail use would be foregone

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. There has been high public interest in making this area wilderness as an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness. Concerned individuals or organizations specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	1,471	1,471	1,471	1,471	1,471	7,653	1,471
Potential low levels of development	0	6,183	6,183	6,183	3,208	0	6,183
Available for full range of development	6,183	0	0	0	2,975	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	5,431	5,431	5,431	0	5,431	0	5,431
Total	5,431	5,431	5,431	0	5,431	0	5,431

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Huckleberry IRA for wilderness. The Redfish Lake Moraine RNA (1,470 acres) would retain its undeveloped character. The remainder of the IRA would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Liberal Mountain
Roadless Area No. 0414040
10,531 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Liberal Mountain IRA includes a small southwestern portion of what was Roadless Area No. 14018 (Buttercup Mountain) in the 1987 Sawtooth Forest Plan. That area has been broken into three separate areas. Existing roads that separate them were considered to be too highly developed to meet wilderness standards.

This roadless area is located in Camas County, within the Fairfield Ranger District, about 7 miles north of Fairfield, Idaho. It is bordered on the south by the Forest boundary, on the west by the Basalt Creek Road (Forest Road 095), on the north by a portion of the Liberal Creek Road (Forest Road 018), and on the east by a portion of the Willow Creek Road (Forest Road 017).

The topography is very steep over much of the area. The elevations range from around 5,800 feet to 8,272 feet on Liberal Mountain.

The slopes are generally vegetated up to the ridgelines with Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, and some lodgepole pine on the northern and eastern slopes. The southern and western slopes are vegetated with mountain shrub-sagebrush-grass communities. The brush communities include snowberry, bitterbrush, and sagebrush. Some aspen is present but it is in decline due to fire exclusion and encroachment of conifers.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Natural integrity and apparent naturalness are rated low because of mining activities, improved and unimproved roads along the borders and interior exclusions, and range management activities. The area includes 0.6 mile of unclassified and 0.9 mile of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are moderate, due primarily to the area's small size. The Little Smoky, Basalt Creek, and Willow Creek Roads can be seen from portions of the area. The distance from the center of the area to the boundary is generally less than 2 miles. Topographic relief with numerous small and steep draws, does provide some opportunity for solitude. Primitive recreation opportunities are moderate, and opportunities for challenging experiences are moderate.

Special Features: No significant special features occur in this IRA.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundary, as inventoried, would be difficult to manage because of the many road intrusions and adjacency to numerous roads and timber sale areas. Boundaries could be established that would improve overall wilderness qualities; however, an acreage reduction would occur.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: The predominant recreation uses are motorized trail bike riding, mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, big-game hunting, and snowmobiling. A few miles of groomed snowmobile trail lie within the area. Motorized use comprises about 60 percent of the overall recreation use. There are two system trails within the roadless area, totaling about 8 miles. All of these trail miles are open for motorized use. Fishing opportunities are poor. Inventoried ROS classes are as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	16%	2%
Roaded Modified	28%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	56%	98%

Fisheries: A few tributaries to Little Smoky Creek are thought to provide habitat for bull trout, a threatened species. The Willow Creek drainage has habitat for Wood River sculpin, a Region 4 sensitive species. Occupied or historic habitat for redband trout may exist over most the area. Brook trout are also present in isolated pockets.

Wildlife: Deer and elk are relatively common. Moose occur in some of the main drainages from past introductions. Habitat exists for Canada lynx, a threatened species (3,407 acres or 32 percent of the IRA), fisher (50 acres, <1 percent), northern goshawk (674 acres, 6 percent), boreal owl (113 acres, 1 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (728 acres, 7 percent), and great gray owl (28 acres, <1 percent). Habitat for wolverine, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, flammulated owl, and spotted frog may also occur within the area. Probable sightings of gray wolves have been reported. Gray wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. Black bear, cougar, bobcat, and pine martin are also present.

Water: Primary drainages within this area include Liberal, Cannonball, Wardrop, Sampson, and Big Deer Creeks, and tributaries to Willow Creek. Runoff from this area provides an important source for water for irrigation on the Camas Prairie and also provides water for the Boise River system used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation. There are no lakes within the area.

Range: The area contains two cattle allotments that are managed under deferred rotation systems. There is a high level of structural grazing improvements on these allotments. The entire roadless area is allocated to cattle grazing. There are 1,660 acres (15.8 percent of IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing.

Timber: The IRA contains an estimated 31,783 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to 61,246 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 6,700 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 371 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; 6,391 acres, moderate; and 277 acres, high.

Minerals and Energy: There are 25 registered mining claims, no leases, and no withdrawals within the roadless area. The potential for energy or leasable minerals is low.

Heritage: The area contains some historic sites associated with mining activities. A small number of American Indian cultural sites have also been identified within the area.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private or state lands within the roadless area. Two special-use permits have been issued for outfitter and guide services within the area.

Disturbances: Wildfire has not been a recent significant factor within the roadless area. Douglas-fir mistletoe is scattered throughout the area.

Botanical Characteristics: This area is within the geographic range of the threatened plant, Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*), but no individuals of the species have been found in or near the area. Bugleg goldenweed (*Haplopappus insecticuriis*), a Region 4 sensitive species, is found here. Aspen is in decline due to a lack of fire, encroachment of conifers, and disease.

Noxious weed infestations of spotted knapweed and Canada thistle occur in the area but less than one acre is affected. There are numerous stands of old forest scattered throughout the area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Sawtooth Wilderness, 23 miles to the northwest. A Liberal Mountain Wilderness would serve primarily the Boise, Mountain Home, and Twin Falls areas, and smaller communities in and near the Snake River Valley, including nearby Fairfield.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wildernesses

Public Interest: There has been little or no public demand for this area to become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. It was, however, recommended for wilderness designation in HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act, when this area was a part of the larger Buttercup area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Moderate
Special Features	None

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 6,700 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 31,783 MBF or 61,246 CCF would be foregone. The Sawtooth NRA has already been withdrawn from mineral entry. The established pattern of motorized trail use would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wilderness. There has been little interest shown for designating a Liberal Mountain wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	10,531	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	10,531	0	0	8,605
Available for full range of development	10,531	10,531	10,531	0	10,531	0	1,926

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	5,485	0	0	0	4,651	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	4,630	4,630	4,630	867	0	4,630
Total	5,485	4,630	4,630	4,630	5,517	0	4,630

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	H	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Liberal Mountain IRA for wilderness. An estimated 82 percent of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development, 18 percent for a full range of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Lime Creek
Roadless Area No. 0414937 and 0402937
96,992 Acres
(83,519 Sawtooth NF Acres, 13,473 Boise NF Acres)

DESCRIPTION

The Lime Creek IRA is located on the Fairfield Ranger District of the Sawtooth National Forest and the Mountain Home Ranger District of the Boise National Forest. This roadless area is located 10 miles northwest of Fairfield, Idaho, in Camas County. Access is by way of the Couch Summit Road (Forest Road 094), north of Fairfield; the Ketchum-Featherville Road (Forest Road 227) along the northern boundary; and the South Fork Boise River Road (Forest Road 156) downstream from Featherville. Numerous trails access the area.

Subalpine and glacial associated lands comprise most of this area, which contains the headwaters of Boardman, Deadwood, Deer, Lime, and Soldier Creeks. The highly erodible character of the steep granite slopes restricts use. The IRA is of great importance for its snowpack and resulting water production. Elevations range from 4,400 feet along the South Fork Boise River to over 10,000 feet at Smoky Dome. Open sagebrush-grass communities dominate the south and westerly aspects, while moderate to dense stands of Douglas-fir and sub-alpine fir occupy north and easterly aspects at higher elevations.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Evidence of man's activity exists in the forms of permitted grazing, grazing developments, and heavy recreation use. The trail to the Iron Mountain Lookout is well developed and would detract somewhat from the area's wilderness quality if it were so designated. The area includes 1.7 miles of unclassified and 3.7 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude vary within the roadless area. The large size and varied terrain of the area provide some opportunities for solitude. However, the terrain tends to concentrate use largely along trails and more easily accessible areas. Most activity occurs near the heavily used developed sites close to Anderson Ranch Reservoir and the heavily roaded area near Sprout Mountain. Opportunities for primitive recreation are moderate to low because of the relatively small amount of rugged terrain and relatively few high mountain lakes. The limited access and high rattlesnake populations make the fishing experience along Lime Creek a challenge.

Special Features: The ten-mile-long Soldier Mountain chain includes a number of high peaks, including Smoky Dome and Iron Mountain. The South Fork Boise River (2.6 miles) is eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. A special management corridor (an estimated 1,663 acres) will be established to protect its outstandingly remarkable values.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundary, as inventoried, would be difficult to manage for wilderness values due to adjacent timber sale areas and excluded roads that penetrate the defined area. The south and west boundaries primarily border other land ownerships, which could complicate accessibility. Historic and current patterns of motorized recreation use would also contribute to management difficulties. Establishment of a manageable boundary would result in a substantial reduction in acreage.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Dispersed recreation is the predominant use of the roadless area and includes activities such as big-game hunting, horseback riding, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and trail bike riding, hiking, mountain biking, and backpacking. Winter recreation uses include snowmobiling and snowcat skiing.

Approximately 75 percent of all recreation use is motorized use. Fishing is good in Lime Creek, which is very popular with local fishermen. There are 18 system trails within the roadless area, comprising an estimated 97 miles of trail. All of these trails are open for motorized use. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	8%	1%
Roaded Modified	6%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	86%	98%
Primitive	0%	1%

Fisheries: Lime Creek offers historic spawning and rearing habitat for bull trout, a threatened species. The Camas Creek watershed provides habitat for the Wood River sculpin, a Region 4 sensitive species. Kokanee salmon travel up the lower reaches of the tributaries of the South Fork Boise River to spawn. Kokanee from Anderson Ranch Reservoir use the lower 4 to 5 miles of Lime Creek for spawning. Deer Creek crosses the northwest corner of the roadless area and is one of the few streams in the South Fork Boise River drainage with a natural population of westslope cutthroat trout, a Region 4 sensitive species. Rainbow and brook trout are common in several streams within the area. Lime Creek is known to support a strong population of native redband trout. Smoky Dome Lake contains golden trout.

Wildlife: This area provides habitat for numerous species of big game, small game, and predatory animals. Mule deer, elk, and black bear are found within the area. Small mammals include beaver, muskrat, mink, pika, badger, weasel, and red squirrel. Predators include cougar, coyote, and bobcat. The roadless area includes winter ranges for deer and elk.

Habitat exists for threatened bald eagle (1.4 acres or 1 percent of the IRA), threatened Canada lynx (22,359 acres, 23 percent), fisher (872 acres, 1 percent), northern goshawk (6,456 acres, 7 percent), white-headed woodpecker (1,181 acres, 1 percent), flammulated owl (2,485 acres, 3 percent), boreal owl (1,097 acres, 1 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (5,565 acres, 6 percent), and great gray owl (562 acres, <1 percent). Gray wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. The area may also contain habitat for wolverine, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, mountain quail, and spotted frog. There are two elk feeding grounds near the South Fork Boise River. One lies within the roadless area and one lies just outside.

Water: Numerous miles of perennial streams within the roadless area fall within the South Fork Boise, Lime Creek, and Camas Creek watersheds. Lime Creek is a major drainage that flows west into Anderson Ranch Reservoir on the South Fork Boise River. Water from this area is used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation. The area includes about a half dozen high-elevation mountain lakes.

Range: There are portions of seven sheep allotments and six cattle allotments within the roadless area. The sheep allotments are managed under a rest rotation grazing system, while the cattle allotments are managed under a deferred rotation system. There is a high level of structural improvements on the cattle allotments, and a low level of structural improvements within the sheep allotments. One designated and several historic sheep driveways lie within the area. There are 11,860 acres of land (12.2 percent of IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 7,986 acres (8.2 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The IRA contains an estimated 370,884 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to 731,088 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 49,500 acres are classified as tentatively suitable timberlands. An estimated 2,730 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; 34,396, moderate productivity; and 13,300 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There are a few inactive mines within the area. There are six registered mining claims, no leases, and no withdrawals within the roadless area. The potential for locatable minerals, energy, or leasable minerals is low.

Heritage: The area has low cultural resource sensitivity. Surveys in adjoining and overlapping areas, in similar topographic situations, show the area to be characterized by a low site density.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no state or private lands included within the IRA. Five special-use permits have been issued for uses within the IRA. These uses include three hunting outfitter and guide permits, a snowcat skiing permit, and a radio repeater permit on Iron Mountain for the Camas County Sheriff's Department.

Disturbances: Fire activity has been minimal in recent years. One fire of 41 acres has been recorded since 1960. Spruce budworm and Douglas fir tussock moth populations have returned to endemic levels after killing many trees in the early 1990s. Mountain pine beetle and Douglas fir beetle epidemics are still active in localized areas. Most insect activity has occurred on the north-facing slopes above the South Fork Boise River and upper Lime Creek, affecting about a third of the roadless area.

Botanical: There is a historic occurrence of the Region 4 sensitive plant species, least phacelia, (*Phacelia minutissima*) that has not been observed since the original discovery in the early 1900s. The sensitive plant, giant helleborine (*Epipactus gigantea*) is known to occur here. Noxious weeds found within the IRA include leafy spurge (569 acres), spotted knapweed (24 acres), diffuse knapweed, rush skeletonweed, and Canada thistle. These populations appear to be staying at about the same level. Scattered pockets and slopes of old forest occur across the area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Sawtooth Wilderness, 12 miles to the north. A Lime Creek Wilderness would serve primarily the Boise, Mountain Home, and Twin Falls areas as well as many smaller nearby communities.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wilderness.

Public Interest: Moderate public interest for wilderness designation has been expressed. Four public comments favoring designation were received in response to the DEIS. The area was recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Moderate
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 2,730 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 370,884 MBF or 731,088 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low potential for minerals or energy development. The substantial pattern of existing motorized trail use would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. Moderate public interest for wilderness designation has been expressed. Four concerned individuals or organizations suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	96,992	0
Potential low levels of development	38,700	38,445	16,987	96,992	0	0	96,992
Available for full range of development	58,292	58,547	80,005	0	96,992	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	18,190	375	235	0	30,088	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	3,376	22,115	40,801	31,047	8,929	0	41,037
Total	21,566	22,490	41,036	31,047	39,017	0	41,0370

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	H	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Lime Creek IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Lone Cedar
Roadless Area No. 0414011
6,787 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Lone Cedar IRA is located 37 air miles southeast of Twin Falls, Idaho, in Cassia County. The primary access is by the Goose Creek Road south of Oakley, Idaho at Coal Banks Creek and the Rodeo Creek Road (Forest Road 533) in Trapper Creek. This area is located in the Cassia Division of the Sawtooth National Forest, on the Minidoka Ranger District.

The area is comprised of volcanic rhyolite ash flows that overlie older limestones and quartzites. There are many rhyolite ledges and cliffs throughout the area. Trapper Creek has especially vertical walls. The soil is very erodible, composed primarily of volcanic ash. Elevations range from 6,400 feet on the west end to 4,800 feet on Trapper Creek at the Forest boundary.

The vegetation types vary with elevation. At the lower elevations on the east end, a mixed stand of sagebrush and juniper dominates. Mountain mahogany stands occur on the west end at the higher elevations. Some juniper occurs on the slopes of Trapper Creek. The ground vegetation varies from bunch grass types on the east to grass-brush types on the west.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is low due to impacts from past vegetative manipulation, livestock grazing, livestock grazing facilities, and past fire suppression activities. The natural appearance is moderate for the same reasons. The area includes 0.2 mile of unclassified and 1.7 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are low since the surrounding area receives all forms of motorized recreation use. Off-site intrusions are visible (Lower Goose Creek Reservoir, Trapper Creek and Lone Cedar Roads, and Trapper Creek watershed projects). The distance from the perimeter to the center is less than one mile. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also moderate due to the lack of diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: Special features include several lines of high, vertical cliffs, composed of white volcanic ash stone in Ibex Hollow. Other volcanic ash stone outcrops in that area have eroded into unusual cone shapes.

Manageability and Boundaries: Manageable boundaries exist on the east end in the form of the Forest boundary, along Trapper Creek on the north, the Rodeo Creek Road along the west end, and Lone Cedar Creek on the south side. A portion of the southwest boundary is not well defined.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: The small amount of recreation is dispersed and primarily related to big and small game hunting, with minor amounts of off-highway vehicle (OHV) use. There are few established trails and no constructed trail system. All roads on the perimeter are open to motorized vehicle use, except for the

brief mule deer buck hunt in the fall. During that time, the west end is closed to all motorized vehicles in cooperation with the IDFG. Fishing opportunities are fair in Trapper Creek. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	23%	6%
Roaded Modified	9%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	68%	94%

Fisheries: Trapper Creek contains rainbow trout, brook trout, and leatherside chub. The leatherside chub, a native species that has become rare throughout much of its range, is a species of concern for the State of Idaho. No fish occur in Lone Cedar Creek. No known threatened, endangered, or sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. This area is summer range for mule deer. There is habitat for other common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, beavers, cougar, bobcat, and coyote. Gray wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area.

Water: This area includes the country draining into Lone Cedar Creek from the north, and the slopes draining into Trapper Creek from the south. It contributes small quantities of water to the Lower Goose Creek Reservoir for irrigation off the Forest. Water quality is fair. Virtually all sediment from these drainages is eventually trapped in the reservoir.

Range: This entire area is within portions of two cattle allotments, both grazed in a deferred rotation system. These portions of both allotments contain a moderate amount of fence, and they contain a small number of stock water developments. There are 3,854 acres (56.8 percent of the IRA) of land classified as capable for cattle grazing.

Timber: The IRA contains an estimated 73 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to 141 hundred cubic feet (CCF). No portion of the IRA is considered tentatively suited timberland. An estimated 24 acres are considered to have low timber productivity. No portion is considered to have either moderate or high timber productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence and development of locatable minerals, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate), and geothermal resources. The area has a high potential for the occurrence of, and a moderate potential for development of, mineral materials (rhyolite building stone). There is a recent proposal to remove lichen-covered rhyolite building stone from this area. The IRA is prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: This entire area was historically used by Native Americans. Evidence of use exists throughout the area, consisting primarily of lithic scatters left after tool making.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private or state lands within this roadless area. The only special use permitted is one guide who hunts cougars.

Disturbances: Fire has recently played a major roll in this area. Much of the southern two-thirds was burned in the 1981 Lone Cedar Fire, and follow-up controlled burns to remove additional sagebrush and juniper. A portion of the area has been chained to take down juniper snags and scarify the soil, and then

seeded to grasses, forbs, and shrubs. The 1992 Trapper Fire burned a small acreage of juniper and sagebrush in the northwest corner. Since 1960, 5 wildfires have consumed 2,573 acres of vegetation. During some years, this area is hit by high-intensity thunderstorms, resulting in large debris flows on the steep slopes of Trapper Creek. The lower reaches of Lone Cedar Creek are deeply entrenched as a result of past livestock use in conjunction with these severe storms.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS plant species in the IRA. Some introduced species of grasses and forbs have been seeded in large portions of burned areas after wildfires. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of black henbane and Canada thistle, about 3 acres each, have been identified in the IRA. Although the acreage is small, most of the forested area is old forest.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, approximately 60 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is an estimated 145 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 125 air miles to the southeast. A Lone Cedar Wilderness would serve primarily Twin Falls, Burley, and the smaller communities in the Magic Valley, including nearby Oakley. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public interest in having this roadless area become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included it.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Moderate
Opportunity for Solitude	Low
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Moderate
Special Features	None

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with timberlands containing 73 MBF or 141 CCF would be foregone. There are no acres considered to be tentatively suited as timberlands. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low potential for minerals or energy development, except for rhyolite building stone. The value associated with a very minimal motorized use would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. There has been little public interest in having this roadless area become wilderness

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	6,787	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	3,336	0	0	0
Available for full range of development	6,787	6,787	6,787	3,451	6,787	0	6,787

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Lone Cedar IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for a full range of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Mahogany Butte
Roadless Area No. 0414012
21,029 Acres

DESCRIPTION

The Mahogany Butte IRA is located 38 air miles southeast of Twin Falls, Idaho, in Cassia County. Road access is by way of Trapper Creek, Goose Creek at Coal Banks Creek, or from Nevada by way of Piney Creek. It is located in the Cassia Division of the Minidoka Ranger District of the Sawtooth National Forest. The boundaries are the Nevada state line, the Badger Gulch Road, the Trout Creek Pass Road, the Trout Creek Road, the Piney Creek Road, and the Beaverdam Creek Road.

The area is characterized by wide canyons with a combination of very steep and gentle slopes, containing only a few large rock outcrops. High ridge tops and gentle mountains, with some gentle plateau areas, dominate the high country. The geology consists of volcanic ash flow rhyolite on the southern end of the area overlying carbonaceous shales, phosphate, and limestone. The Phosphoria formation, carbonaceous shales, and underlying limestone are exposed in the north half of the area. The soil is moderately erodible in the western and northern two thirds of the area, and highly erodible volcanic ash soil in the south and eastern one third. Elevations range from about 5,200 feet at the Nevada border to 7,208 feet on Mahogany Butte.

Small stands of lodgepole pine, subalpine fir, and aspen dominate north exposures on the north end of the area. Small timbered areas also occur on the west side. Most of the area is at lower elevations, and supports primarily grass and brush land, with some pockets of mountain mahogany.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is low due to a number of unimproved roads, the impacts of heavy livestock grazing, and the presence of grazing facilities. The natural appearance is low with the evidence of impacts from grazing, primitive roads, and some evidence of past fire suppression activity. A large increase in the number and size of beaver ponds in portions of Trout Creek has added to the natural beauty of these areas in recent years. However, these have been achieved through fencing, which detracts from the naturalness of the area. The area includes 10.3 miles of unclassified and 23.6 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude over much of the area are low because of the area's relatively small size and the effects of motorized use on adjacent areas. It is also beneath a commercial and military flyway. Lower Trout Creek would provide good solitude if this area were wilderness. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also moderate due to the lack of diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: Significant ecological features in the area include the large springs, which are the beginning of permanent water flow in Trout Creek and the large rock pinnacles in Swanty Creek. Another significant feature is Phantom Falls, a 50-foot water fall on Fall Creek.

Manageability and Boundaries: The current boundaries of this area would create a manageable area.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use is primarily hunting and off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in the fall. Fishing opportunities in Trout Creek and Fall Creek are fair. Moderate trail bike use occurs on a number of undeveloped roads. Undeveloped trails exist to varying degrees throughout the area. The only developed trail is the 2-mile trail to Phantom Falls in Fall Creek, which is not suitable for motorized travel. Snowmobiling is popular in the higher elevation areas to the north. There is no opportunity for intensive recreation development. Much of the perimeter of this roadless area is bordered by roads that are open to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Modified	25%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	75%	100%

Fisheries: Trout Creek contains Yellowstone cutthroat trout and rainbow trout, and includes important year-round and spawning habitat for Yellowstone. Recent riparian improvement projects have greatly improved habitat in much of the Forest portion of Trout Creek.

The leatherside chub, a native species that has become rare throughout much of its range, is considered a species of concern by the State of Idaho. It is known to have historically occurred in Trout Creek and possibly Jay Creek and Beaverdam Creek; however, its present status is unknown. The leatherside chub is known to be present in Trapper Creek and possibly Fall Creek within the IRA. Fall Creek also contains rainbow trout and brook trout. No known threatened or endangered fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. The area provides summer range for mule deer, and there is habitat for other common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, coyote, beaver, and badger. Elk numbers are slowly building on the Cassia Division, and elk have been seen here occasionally. This unroaded area connects low-elevation winter ranges and the higher timbered areas of cover for mule deer and elk.

Water: This area includes large portions of Piney Creek, Trout Creek, Jay Creek, Beaverdam Creek, and Fall Creek. It contributes a moderate amount of water to the Goose Creek system, all of which is caught in the Lower Goose Creek Reservoir. This water is used for irrigation in the Oakley Valley.

Range: This entire area is allocated to livestock grazing. The northern portion is grazed primarily by sheep, with a small number of cattle. There is a small amount of fence and a small number of water developments within the area. The southern and eastern portions are grazed by cattle in a separate allotment. This portion of the roadless area contains a large amount of fence, stock ponds, and developed springs for stock water. These allotments are both managed in a deferred rotation system. There are 11,860 acres of land (56 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 4,904 acres (23 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 4,192 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to or 8,354 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 700 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 706 acres are considered to have low timber productivity. No portion is considered to have either moderate or high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence and development of locatable minerals. Exploration for low-grade gold resources occurred in the 1980s but they have not proven to be valuable enough to warrant further exploration or development. The mining claims have been abandoned. The area has moderate potential for the occurrence of solid leasable minerals (coal and phosphate) but a low development potential. This low rating is based on the limited reserves of both phosphate and carbonaceous shale, located in a remote location. The shale, locally thought to be coal, was used (with limited success) to heat homes around the turn of the century. A 3,000-acre “coal” reserve still exists within the area.

There is low potential for the occurrence and development of mineral materials (building stone) and geothermal resources. The roadless area is prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: This entire area was historically used by American Indians. Evidence of use exists throughout the area, consisting primarily of the lithic scatters left after tool making.

Landownership and Special Uses: All of the land within the roadless area is in National Forest ownership, except for one 80-acre parcel on Trout Creek. This inholding could add complexity to wilderness management. The only special use permitted within this area is one guide who hunts cougars.

Disturbances: Fire has recently played a significant roll in this roadless area. The 1959 Jay Creek fire burned a large acreage in the southeast corner, on the Nevada border. The 1992 Trapper Fire burned a small portion of the north end of the area. In 1995, the upper Beaverdam Creek drainage burned in the eastern portion of the area. In 1997, a small fire burned in Willow Creek. With these and other smaller fires, an estimated 5,683 acres have burned since 1960.

An extensive bark beetle epidemic in the 1960s and 1970s killed large numbers of lodgepole pine trees in the small timbered area in the north and western portions of the area. The subalpine fir component is experiencing mortality from insects, disease, and other environmental factors.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS plant species present. Some introduced species of grasses and forbs have been seeded in small portions of burned areas after wildfires. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only 6 acres of black henbane have been identified within the IRA. Although the acreage is small, most of the forested area is in an old forest condition.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, approximately 60 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is an estimated 150 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 125 air miles to the southeast. A Mahogany Butte Wilderness would serve primarily Twin Falls, Burley, and the smaller communities in the Magic Valley, including nearby Oakley. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public interest in having this roadless area become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included this area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Low
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 700 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 4,192 MBF or 8,354 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has relatively low potential for minerals or energy development. While there are no trails currently being utilized to any degree for mountain bike use, potential mountain bike use opportunities would be foregone. No motorized use occurs on system trails, however, some undeveloped trails see limited use. Snowmobile use in winter would also be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Only one concerned individual specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	21,029	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	9,883	0	0	0
Available for full range of development	21,029	21,029	21,029	11,147	21,029	0	21,029

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	161	0	0	0	468	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	466	621	621	623	155	0	623
Total	627	621	621	623	623	0	623

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	L	L	L	L	L	N	L

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact: 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Mahogany Butte IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for a full range of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Mount Harrison
Roadless Area No. 0414006
29,958 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Mount (Mt.) Harrison IRA is located 15 air miles southeast of Burley, Idaho in Cassia County. The primary access is by the Howell Canyon Road (Forest Road 549) south of Albion, Idaho. It is located in the Albion Division of the Minidoka Ranger District. The boundaries generally follow the Forest boundary, except where they follow the roads, some of which penetrate deep into the interior.

The geology of the area consists of metamorphic gneisses, mica schists, and quartzites that are some of the oldest rocks in the state, with age dates at 2.4 billion years. Much of the area is steep and rocky. Water from the area is important for recreation uses, in-stream flows for trout, wildlife, and downstream irrigation and hydropower uses. Elevations range from about 5,500 feet to 9,263 feet on Mt. Harrison.

Douglas-fir, subalpine fir and aspen are found on the northerly slopes with sage-grass and mountain brush communities on southern aspects.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is rated moderate to high. The natural appearance is rated as low as a result of livestock grazing impacts, grazing facilities, the existence of low-standard roads, past fire suppression activity, and recreation developments. The area includes 8.0 mile of unclassified and 23.6 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: The opportunities for solitude are considered low, mostly because of the intrusions, including the highly developed Howell Canyon, which almost divides the area, and the short distance from the perimeter to the interior. Opportunities for primitive recreation experiences are limited, due to the lack of diversity and few challenging experiences.

Special Features: A portion of the Mt. Harrison Research Natural Area lies within this roadless area.

Manageability and Boundaries: Manageable boundaries would be difficult to establish. Boundary modification would not enhance the area's wilderness characteristics.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: This area is used extensively for various types of recreation. Big-game hunting in the fall is a major use. Some small-game hunting also occurs. Fishing opportunities are marginal due to the small size of the trout and the few scattered streams containing trout. Dispersed uses include hang gliding, groomed snowmobile trails, and horseback riding. The paved Howell Canyon Road allows easy access for OHV use and hiking in summer, and cross-country skiing in the winter. The adjacent developed portions of Howell Canyon include the Pomerelle Ski Area, the Lake Cleveland Recreation Area, the Thompson Flat Campground and summer homes, and the Mt. Harrison Fire Lookout. Visitors to the Mount Harrison lookout have an excellent view of the roadless area. The area contains 15 miles of trail, all of which are open to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	11%	4%
Roaded Modified	24%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	65%	96%

Fisheries: Some streams in the area contain Yellowstone cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout. No known threatened, endangered or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: Although there are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present, the area provides 2,783 acres (9 percent of the IRA) of habitat for threatened Canada lynx. This area may also provide habitat for the northern goshawk, Townsend's big-eared bat, flammulated owl, and boreal owl. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. The area is summer range for mule deer. The lower elevations on the west side provide winter range for mule deer. There is habitat for other species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, coyote, badger, and beaver. This undeveloped area connects winter ranges for deer on the south and west slopes at lower elevations and summer range in the timbered areas of the high country.

Water: This area contains portions of most of the drainages that run outward from Mt. Harrison. Water quality is generally fair during periods of low flow, and fair to poor during high flows. Water from this area is used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation. Maintenance of minimum water flow from this portion of the roadless area is important.

Range: About 90 percent of the IRA is allocated to livestock grazing. Portions or all of six cattle allotments are located within the area. They are managed in rest and deferred rotation systems. There are a small number of livestock grazing facilities, consisting primarily of fences and water developments. There are 10,552 acres of land (35 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 68,042 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to 132,836 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 6,800 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 376 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; 780 acres, moderate productivity; and no acres, high productivity.

Minerals: The area has moderate potential for the occurrence and development of locatable uncommon variety building stone locally referred to as "Oakley stone." There is moderate potential for the occurrence of other locatable metal commodities such as gold, silver, copper, and lead, but development potential is low. There was historic development of underground lead, silver and copper deposits on the southern edge of the roadless area. Production was limited due to the remote location and type of deposits. There is low potential for development of mineral materials (sand, gravel, and other building stone). Potential for the occurrence and development of oil and gas leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate) or geothermal resources is low. The Howell Canyon area was withdrawn from mineral entry in 1996 to protect a research natural area, a rare plant species, and ski area capital improvements.

Heritage: There are a moderate number of cultural sites within the area. The probability of finding others is likely.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private lands within the area. Some parcels of private land adjoin the boundary. The area is used by two outfitter and guide operations. It also contains one electronic site used by four permittees.

Disturbances: The 1996 Elba Fire, which burned about 4,660 acres of the area, is the only significant fire that has occurred in recent years. Since 1960, there have been four wildfires for a total of 4,664 acres. Mountain pine beetle and Douglas-fir beetle damage has occurred to timber.

Botanical: The northwest portion contains part of the Mt. Harrison population of the Region 4 sensitive plant, Christ's Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja christii*). This is the only known population of this species. The sensitive plant, Davis' wavewing, also occurs here. Minor populations of Engelmann spruce and limber pine occur within the area, and they are rare in extreme southern Idaho. Aspen is in decline from conifer encroachment due to the lack of fire. Some introduced species of grasses and forbs have been seeded in conjunction with range revegetation projects and fire rehabilitation. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of Canada thistle (4 acres) and medusa head (0.4 acre) have been identified within the roadless area. Small amounts of old forest are scattered across the timbered portions of the area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, approximately 80 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is an estimated 135 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 110 air miles to the southeast. A Mt. Harrison Wilderness would serve primarily Burley, Twin Falls, and the many small communities in the Magic Valley including nearby Oakley, Almo, and Albion. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: Very little or no public interest has been expressed for wilderness designation of the area. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included it.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Low
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 6,800 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 68,042 MBF or 132,836 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has relatively low potential for minerals or energy development, with the exception of Oakley stone. Also, the Howell Canyon portion has already been withdrawn from mineral entry. The use associated with 15 miles of popular motorized trail would be foregone, as would a long established pattern of snowmobile use in winter.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Very little public interest has been expressed for wilderness designation. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	294	294	294	294	294	29,958	294
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	16,035	0	0	7,710
Available for full range of development	29,664	29,664	29,664	13,629	29,664	0	21,954

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	1,766	231	0	0	1,979	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	4,364	5,910	6,130	6,130	4,153	0	6,130
Total	6,130	6,141	6,130	6,130	6,131	0	6,130

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	H	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Mt. Harrison IRA for wilderness. A 294-acre Mt. Harrison Research Natural Area would retain its undeveloped character. Essentially all other acres of the roadless area would be available for development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Pettit
Roadless Area No. 0414017
3,099 Acres

DESCRIPTION

The Pettit IRA is located within the Sawtooth NRA, 16 miles south of Stanley, within Custer and Blaine Counties. The IRA lies on the west side of the Sawtooth Valley between the Hell Roaring Creek Road and Pettit Lake. The east side is near the private land in the Sawtooth Valley. The west side borders the Sawtooth Wilderness. Access is from State Highway 75 and the Pettit Lake, Yellow Belly, and Mays Creek Roads.

The terrain is dominated by prominent glacial lateral moraines and portions of end moraines. Pettit and Yellow Belly Lakes are morainal lakes adjacent to the roadless area. The only other lake in the area is McDonald Lake, about a half mile west of Yellow Belly Lake. Soils are deep and well developed. The soil surface is very cobbly, as is the soil profile. Elevations range from 7,000 feet on the valley floor to 7,900 feet at the Wilderness boundary. Vegetation is predominantly dense lodgepole pine. A few small park-like openings occur.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity is moderate. The construction and maintenance of 6 miles of trail are man-made developments in the area. The Mays Creek Road, a two-track road that is still visible, is within the area. There is also some evidence of past timber cutting activity. However, the area appears natural to the visitor upon leaving the trailhead, lakeshore, or road. The area includes 2.1 miles of classified road.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for primitive recreation are low. Opportunities for solitude are moderate, but the range of opportunities is low. There are few areas more than a mile from existing roads. The fact that the area abuts the Sawtooth Wilderness adds to the solitude, however. Motorized boat use on Pettit Lake influences solitude, because users are aware of the boat sights and sounds. The vegetative screening and topographic screening by the moraines provide some solitude.

Special Features: Scenic features within the area include views of the Sawtooth peaks, Yellow Belly Lake, and Pettit Lake. Pettit Lake Creek (0.1 mile) and Yellowbelly Lake Creek (0.8 mile) are eligible for designation as Wild and Scenic Rivers. Special management corridors (a total of 428 acres) will be established to protect their outstandingly remarkable values.

Manageability and Boundaries: Although low development intrusions exist, the boundaries would be quite manageable. The boundary generally follows roads, lakeshores, and the existing wilderness boundary. If this area were not adjacent to the Sawtooth Wilderness, its small size would not meet wilderness criteria.

Since the area is in the Sawtooth NRA, management options for development are limited. Management direction for the NRA is to preserve and protect the natural, scenic, and fish and wildlife values of the area, and enhance their associated recreational values.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Fishing, backpacking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and camping are the typical activities pursued by those traversing the area. Little use occurs within the area other than on the trails or along the lakeshore. Fishing opportunities are good. Some of the trails receive heavy use by people accessing the Sawtooth Wilderness. The dense stands of lodgepole pine present a scenic foreground view to the towering Sawtooth Range. Enjoying scenery is a recreational pursuit occurring both within and outside the area. The Pettit Lake Trail and the Pettit Lake Cutoff Trail are the two major access trails to the Sawtooth Wilderness. The area contains four developed trails totaling 13 miles, all of which are closed to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	21%	0%
Roaded Modified	79%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	0%	100%

Fisheries: Fish species present include chinook salmon, steelhead trout, bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout. Use by spring and summer chinook salmon and steelhead may occur in Mays Creek and Yellow Belly Creek, tributaries to Alturas Lake Creek and the Salmon River. Bull trout occur as both resident populations and as adults moving up streams from the Salmon River to spawn. Chinook salmon and steelhead travel approximately 900 miles from the mouth of the Columbia River to spawn in these waters. Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Wildlife: Gray wolves are known to inhabit the roadless area and are an experimental/non-essential population in this area. The area provides habitat for threatened Canada lynx (1,997 acres, 64 percent of the IRA), bald eagle (192 acres, 6 percent), northern goshawk (5 acres, <1 percent), boreal owl (487 acres, 16 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (492 acres, 16 percent), and great gray owl (15 acres, <1 percent). Habitat is thought to be present for wolverine and spotted bat. Habitat for Townsend's big-eared bat, flammulated owl, and spotted frog is unknown. Wolverine and flammulated owl have been sighted in the area. The area contains deer and elk summer range. Due to the dense timber, there are few openings to provide summer forage.

Water: The main streams within the area are portions of Mays Creek, and the creeks draining to Yellow Belly and Pettit Lakes. This area contributes water to the Salmon River system. The watershed condition is excellent and water quality is good. This water provides for aquatic habitat, irrigation, hydropower, and other important uses off the Forest. Approximately 1,600 acres are considered as producing high-quality water.

Range: No livestock are grazed within the area because of the dense timber stands.

Timber: The IRA contains an estimated 17,268 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to about 34,356 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 2,000 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 1,899 acres are considered to have low productivity; 130 acres, moderate productivity; and 0 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence of locatable minerals, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate), mineral materials (sand, gravel, and building stone), oil and gas, and geothermal resources. The area has been Congressionally withdrawn from mineral entry. No recorded mineral activity has occurred within this area.

Heritage: No significant cultural resources have been found, and the potential to find sites is low.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private lands or permitted special uses within the area.

Disturbances: Recent fire occurrence has been rare. Bark beetles continue to kill scattered patches of trees.

Botanical: Idaho douglasia (*Douglasia idahoensis*), and Buxbaum's sedge, Region 4 sensitive species, occur here. There are no inventoried sites of noxious weeds within the IRA. Most of the area is old forest.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: This area adjoins the eastern side of the Sawtooth Wilderness. The Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness is 26 miles to the north. If designated wilderness, the Pettit IRA would become an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness. In combination with the Sawtooth Wilderness, it would attract a nationwide and international clientele. It would serve the nearby metropolitan areas of Missoula, Boise, Twin Falls and Salt Lake City, as well as the local smaller communities, including nearby Stanley, Sun Valley, Ketchum, and Challis.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wildernesses.

Public Interest: There has been high public interest in adding this area to the Sawtooth Wilderness. Two public comments favoring designation were received in response to the DEIS. It was recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Moderate
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 2,000 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 17,268 MBF or 34,356 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, this IRA has low potential for minerals or energy development, and the Sawtooth NRA has already been withdrawn from mineral entry. There are no motorized trail uses in this area.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. Two concerned individuals or organizations specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation. There has been high past public interest in adding this area to the Sawtooth Wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	3,099	0
Potential low levels of development	0	3,099	3,099	3,099	0	0	3,099
Available for full range of development	3,099	0	0	0	3,099	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	1,837	1,837	1,837	0	1,837	0	1,837
Total	1,837	1,837	1,837	0	1,837	0	1,837

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Pettit IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Pioneer Mountains
Roadless Area No. 06921 and 0414921
288,930 Acres
(169,371 Salmon-Challis NF Acres, 119,559 Sawtooth NF acres)

DESCRIPTION

More than half of the Pioneer Mountains IRA is within the Lost River Ranger District of the Salmon-Challis NF, while the remainder is on the Ketchum Ranger District of the Sawtooth NF. The Sawtooth is the lead Forest for this roadless area evaluation. The IRA is adjoined by two Bureau of Land Management (BLM) roadless areas, known as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), on the southern boundary of this IRA. The Little Wood River WSA is 4,265 acres, while the Friedman Creek WSA is 9,773 acres (total of 14,038 acres).

The Pioneer Mountains IRA is located 20 miles southwest of Mackay, Idaho and 5 miles east of Ketchum, Idaho, in Custer and Blaine Counties. It extends for 38 miles in a northwest to southeast direction. It is bounded generally by the Wood River Valley on the southeast, the Trail Creek Road on the northwest, the East Fork Big Lost River on the northeast, and the National Forest boundary to the south. Primary access is by way of State Highway 75 in the Wood River Valley, the Trail Creek Road, the East Fork Big Lost River Road, the Antelope Creek Road, the Muldoon Creek Road, and the Little Wood River Road.

The mountainous terrain varies from alpine basins, flats and benches, to steep, rocky walls topped by mountain peaks. Glacial cirques with vertical relief of 3,000 to 4,000 feet are found at the base of many peaks. The Pioneer Range is the second highest in Idaho, with Hyndman Peak the highest point at 12,009 feet. The lower elevations of the area are near 6,000 feet. There are gentle, rolling hills in the eastern portion of the area. There are numerous lakes and streams.

Vegetation at the lower elevations consists of Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, and aspen scattered within a sage-grass community. Spruce and wet sedge meadows occur in parts of the eastern portion of the roadless area. At higher elevations, vegetation changes to subalpine forest and then to alpine meadows under the barren mountain summits.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Natural integrity and appearance are rated very high in the central high peaks area, and high to moderate in the rest of the area. The large size, variation of topography, quality of the scenery, and visual screening enhance the natural integrity. There are, however, some localized impacts from past roading and mining activities, and livestock grazing facilities. The Big Lost River portion contains three major road intrusions, reducing the distance from roads to less than 4 miles in most areas. These road intrusions reduce the natural integrity and appearance in those areas, although the topography and visual screening minimize the effects. The area includes 22.3 miles of unclassified roads and 10.7 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are very good in the central high peaks area because of the distance from the boundaries, the rugged terrain, and topographic and vegetative screening. They are good, moderate, or low in the rest of the area. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are reduced in the Big Lost River portion

where the three main roads intrude into the area. Challenging experiences are readily available in the central high peaks area, including technical and non-technical climbing, and cross-country travel opportunities. There are many high peaks, the mountains are precipitous, and many areas are devoid of trails.

Special Features: Hyndman Peak at 12,009 feet is a special feature of the area. There are also many other spectacular high peaks, cirque basins, and mountain lakes. The area in general is very scenic. Pioneer Cabin is a well-known historic feature. On the Big Wood River side, segments of North Fork Hyndman Creek (4.6 miles), Muldoon Creek (2.3 miles), and Box Canyon Creek (3.4 miles) are eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. Special management corridors (an estimated 3,571 acres) will be established to protect their outstandingly remarkable values. The Iron Bog Research Natural Area occurs within the roadless area. One special interest limber pine area also occurs here.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundary as presently inventoried would be difficult to manage. Because of the size of the area, a boundary could be established that would enhance manageability and form logical boundaries, although an acreage reduction would result. Boundaries on the west side would be more easily established because there are fewer intrusions. Boundaries could be modified to exclude the areas rated good or better for locatable minerals, and most of the areas rated moderate. The fact that most of the area is currently open to motorized and mechanized uses would complicate manageability. Heli-skiing is currently available in some areas. There are seven parcels of non-Forest land within the boundary on the Big Lost River side of the area and one on the Big Wood River side, which would complicate manageability.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: The current recreation use and potential of the area is tied to dispersed forms such as hunting, back packing, mountain climbing, cross-country hiking, mountain biking, off-road vehicle (ORV) use, trail riding, fishing, cross-country skiing, helicopter skiing, and snowmobiling. The area is currently not heavily used. Fishing opportunities are good in some areas. The developed trail system consists of 40 trails totaling 181 miles, 40 miles of which are open to motorized travel. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	5%	0%
Roaded Modified	11%	2%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	38%	93%
Semi-Primitive Non-motorized	40%	1%
Primitive	6%	4%

Fisheries: Fish species present in the Wood River drainages include Wood River sculpin, rainbow trout, brook trout, and westslope cutthroat trout (in mountain lakes). The Region 4 sensitive species, Wood River sculpin, occurs in the Big and Little Wood River drainages.

The Big Lost River fishery is primarily a hatchery rainbow population. Some natural rainbow production occurs, however this is supplemented throughout the summer with catchable hatchery trout. Brook trout, mountain whitefish, and shorthead sculpin are also found in the streams. Whirling disease, which affects

natural reproduction, is prevalent in the Big Lost River and its tributaries. The mountain lakes in this area support a variety of fish. There are no threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species in this drainage.

Wildlife: Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. The IRA provides habitat for threatened Canada lynx (16,056 acres 13 percent of the IRA). The Region 4 sensitive species, wolverine is known to be present. The area provides habitat for northern goshawk (7,707 acres, 6 percent), flammulated owl (69 acres, <1 percent), boreal owl (2,857 acres, 2 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (8,480 acres, 7 percent), great gray owl (12 acres, <1 percent), and fisher (2,773 acres, 2 percent). Habitat is uncertain for Townsend's big-eared bat, likely for spotted bat, and unknown for spotted frog. The area supports big game such as mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, and mountain goats. The higher elevations contain historic bighorn sheep range, and sheep are occasionally sighted. Blue grouse are common, along with spruce grouse and various species of songbirds. Black bear and cougar are present. .

Water: The area contains numerous mountain lakes, and large and small streams that drain into the Big Lost River, Big Wood River, and Little Wood River drainages. Water quality varies from good to poor across the area, the best occurring in high cirque basins. The water from this area provides for aquatic habitat, irrigation, hydropower, and other important uses off the Forest.

Range: This area contains portions or all of six cattle and 19 sheep allotments. They are managed under deferred rotation systems. Most of the cattle allotments on the Big Lost River side have been intensively developed with numerous fences, water developments and past vegetative treatments. Portions of the cattle allotments on the Big Wood River side have been developed with fencing and water developments. There are 42,247 acres of land that are classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 62,951 acres capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The area contains 348,175 thousand board feet (MBF) of standing timber volume, equivalent to about 658,469 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 35,400 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. About 12,846 acres are considered to have low productivity; 34,657 acres, moderate productivity; and 721 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: This roadless area has a long history of mineral exploration and mining. There are numerous mining claims and some operating mines. Approximately three quarters of the area is rated moderate or better in locatable mineral potential. There was heavy exploration for locatable minerals in the 1980s, but most of that activity has ended. There is no known potential for energy-producing minerals.

Heritage: The area contains a number of old buildings associated with mining, and the remains of a few old trapper cabins. Pioneer Cabin is a well-known historic building.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are eight parcels of private land scattered across the area. They are mainly associated with patented mining claims, and the acreage involved is small. Special-use permits have been issued within the area for 11 outfitter and guides. Services include snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking, trail rides, mountain biking, wagon rides, hunting, fishing, llama packing, technical mountain climbing, photography, and heli-skiing.

Disturbances: The incidence of man-caused and lightning caused fires has been light, with four wildfires totaling 393 acres since 1960. Prescribed burning and sagebrush spraying has occurred on portions of the sagebrush community. The effects of these treatments are still visible. Timber stands have sustained infestations of spruce budworm, tussock moth, and mountain pine beetle. Dwarf mistletoe infection is widespread.

Botanical: There are no known threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive species present. Proposed sensitive plants, Mt. Shasta sedge (*Carex stramineiformis*), wedge-leaf saxifrage (*Saxifraga adscendens oregonensis*), and nodding saxifrage (*Saxifraga cernua*), are known to exist here, while park milkvetch (*Astragalus leptaleus*) and petalless campion (*Silene uralensis montana*) may possibly be present. The Iron Bog Research Natural Area occurs within the IRA. One special interest limber pine area occurs here. This is an area of high botanical diversity. Noxious weeds have not been a serious problem. There are some occurrences of Canada thistle and spotted knapweed (5 acres). Stands and pockets of old forest occur throughout the IRA.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Sawtooth Wilderness, about 32 miles to the northwest. The Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness is about 50 miles to the north. A Pioneers Mountains Wilderness would attract a nation-wide and international clientele. It would serve the nearby metropolitan areas of Missoula, Boise, Twin Falls and Salt Lake City. It would also serve the smaller nearby communities including Challis, Stanley, Ketchum, Sun Valley, Hailey, and Bellevue.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wildernesses.

Public Interest: There has been high public interest in designating at least a portion of this area as wilderness. Nine public comments favoring designation were received in response to the DEIS. The area was recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	High
Opportunity for Solitude	High
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	High
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 35,400 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 348,175 MBF or 658,469 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. This IRA moderate

to high potential for locatable minerals development, but low potential for energy development. Substantial patterns of use by mountain bikes, motorized OHV, helicopter skiing, and snowmobiles would be foregone if this area were to be designated as wilderness.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. Concerned individuals or organizations specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation. There has been high public interest in designating at least a portion of this area as wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	112,485	112,485	112,485	171,072	51,513	112,485	112,485
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	58,587	0
Potential low levels of development	125,384	134,121	128,959	117,858	143,357	117,858	155,453
Available for full range of development	51,061	42,324	47,486	0	94,060	0	20,992

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	8,377	0	0	0	9,885	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	4,859	14,079	16,409	0	21,129	0	16,409
Total	13,236	14,079	16,409	0	31,014	0	16,409

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	L	L	M	N	M	N	M

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative recommends an estimated 51 percent of the Sawtooth portion and an estimated 30 percent of the Salmon-Challis NF portion (or an accumulative 39 percent) of the Pioneer Mountains IRA for wilderness designation. The Iron Bogs RNA would also retain its undeveloped character. The remainder of the IRA would be available for development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Raft River
Roadless Area No. 0414001
23,999 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Raft River IRA is located about 42 air miles southeast of Burley, Idaho in Box Elder County, Utah. The primary accesses are: south from Interstate 84 on Idaho State Highways 81 and 77 to Almo, Idaho and county roads to Yost, Utah; and west from Interstate 84 near Snowville, Utah on Utah State Highway 30 to Rosette, Utah. The IRA is located in the Raft River Division of the Minidoka Ranger District.

The geography and terrain of the area consists of deep canyons with gentle ridges and plateaus between. The geology consists primarily of precambrian age quartzites and overlying limestones and sandstones. Soils range from moderately erodible in the western portion to highly erodible in the eastern portion. Elevations range from 6,000 feet at the northwest corner to 9,601 feet on George Peak. The area contains numerous patches and pockets of Engelmann spruce, Douglas-fir, and subalpine fir timber, with some areas of pinyon pine and aspen. Much of the area is in grass-sage types, mountain brush, and mountain mahogany.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is moderate to high because of the lack of ground-disturbing management practices. The natural appearance is moderate due to non-system roads created by Forest users. The area includes 34.3 miles of unclassified and 6.7 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are low because of the area's relatively small size and views of high levels of development outside the area from many locations within. Many highways are visible in the valleys below. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also low due to the lack of diversity and a lack of opportunities for challenging experiences.

Special Features: There are no significant special features in the IRA.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundaries on the north, south, and east sides are quite manageable, following the Forest boundary, roads, and ridges. The boundary on the west side would be difficult to manage, as it cuts across ridges and drainages for much of the way. There is little opportunity to adjust the boundary on the west side to improve it. Adjacent roads would make it difficult to keep motorized uses out of the area.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use in the area is moderate to low. The major recreation uses are big-game hunting, game bird hunting and snowmobiling. Fishing opportunities are poor because of the small size of the fish and limited public access. The trail system consists of one trail that is 4 miles long; however, it has been abandoned due to the loss of access through private lands. Motorized use on the perimeter is generally confined to designated routes and occurs primarily during the mule deer and bird hunting seasons. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Modified	41%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	59%	100%

Fisheries: Johnson, George, and Charleston Creeks support Yellowstone cutthroat trout. Their populations are considered to be strong. Some streams also contain rainbow trout and brook trout. No known threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. The area is good summer range for mule deer and elk. Deer winter range occurs in the southwest corner of the area. There is good habitat for other common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, and coyote. The area provides an important connection for mule deer between winter and summer ranges.

Water: The area includes much of the drainages of Wildcat, Johnson, Charleston, Clear, Pine, and Black Hills Creeks, and portions of Dove Creek. The water from this area is an important source of irrigation water for surrounding farms and ranches. Water quality is fair during low flow periods and poor during high flows, primarily as a result of the erodible soils.

Range: This entire area is allocated to livestock grazing. It contains portions of four cattle allotments managed in rest and deferred rotation systems. There is a moderate amount of livestock fencing and water developments. There are 10,691 acres of land (44 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing. No acreage is identified as capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 47,264 thousand board feet, equivalent to 88,084 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 3,900 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberland. About 878 acres are considered to have low productivity; 3,026 acres, moderate productivity; and no acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: The area has a moderate potential for the occurrence of locatable minerals, specifically tungsten, zinc, lead, gold, and silver. There is a moderate potential for the occurrence and development of locatable uncommon variety building stone locally referred to as "Oakley stone." There is low potential for the occurrence and development of leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate) and for geothermal resources. The IRA is prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: There are a moderate number of cultural sites near springs and some historic mining sites. It is likely that more prehistoric cultural sites could be found near springs.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no special uses in this area. There is no private land within the roadless area boundary. A number of parcels adjoin the boundary.

Disturbances: This area has had numerous small fires. Less than 30 acres have burned since 1960. Douglas-fir bark beetles have killed much of the Douglas-fir. Flooding in the winter of 1983 and 1984 has impacted Johnson Creek.

Botanical: The Region 4 sensitive plant, Cottam cinquefoil (*Potentilla cottamii*) occurs within this area. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of Canada thistle (13.9 acres) have been identified within the IRA. This area contains good quantities of old forest scattered throughout.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah, about 80 air miles to the southeast. The Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada is about 85 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is an estimated 155 air miles to the north. A Raft River Wilderness would serve primarily the large population centers of the Salt Lake and Ogden areas in Utah. It would also serve the Pocatello, Burley, and Twin Falls areas in Idaho, and many small local communities in nearby portions of Utah and Idaho.

Biological: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no interest by the public in making this area wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included this area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY**Capability Summary:**

Apparent Naturalness	Moderate
Opportunity for Solitude	Low
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	None

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 3,900 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 47,264 MBF or 88,084 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. This IRA has moderate potential for locatable minerals development, but low potential for other minerals and energy development. While there are no trails currently being utilized to any degree for mountain bike/motorized OHV use, potential use opportunities would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. Very little public interest has been expressed for wilderness designation of the area.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	23,999	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	14,366	0	0	23,999
Available for full range of development	23,999	23,999	23,999	9,632	23,999	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	3,286	500	0	0	3,286	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	2,820	3,340	3,340	0	0	3,340
Total	3,286	3,321	3,340	3,340	3,286	0	3,340

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	M	M	M	M	M	N	M

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Raft River IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the IRA would be available for low levels of development. Before any action is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the IRA, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

Railroad Ridge
Roadless Area Nos. 0414922 and 0413922
50,818 Acres
(42,905 Sawtooth NF Acres, 7,913 Salmon-Challis NF Acres)

DESCRIPTION

The majority of this roadless area is within the Sawtooth NRA of the Sawtooth National Forest. The remainder is within the Lost River Ranger District of the Salmon-Challis Forest. The Sawtooth is the lead Forest for the roadless area evaluation. This area is located 20 miles due east of Stanley, just south of Clayton, and 20 miles southwest of Challis in Custer County. The IRA is bounded on the west by the Slate Creek Road. The southern boundary is 150 feet from the Jim Creek and Big Boulder Creek Roads. The National Forest boundary (both Sawtooth and Salmon-Challis) forms the north and east boundaries. Primary access is by way of State Highway 75, Slate Creek Road, and East Fork Salmon River Road.

This area has a variety of land types. The south end consists of weakly and moderately dissected glaciated lands. Railroad Ridge, with a high elevation at 9,600 feet, is a remnant of a glacial moraine from the Nebraskan Ice Age. The north and east ends of the IRA consist of the Challis Mountain land type with Challis Volcanic flows forming the mountains. The area is moderately to strongly dissected, forming canyons with colorful outcroppings of rock and many areas of boulder fields and rock slides. The lowest elevation is at 6,000 feet along the Salmon River. Soils are shallow and moderately erodible, with low to moderate fertility. Water quality is good but many drainages or segments suffer from excessive fine sediment.

The vegetation in the higher elevation area to the south is characteristic of an alpine zone. Vegetation over the rest of the area is primarily a mixture of whitebark pine, Douglas-fir, sagebrush, and grass.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: Numerous range improvements are present, including water developments and fences, but they are not major detractions to the natural beauty of the area. Sagebrush and grass prescribed burning has occurred on the east side. Grazing is quite intensive. A number of old mining roads and four-wheel drive roads are present on the western side of the area. The trail up French Creek was formerly a road. A small electronic site has been constructed near Potaman Peak just inside the roadless area boundary, where two small buildings and a tower exist. The visibility of these developments and roads reduces the natural integrity to moderate. The broken topography and the fact that most four-wheel drive roads were not constructed, leads to a moderate apparent naturalness rating. The area includes 9.3 miles of unclassified and 13.0 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: A high degree of solitude occurs due to the topographic screening and difficulty of access, although vegetative screening is minimal. Distance to the core from the perimeter rarely exceeds 3 miles, but one should be able to feel secluded and alone. The dissected and broken topography makes this area appear larger than it is. There are opportunities for primitive recreation. Other than hiking and some limited camping, there are few summer activities, or opportunities for challenge.

Special Features: Railroad Ridge has scenic and scientific values due to its unique plant communities and geology. Whitebark pine stands occur here with trees up to 1,100 years old. These trees are free of white pine blister rust, which has infested most areas of the West. An estimated 18 acres will be established as a special management corridor to protect the outstandingly remarkable values of the adjacent Salmon River, which is eligible for designation as a Wild and Scenic River.

Manageability and Boundaries: That portion of the roadless area within the Sawtooth NRA is managed to protect and preserve the natural, scenic, historic, pastoral, and fish and wildlife values, and enhance their associated recreational values

The east and most of the north boundaries follow the Sawtooth NRA and Challis National Forest boundaries. These boundaries could be located on the ground, but do not follow terrain features, and cut across numerous ridges and drainages. The west boundary is Slate Creek and Silver Rule Creek. The southern boundary is on Big Boulder Creek Road and would be a manageable boundary. Historic and current patterns of motorized use would present some difficulty in enforcing a non-motorized use policy. Access to the east portion of the boundary is limited by a lack of access through private land.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use is relatively low. Summer use consists of hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, motorized cycle riding, and four-wheel drive vehicle use. Fall hunting accounts for a majority of the use. Fishing opportunities are moderate. This area is valued for the primitive recreation opportunity it provides. The absence of lakes and well-maintained trails ensures that use levels are low, solitude is readily available. Wildlife viewing opportunities are outstanding. The area contains six system trails totaling about 40 miles, of which 17 miles are open to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	8%	5%
Roaded Modified	25%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	10%	85%
Semi-Primitive Non-motorized	57%	10%

Fisheries: Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout are threatened fish species found in several creeks that drain from into the Salmon River. Sockeye salmon, an endangered species, travel up the Salmon River, which adjoins this roadless area. Habitat for westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout is also found in the area. Salmon and steelhead travel approximately 900 miles from the mouth of the Columbia River to spawn in these waters. Rainbow trout and brook trout inhabit Big Lake Creek and French Creek. Sullivan Lake does not contain fish because of winterkill.

Wildlife: Gray wolves, an endangered species whose population in this area is considered experimental and non-essential, are known to use this and adjoining areas. Habitat exists for Canada lynx, a threatened species, (12,033 acres, 28 percent of the IRA), bald eagle (14 acres, <1 percent), fisher (447 acres, 1 percent), northern goshawk (2,783 acres, 6 percent), boreal owl (11,405 acres, 3 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (3,796 acres, 9 percent), and great gray owl (184 acres, <1 percent). Habitat for

Townsend's big-eared and spotted bats, flammulated owl, and spotted frog is unknown. Big-game animals are common and include elk, mule deer, mountain goat, antelope, bighorn sheep, black bear, and cougar. The eastern portion contains big-game winter range. This roadless area connects habitat within it, and on all sides, for both wildlife and fish.

Water: Big Lake Creek, French Creek, Big Boulder Creek, and Slate Creek are the four major drainages. Sullivan Lake is within the area, and Jimmy Smith Lake is on the boundary. Landslides formed both lake bodies. This area contributes relatively small amounts of water to the Salmon River and the East Fork Salmon River. This water contributes to downstream uses such as aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower. Water quality is good but many drainages or segments suffer from excessive fine sediment. Past grazing practices and spring floods have caused some watershed problems in the Mill Creek drainage. Improved grazing practices and a watershed improvement project have been implemented to reduce sediment and excessive rates of runoff.

Range: This area contains portions or all of two cattle grazing allotments managed in a rest rotation system. The entire roadless area is allocated to livestock grazing. There are a large number of grazing facilities in the eastern portion of the area, consisting primarily of fences and water developments. There are 4,623 acres of land (9 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing. No acreage is identified as capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 180,136 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to about 354,247 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 26,000 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 8,922 acres are considered to have low timber productivity; and 23,620 acres, moderate productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence and development of leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate) and oil and gas resources. There is also low potential for the development of mineral materials (sand, gravel, and building stone) and geothermal resources. There is a high potential for the occurrence of locatable minerals (lead, zinc, and silver), but a low potential for development due to the lack of geologic information to verify reserves and the present cost to develop a mine in a remote location. The Sawtooth NRA is Congressionally withdrawn from mineral entry. Claims that pre-date the creation of the Sawtooth NRA exist in and adjacent to this area.

Heritage: There are only a few known cultural sites, and the potential to locate others is low.

Land Ownership and Special Uses: One 640 acre section of state land, used for grazing purposes, occurs within the IRA. There are no permitted special uses within the roadless area.

Disturbances: Fire activity has been low. Mountain pine beetles are currently attacking small pockets of whitebark pine and lodgepole pine. Douglas-fir beetles are also active. High intensity thunderstorms and spring floods often impact many drainages. Landslides are rare but they also cause some damage.

Botanical: The Region 4 sensitive plant White Cloud milkvetch (*Astragalus vexilliflexus nubilus*), and the proposed sensitive plant, Challis milkvetch (*Astragalus amblytropis*), occur here. Noxious weeds include a small population of Dalmatian toadflax near Livingston Mill in Big Boulder Creek and a population of yellow toadflax (15 acres) in Mill Creek. Scattered pockets and slopes of old forest occur across the area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Sawtooth Wilderness, which is 13 miles across the Sawtooth Valley at the closest point. The FC-RONR Wilderness is 16 miles to the north. A Railroad Ridge Wilderness would attract a national and international clientele. It would serve the nearby metropolitan areas of Missoula, Boise, Twin Falls and Salt Lake City, as well as the local smaller communities, including nearby Stanley, Sun Valley, Ketchum, and Challis.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wildernesses.

Public Interest: There has been moderate public interest in making this area wilderness. Two public comments favoring designation were received in response to the DEIS. The area was recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY**Capability Summary:**

Apparent Naturalness	Moderate
Opportunity for Solitude	High
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 26,000 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 180,136 MBF 354,247 CCF would be foregone. The Sawtooth NRA has already been withdrawn from mineral entry, so future development opportunities are limited. A limited amount of motorized/mechanized vehicle activity, primarily during hunting season, would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. There has been moderate public interest in making this area wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	42,905	0
Potential low levels of development	42,248	50,818	50,818	50,818	19,865	7,913	50,818
Available for full range of development	8,570	0	0	0	30,953	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	3,594	3,594	16,009	0	16,009	0	0
Total	3,594	3,594	16,009	0	16,009	0	0

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1 B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	M	M	H	N	H	N	N

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Railroad Ridge IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Smoky Mountains
Roadless Area No. 0414914 and 0402914
347,098 Acres
(304,159 Sawtooth NF Acres, 42,938 Boise NF Acres)**

DESCRIPTION

The Smoky Mountains IRA is located in Camas, Elmore, and Blaine Counties in south central Idaho, extending along a north-south axis for about 20 miles. The area is about 45 miles wide. The center of this area is about 25 miles north of Fairfield, Idaho. The eastern border is about 2 miles west of Ketchum, Idaho, and the western border is approximately 50 miles east of Boise, Idaho. This area includes portions of the Fairfield and Ketchum Ranger Districts and the Sawtooth NRA of the Sawtooth National Forest, and the Mountain Home Ranger District of the Boise National Forest. The IRA can be accessed from the south by the Ketchum-Featherville Road, from the northeast by State Highway 75, from the northwest by the Middle Fork Boise/Yuba River Road, from the west by the James Creek Road, and from numerous side roads off of these main ones.

This area contains the headwaters of the South Fork Boise River on the west, the Big Wood River on the east, and the Salmon River on the north. Water is relatively abundant throughout the area with many springs, perennial streams, and a small number of high mountain lakes. Topography is broken with numerous steep slopes and talus rock slides. Elevations range from 5,000 to 10,174 feet. The western and central portions are characterized by glaciated granitic peaks, valleys and slopes. Rocky cirques, U-shaped valleys, and scoured side slopes are also common.

Vegetation is characteristic of the subalpine plant community. Scattered stringers of Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, and lodgepole pine interspersed with occasional Engelmann spruce and whitebark pine exist throughout most of the area. The lower elevations in the western portion of the area contain moderate to dense timber stands. Ponderosa pine stands occur along the lower portions of the South Fork Boise River. Aspen is scattered throughout the Smoky Mountains at low to moderate elevations. Non-forested vegetation is characterized by the sagebrush-grass-sedge plant community in the dryer areas. Open sagebrush-grass communities dominate the south and westerly aspects, while moderate to dense stands of Douglas-fir and subalpine fir grow on north and easterly aspects at higher elevations.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of this area is largely intact. The high scenic qualities that are found in many parts of the area contribute to a high level of natural appearance, although evidence of roads does exist. The area includes 5.7 miles of unclassified and 20.4 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are very high because of the roadless area's large size and varied topography. A significant portion of this roadless area exceeds 5 miles from the nearest road. Numerous opportunities for primitive recreation exist. There are many opportunities for challenging experiences due to the long distances on trails and the rugged topography. Visual intrusions include developments on Bald Mountain, of the Sun Valley Ski Area, which are visible from many high locations within the eastern portion of the roadless area.

Special Features: Spectacular scenery is found throughout the area. Bluff Creek Canyon is spectacular and scenic. Blue Clay Creek contains large areas of blue clay-like formations. There are also large areas of barren granite badland-like areas. Castle Creek contains large castle-like spires. A large band of mineralized granite dissects Warm Springs Creek. It is a distinctive geologic feature known as the Rooks Creek Stock of the Idaho Batholith. The area also contains many high glacial cirque basins and high-elevation alpine lakes. Segments of Alpine Creek (0.9 mile), Alturas Lake Creek (7.5 miles), Beaver Creek (0.9 mile), Big Wood River (1.1 miles), Elk Creek (2.6 miles), the Salmon River (4.1 miles), and the South Fork (3.0 mile) and Middle Fork (0.2 mile) Boise River are eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. Special management corridors (an estimated 9,248 acres) will be established to protect their outstandingly remarkable values.

Significant cultural resources associated with early day mining and travel can be found throughout the area. These occur especially around Vienna and Carriestown historical sites, between Rocky Bar and Atlanta, in Placer Creek, West Fork Warm Springs Creek, Rooks Creek, and Beaver Creek. There are also other old buildings and corrals within the area.

Manageability and Boundaries: The boundary, as inventoried, would be difficult to manage because of the many road intrusions and adjacency to numerous roads and timber sale areas. Numerous boundaries could be established that would improve overall wilderness qualities; however, an acreage reduction would occur. The fact that most of the area is currently open to motorized and mechanized uses would complicate manageability. Heli-skiing is currently available in many areas. Several small parcels of private land within the boundary would complicate management or require boundary adjustments to exclude them.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Hiking, mountain biking, motorized trail biking, fishing, big-game hunting, mountain climbing, and horseback riding are the primary summer uses. Snowmobiling, backcountry skiing, and helicopter skiing are the predominant winter activities. Approximately two-thirds of the use is motorized. There are 70 system trails within the roadless area comprising an estimated 380 miles of trail. About 270 of these miles of trail are open for motorized use. Important put-and-take fisheries occur in Baker Creek and Warm Springs Creek. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	8%	1%
Roaded Modified	10%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	53%	93%
Semi-Primitive Non-motorized	29%	3%
Primitive	0%	3%

Fisheries: Steelhead, sockeye, and chinook, all listed under the ESA, are present in the Salmon River drainages. The Salmon and Boise River watersheds within this area are occupied bull trout habitat. This roadless area is a stronghold for bull trout. The Wood River sculpin, a Region 4 sensitive species, occurs in the Big Wood River watershed. Sawtooth Valley has kokanee salmon in a number of streams. Brook trout, rainbow trout, westslope cutthroat trout, whitefish, and mountain suckers are common in streams throughout the area. Golden trout can be found in Baker Lake. Kokanee salmon migrate up the South Fork Boise River, which adjoins the roadless area.

The Middle Fork Boise River also flows on the northwestern boundary of the unit. The area has an important subpopulation of bull trout in the Yuba River and tributaries. A small isolated subpopulation is also found in Elk Creek on the southwest corner of the area. Both Elk Creek and Yuba River are priority bull trout watersheds. The Yuba population is connected to nodal habitat in the Middle Fork Boise River, and migration to the lower river area is being restored with the construction of a fish ladder in Kirby Dam. Redband and rainbow trout, and whitefish also inhabit these streams.

Wildlife: Major big-game species include elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lion. Moose are seen occasionally. The area provides habitat for a small population of mountain goats, which can be found in high, isolated areas year-round. Suspected wolverine denning sites are also located within the area. It also provides a large, important area of connectivity with adjoining areas for many wildlife species. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. Their presence has been confirmed within the roadless area

Habitat exists for threatened Canada (146,983 acres, 42 percent of the IRA), fisher (7,205 acres, 2 percent), bald eagle (1,943 acres, 1 percent), northern goshawk (28,045 acres, 8 percent), white-headed woodpecker (1,316 acres), flammulated owl (1,766 acres, 1 percent), boreal owl (12,301 acres, 4 percent), northern three-toed woodpecker (31,391 acres, 9 percent), and great gray owl (2,486 acres, 1 percent).

Habitat for Region 4 sensitive species including wolverine, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, and spotted frog may also occur within the IRA. Black bear, cougar, and bobcat are present. Prairie falcons also nest within the area.

Water: Portions of the Big Smoky Creek, Warm Springs Creek, Baker Creek, and Yuba River drainages, and drainages of tributaries to the Salmon River lie within the IRA. The South Fork Boise River bisects a portion of the area. The IRA contains approximately 30 high-elevation lakes. Water from this area is used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation. Approximately 200 acres are considered to have high water quality.

Range: There is one vacant allotment covering about 3 percent of the roadless area, two cattle allotments covering about 3 percent of the area, and 15 sheep allotments covering about 94 percent of the area. There is a low level of structural grazing improvements within the roadless area boundary. Most allotments are managed under deferred rotation systems. Several are under rest rotation systems. There are active sheep trails used to access sheep allotments within the area. There are 732 acres of land (less than 1 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 44,914 acres (13 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 1,596,783 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to about 3,030,182 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 177,300 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 67,677 acres are considered to have low productivity; 150,679 acres, moderate productivity; and 10,189 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There are about 70 registered mining claims and no energy leases. Several mining claims are active. The only withdrawal is the Sawtooth NRA portion of the roadless area. It has been withdrawn from mineral entry but some valid claims still exist from before the establishment of the Sawtooth NRA. Approximately 100,000 acres are rated with a moderate or better potential for locatable minerals, with 40,000 to 50,000 acres rated good or better.

Heritage: Several cultural resources associated with early day mining and travel can be found throughout the area. These occur especially around Vienna, Carriatown, and Spanishtown historical sites, between Rocky Bar and Atlanta, in Placer Creek, West Fork Warm Springs Creek, Rooks Creek, and Beaver Creek. The area is part of the South Boise Historic Mining District. There are also other old buildings and corrals within the area.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are a few tracts of private land scattered throughout the area. They are mainly associated with patented mining claims, and the acreage involved is small. Thirteen special-use permits have been issued for uses within the IRA. They include one helicopter skiing operation, one yurt camping operation, and others conducting hunting, fishing, trail horse rides, lama hiking, mountain biking operations, and snowmobiling tours.

Disturbances: Recent fire activity has been relatively low. The last significant fire was approximately 800 acres in 1992. Total number of acres burned since 1960 is 2,617. Tussock moths were active in conifer stands in 1994 and 1995 on less than 5 percent of the area. Mountain pine beetles are active in lodgepole pine stands near Alturas Lake and Beaver Creek. Dwarf mistletoe has had significant impacts in the Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine throughout the area. High-intensity thunderstorms and spring run-off scour stream channels and create large debris flows in some drainages periodically. Major avalanches occur periodically in some drainages, which denude sizeable areas of trees and create large debris piles.

Botanical Characteristics: This area is within the geographic range of the threatened plant, Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*), but no individuals of the species have been found in or near the area. Region 4 sensitive plants bugleg goldenweed, (*Haplopappus insecticruris*) and Giant Helleborine (*epipactus gigantea*) occur here. The area contains the upper portions of the unique Vat Creek bogs.

Noxious weed infestations of leafy spurge (1,557 ac.), spotted knapweed (2 ac.), diffuse knapweed, rush skeletonweed, St. Johnswort (1 ac.) and Canada thistle occur in the area, but less than 1 percent of the area is affected. Noxious weed populations are thought to be increasing in the South Fork Boise River drainage. One leafy spurge infestation of approximately 700 acres occurs along the South Fork Boise River near the west end of the area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: A portion of the northwest boundary of this roadless area adjoins the Sawtooth Wilderness. The next nearest designated wilderness is the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness, 37 miles to the north. A Smoky Mountains Wilderness, in combination with the Sawtooth Wilderness, would attract a nationwide and international clientele. Locally, it would serve the metropolitan areas of Boise, Twin Falls, and Salt Lake City, as well as the smaller local communities.

Biological: The M332 Ecoregion (Middle Rocky Mountain Steppe-Coniferous Forest-Alpine Meadow Province) is well represented in existing designated wildernesses.

Public Interest: Moderate public interest for wilderness designation as an addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness has been expressed. Eighteen public comments expressing various opinions were received in response to the DEIS. The area was recommended for wilderness designation in the most recent wilderness bill, HR 488, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	High
Opportunity for Solitude	High
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	High
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 177,300 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 1,684,002 MBF or 3,198,745 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. This IRA has moderate to high potential for locatable minerals development, but low potential for other minerals and energy development. Substantial levels of use by motorized trail cycles; snowmobiles and helicopter skiers would be foregone if the area is designated as wilderness.

Biological and Social Need: The M332 Ecoregion is well represented in existing designated wildernesses. Eighteen concerned individuals or organizations specifically suggested this IRA for wilderness recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	347,098	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	196	0	0	347,098	0
Potential low levels of development	203,115	305,789	279,160	0	111,471	0	341,332
Available for full range of development	143,983	41,309	67,742	0	235,627	0	5,766

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	15,014	579	0	0	51,110	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	49,475	65,385	110,412	0	74,372	0	115,564
Total	64,489	65,964	110,412	0	125,481	0	115,564

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	M	M	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Smoky Mountains IRA for wilderness. Essentially all (98 percent) of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Sublett
Roadless Area No. 0414005
7,125 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Sublett IRA is located 35 air miles east of Burley, Idaho in Cassia County. The primary access is by Interstate 84 and the South and North Hegler Canyon Roads (Forest Roads 564 and 565). The IRA is located in the Sublett Division of the Minidoka Ranger District, between the South and North Hegler Canyon Roads. The topography is gentle in the canyon bottoms with canyon slopes ranging from 15 to 65 percent. The geology is composed of siltstones, limestones and quartzites. Soils are some of the most stable on the Forest. The area contains three springs and one intermittent stream. Elevations range from 5,200 to 7,500 feet. Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine grow on the north and east slopes. South and west slopes are predominantly sagebrush and mountain brush types.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity is moderate to high, and the natural appearance is moderate to high. There has been a low level of management activity in this area. The area includes 1.8 miles of unclassified and 0.8 mile of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are low. It is less than 1.5 miles from the perimeter to the center of the area in most places. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also poor due to the lack of diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: There are no significant special features.

Manageability and Boundaries: Manageability would be difficult due to the small size. Most of the boundaries would follow roads or the National Forest boundary. The southern third is located across slopes and drainages, making a very poor boundary. Moving the boundary would not significantly improve manageability.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation consists of dispersed uses, primarily mule deer hunting and upland bird hunting. Some off-highway vehicle (OHV) use occurs, as well as some winter snowmobiling where it is allowed. There is no developed trail system. Five miles of road are groomed for snowmobile trails in winter. Much of the area is bordered by roads that are open to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	25%	1%
Roaded Modified	1%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	74%	99%

Fisheries: There are no fish present in the IRA.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. One Canada lynx was trapped in this area in recent years; Canada lynx are now listed as a threatened species. No specific acreage has been identified as habitat for Canada lynx. Habitat may be present for sensitive species including Townsend's big-eared bat, northern goshawk, and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse.

The south and west slopes provide feed for mule deer during winter months. The north end of the area is closed to snowmobiling due to key winter range. Summer range along with winter range is provided for the Sublett Division big-game herd. Elk numbers are building on and adjacent to the Sublett Division. This roadless area is becoming more important as summer and winter range for elk. There is habitat for other species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, badger, cougar, bobcat, and coyote. This unroaded area provides an important island of wildlife habitat.

Water: The area is drained to the northwest by North and South Hegler Canyons. Side canyons drain east and west into the two main canyons. This area contributes little water for uses off the Forest. Almost no surface flow leaves the Forest, and its primary contribution is probably to ground water. The little water that is on the IRA is important to wildlife. Water quality is generally good.

Range: This entire area is allocated to livestock grazing. It contains portions or all of two cattle and two sheep allotments. They are managed under rest and deferred rotation systems. There have been few facilities developed for livestock grazing in the past, although some future developments are planned. There are 860 acres of land (12 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 294 acres (less than 1 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 25,806 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to 49,907 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 2,500 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 32 acres are considered to have low productivity; 2,044 acres, moderate productivity; and 464 acres, high productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There is low potential for the occurrence and development of locatable minerals, mineral materials (building stone), and geothermal resources. There is a moderate potential for the occurrence of phosphate, a leasable solid mineral resource. However, due to the limited resource, lack of geologic information to verify the resource, and distance from a processing facility (Pocatello), the development potential is low. The roadless area is prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: Few cultural resources are known to exist, and site density is expected to be moderate to low

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private or state lands within the boundary. There is one permitted outfitter and guide operation in this area.

Disturbances: There has been minimal fire activity in the area since 1960. The recent Douglas-fir bark beetle infestation has caused high mortality.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS species present. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of diffuse and spotted knapweed, musk thistle, whitetop, and Canada thistle have been identified within this roadless area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness is the Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah, approximately 75 air miles to the southeast. The Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada is about 110 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is approximately 130 air miles to the north. A Sublett Wilderness would serve primarily Burley, Twin Falls, Pocatello, and the many small communities in the Magic Valley. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological Representation: This entire IRA is encompassed by the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public support for designation of this area as wilderness. Only one public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness bills have included it.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY**Capability Summary:**

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Moderate
Special Features	Present

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 2,500 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 25,806 MBF or 49,907 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, the IRA has low potential for minerals and energy development. While there are no trails currently being utilized to any degree for motorized or mountain bike use, potential use opportunities would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. There has been little public support for designation of this area as wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	7,125	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	7,125	0
Potential low levels of development	0	2,548	2,548	0	0	0	7,125
Available for full range of development	7,125	4,577	4,57	0	7,125	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	2,176	0	0	0	2,176	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	2,196	2,196	0	0	0	2,196
Total	2,176	2,197	2,196	0	2,176	0	2,196

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	H	H	H	N	H	N	H

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact: 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Sublett IRA for wilderness. Essentially all of the roadless area would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Third Fork Rock Creek
Roadless Area No. 0414009
14,258 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Third Fork Rock Creek Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) is located about 24 miles southeast of Twin Falls, Idaho, in Cassia County. The primary access is by the Rock Creek Highway (County Highway No. G-3) south of Hansen, Idaho. It is located in the Cassia Division of the Minidoka Ranger District.

The area is composed of canyons eroded in volcanic rhyolite flows, with surrounding mountains and bench lands remaining. The soil is moderately erodible. Elevations range from 4,420 feet where Rock Creek leaves the Forest to 7,708 feet at Pike Mountain.

Mixed stands of lodgepole pine, subalpine fir and aspen dominate the higher elevations in the southern portion of the area, along with some open meadows. The lower elevation areas to the north are dominated by sagebrush-grass communities with small stands of other shrubs scattered throughout.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is moderate, due to the heavy livestock grazing and the presence of facilities for grazing. The natural appearance is low with high evidence of impacts from grazing, some primitive roads now being used as trails, and some evidence of past fire-suppression activity. The area includes 3.1 miles of unclassified and 6.0 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are moderate because of the area's narrow shape, short distances from the perimeter, and the effects of highly used adjacent areas. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also moderate due to the lack of diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: There are no significant special features within the IRA.

Manageability and Boundaries: The topographic features would provide a manageable boundary for wilderness.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use in the area is heavy. The major use is off-highway (OHV) vehicle riding. Horseback riding and mountain biking are also popular. Some snowmobile use occurs, primarily in the higher-elevation areas. Fishing opportunities are poor because of the small size of the trout. The Third Fork trail system is the primary OHV system on the Minidoka Ranger District. Construction and maintenance work has been contributed by local trail bike clubs, with much of the construction financed by the State of Idaho OHV funds. Other volunteers, including local horse user clubs, have contributed time to trail construction and maintenance. The Third Fork trail system consists of nine trails totaling

approximately 30 miles, all of which are open to motorized vehicles. Most of the perimeter of this IRA is bordered by roads open to motorized vehicles. The Pike Mountain historic lookout site, and developed interpretive scenic overlook, is on the western edge of the roadless area. It is accessible by all motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Natural	22%	17%
Roaded Modified	18%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	60%	83%

Fisheries: Third Fork contains redband trout, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brown trout in the main creek and its small tributaries. No known threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. Habitat for the northern goshawk, a Region 4 sensitive species, may be present as well as for Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, and flammulated owl. This area is summer range for mule deer. There is habitat for other species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, partridge, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, coyote, badger, and beaver. Elk numbers are slowly building on the Cassia Division, and elk have been seen occasionally in this area. This unroaded area connects low-elevation winter ranges and the higher timbered areas of cover for mule deer and elk.

Since 1986, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game has introduced California bighorn sheep five times in the Big Cottonwood and Dry Creek drainages to the east. Some of these sheep and their offspring have been observed in the northern portion of this IRA. Most of this area is potential habitat for bighorns. Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep were native to the Cassia Division.

Water: This IRA includes most of the drainages of the First Fork, Second Fork, and Third Forks of Rock Creek; Harrington Fork Creek; and slopes that drain directly into the east side of Rock Creek. It contributes approximately half of the water that leaves the Forest in Rock Creek. It is an important contributor to down stream irrigation. Water quality is generally good, with periods of increased sediment load during high flow. Water from this area is used primarily for downstream aquatic habitat, irrigation, and hydropower generation. Production of high quality water from the Forest portion of Rock Creek is important, because water quality between the Forest boundary and the Snake River has been a matter of great concern for many years.

Range: The entire roadless area is allocated to livestock grazing. Most of this area is grazed by sheep. A small portion of the east side is grazed by cattle. These allotments are grazed in a deferred rotation system. There is a small amount of fence and a small number of water developments within these allotments. There are 1,250 acres of land (less than 1 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 9,818 acres (69 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current standing volume of timber is estimated to be 9,284 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to about 18,625 hundred cubic feet (CCF). An estimated 1,600 acres are classified as tentatively suited timberlands. An estimated 1,554 acres are considered to have low productivity.

Minerals and Energy: There has been past interest in mineral resources in this area. Exploratory drilling for low-grade gold resources occurred in the lower Third Fork and Wahlstrom Hollow areas, but it has not proven to be valuable enough to justify further exploration or development. The claims were relinquished after a limited amount of test drilling. There is a moderate potential for development of mineral materials (rhyolite building stone). The roadless area is prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: This entire area was historically used by American Indians. Evidence of use exists throughout the area, consisting primarily of lithic scatters left after tool making. Evidence also demonstrates that fishing occurred in Rock Creek and Third Fork for salmon that historically came into this area from the Pacific Ocean via the Snake River.

Landownership and Special Uses: There are no private or state lands within the IRA. The only special use permitted within this area is one guide who hunts cougars.

Disturbances: Fire has recently played a significant role in this roadless area. A number of timber stands burned in the head of Third Fork in a 1974 wildfire. A large fire in 1987 burned primarily grassland in the Harrington Fork and Lower Third Fork Areas. In 1988, a fire burned timber and grassland in the First Fork drainage. With these and other smaller fires, an estimated 14,000 acres have burned since 1960. The burned timber stands have regenerated to thick stands of lodgepole pine. Most grassland areas have been successfully regenerated to grasses, forbs and shrubs.

The extensive bark beetle epidemic in the 1960s and 1970s killed large numbers of lodgepole pine trees. The 1974 wildfire burned many of these stands within this roadless area. The summer after the 1987 Harrington Fire, a high-intensity thunderstorm caused a large debris flow in the Dry Fork of Harrington Fork, and a number of other small debris flows or gullies in lower Harrington Fork. These have now stabilized.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS plant species present. Some introduced species of grasses and forbs have been seeded in small portions of burned areas after wildfires. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of knapweed and Canada thistle have been identified within this roadless area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, approximately 60 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is an estimated 135 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 125 air miles to the southeast. A Third Fork Rock Creek Wilderness would serve Twin Falls, Burley, and the smaller communities in the Magic Valley. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological Representation: This entire IRA is encompassed by the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public interest in having this roadless area become wilderness. One public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included this area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Low
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	None

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 1,600 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 9,284 MBF or 18,625 CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, the IRA has relatively low potential for minerals and energy development. The very substantial use by motorized trail cycles and snowmobiles would be foregone.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. There has been little or no public support for designation of this area as wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	14,258	0
Potential low levels of development	7,909	0	0	7,633	0	0	7,909
Available for full range of development	6,349	14,258	14,258	6,625	14,258	0	6,349

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	225	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	1,255	1,255	1,255	1,232	0	1,255
Total	225	1,255	1,255	1,255	1,232	0	1,255

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	L	M	M	M	M	N	M

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact; 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Third Fork Rock Creek IRA for wilderness. About 55 percent of the IRA would be available for low levels of development, and 45 percent would be available for a full range of development activities. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the roadless area, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

**Thorobred
Roadless Area No. 0414013
6,076 Acres**

DESCRIPTION

The Thorobred IRA is located about 40 air miles south of Twin Falls, Idaho, in Cassia County. The primary access is from the north via Rock Creek Canyon and Monument Peak, or from the south from Nevada up Piney Creek. It is located in the Cassia Division of the Sawtooth National Forest, on the Minidoka Ranger District. The southern end is on the Forest boundary (the Nevada state line).

Canyons eroded in volcanic rhyolite ash flows comprise most of the area, with surrounding gentle ridges and bench lands. Many large rhyolite bluffs and cliffs occur within the canyons. The soil is fairly stable. The watershed value is moderate, providing water primarily for irrigation off the Forest. Elevations range from 6,000 to 7,000 feet. Most of the area is in grass and sagebrush with small stands of aspen and conifers. Surrounding areas are similar except for an increase in aspen and conifer timber to the north.

CAPABILITY

Natural Integrity and Appearance: The natural integrity of the area is moderate due to the presence of some past and present heavy livestock grazing and the presence of grazing facilities. The natural appearance is moderate with high evidence of impacts from grazing, grazing facilities, and some primitive roads. The area includes 1.4 miles of unclassified and 7.1 miles of classified roads.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive Recreation: Opportunities for solitude are moderate because of the area's small size, the lack of topographic and vegetative screening and the effects of highly used adjacent areas. The IRA is also within a commercial and military flyway. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also moderate due to the lack of diversity and challenging experiences.

Special Features: There are no significant special features within the IRA.

Manageability and Boundaries: The topographic features would provide a manageable boundary for wilderness.

AVAILABILITY

Recreation: Recreation use consists primarily of hunting and off-highway vehicle (OHV) use. Goose Creek provides a marginal opportunity for fishing, since trout numbers are low. There is no opportunity for intensive recreational development. Access consists of constructed and unimproved roads on much of the perimeter, and a few unimproved roads within the area. No developed trail system exists. Much of the perimeter of this roadless area is bordered by roads open to motorized vehicles. Inventoried ROS classes have been determined as follows:

ROS Class	Summer	Winter
Roaded Modified	30%	0%
Semi-Primitive Motorized	70%	100%

Fisheries: Goose Creek and lower Thorobred Creek support Yellowstone cutthroat trout, a native species. Goose Creek contains leatherside chub, a species of concern by the State of Idaho. Leatherside chub is a native species whose numbers have been declining over much of its range; however, their status is unknown. No known threatened, endangered, or Region 4 sensitive fish species are known to exist within the area.

Wildlife: There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species present. Grey wolves are considered an experimental/non-essential population in this area. This area may provide habitat for the northern goshawk, Townsend's big-eared bat, and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse; all Region 4 sensitive species. The area is summer range for mule deer. There is good habitat for other common species of wildlife such as sage grouse, forest grouse, hawks, golden eagle, cougar, bobcat, coyote, badger, and beaver. Elk numbers are slowly building on the Cassia Division, and elk have been seen occasionally in this area. This area connects low-elevation winter ranges and the higher timbered areas of cover for mule deer and elk.

Water: This area includes virtually all of the East and West Forks of Thorobred Creek, and a portion of the Goose Creek drainage. The IRA contributes a small quantity of water to Goose Creek. The water is used for downstream irrigation off the Forest. All of this water that is unused to that point is impounded in the Lower Goose Creek Reservoir and used for irrigation in the Oakley Valley. Water quality is fair during periods of low flow and poor during periods of high flow due to high sediment production and bank damage.

Range: This entire area is allocated to livestock grazing. Most of the area lies within the western unit of the Goose Creek cattle allotment. It is grazed every year in a deferred rotation system, along with four other units and two BLM units. This area contains a moderate amount of fence and a few stock ponds. The small western portion of the IRA that lies west of Goose Creek is within the Little Piney sheep allotment. It is grazed by sheep bands in a rotation with other allotments to the north. The only development is the fence between the sheep and cattle allotments. There are 4,143 acres of land (68 percent of the IRA) classified as capable for cattle grazing, and 86 acres (less than 1 percent) capable for sheep grazing.

Timber: The current estimate of standing volume is 2,099 thousand board feet (MBF), equivalent to about 4,161 hundred cubic feet (CCF). The area includes 400 acres of tentatively suited timber. An estimated 378 acres are considered to have low productivity.

Minerals and Geology: There is low potential for the occurrence and development of locatable minerals, leasable solid minerals (coal and phosphate), mineral materials (building stone), and geothermal resources. The roadless area is prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources but has low development potential at this time.

Heritage: This entire area was historically used by American Indians. Evidence of use exists throughout the area, consisting primarily of lithic scatters left after tool making.

Landowners hip and Special Uses: There are no state or private lands within the IRA. The only special use permitted within this area is one guide who hunts cougars.

Disturbances: This area has a past history of significant fire activity. Since 1960, the area has seen wildfire affecting an estimated 5,766 acres.

Botanical: There are no known TEPCS plant species present. Noxious weeds have been increasing on Forest and non-Forest lands in this area. However, only small populations of Canada thistle have been identified within this roadless area.

NEED

Proximity to Designated Wildernesses and Population Centers: The nearest designated wilderness area is the Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada, approximately 50 air miles to the southwest. The Sawtooth Wilderness is approximately 125 air miles to the north. The Mt. Naomi Wilderness in Utah is about 160 air miles to the southeast. A Thorobred Wilderness would serve primarily Twin Falls, Burley, and the smaller communities in the Magic Valley. It would also serve the larger population centers in the Boise and Salt Lake City areas.

Biological Representation: This entire IRA lies within the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas.

Public Interest: There has been little or no public interest in having this roadless area become wilderness. Only one public comment favoring designation was received in response to the DEIS. No Congressional wilderness proposals have included this area.

WILDERNESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

Capability Summary:

Apparent Naturalness	Moderate
Opportunity for Solitude	Moderate
Opportunities for Challenge and Adventure	Low
Special Features	None

Determination of Availability or Unavailability: The IRA does not meet any of the criteria listed in FSH 1909.12.7.22a. Therefore, the IRA is available for wilderness designation.

Values Foregone With Wilderness Designation: The economic values associated with 400 acres of tentatively suited timberlands containing 2,099 MBF or 4,161CCF would be foregone. Values from future mineral development would likely be foregone, although rights to valid existing claims might be retained. However, the IRA has low potential for minerals and energy development. There are no system trails in the IRA; however, some Off-Highway use of vehicles would be foregone if the area is designated as wilderness.

Biological and Social Need: This entire IRA is in the Intermountain Semi-desert Province (342), which is minimally represented in existing wilderness areas. There has been little or no public support for designation of this area as wilderness.

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IRA Disposition by Alternative: The following table displays IRA disposition for each alternative in acres rounded off to the nearest hundred. These values represent the potential, long-term outcomes of managing the IRA based solely upon its MPC assignments.

IRA Management Disposition	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Recommended Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintain undeveloped character	0	0	0	0	0	6,076	0
Potential low levels of development	0	0	0	6,076	0	0	6,076
Available for full range of development	6,076	6,076	6,076	0	6,076	0	0

Potential Future Development: Potential future development is represented by combinations of management emphasis/direction (MPCs), and existing conditions that are likely to become priority areas for development activities over the course of the next two or three decades. The development activities chosen for this estimation are timber harvest, vegetation restoration, and fuel reduction. Development potential is expressed in acres in the table below.

Potential Development	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
Timber activities	300	300	300	0	300	0	0
Restoration/fuel reduction activities	0	0	0	300	0	0	300
Total	300	300	300	300	300	0	300

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics: The following table displays the effects on wilderness characteristics for each alternative. The effects on wilderness characteristics are based on the estimation of potential future development.

Effects on Wilderness Characteristics	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
	L	L	L	L	L	N	L

N = No change; slight change or less than 1 percent of the area potentially affected.

L = Light impact: 1-5 percent of the area potentially affected.

M = Moderate impact; 5-20 percent of the area potentially affected.

H = High impact; greater than 20 percent of the area potentially affected.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative does not recommend any portion of the Thorobred IRA for wilderness. All of the IRA would be available for low levels of development. Before any activity is approved that would have a significant impact on the undeveloped character of the IRA, it would be preceded by an environmental analysis following NEPA procedures and public involvement.

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