



File Code: 1950

Date: August 23, 2010

Dear Interested Public:

The outfitter and guide special use permits for the Lower White Salmon River and the Lower Klickitat River will be expiring at the end of this year. These permits cover the Wild and Scenic portions of the two rivers. The Forest Service plans to reissue the existing permits and also manage a pool of use days for temporary permits.

Background

Under the 1986 Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, the lower portions of each river were designated Wild and Scenic as defined by the 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Through public processes, environmental impact statements and management plans were developed for each river. The 1991 Lower White Salmon River Management Plan specifically addresses outfitter and guide permits, and limits the number of permits to ten. While the 1991 Lower Klickitat River Management Plan does not establish a limit on the permits, it does state that commercial recreational use should be managed in manner consistent with Forest Service policy. In addition to management plans, the Forest Service has specific policy objectives for managing outfitter and guide use to provide for public health and safety, support small business, facilitate participation of youth and educational groups and provide forest visitors high-quality recreation services in a manner that protects resources.

In 2008, the Forest Service developed new policies for outfitter and guide permits. These policies included the creation of a temporary (6 month or less) permit. The new policy made few changes to the 10-year priority permits, although the new 10-year permits now require a quota or allocation be placed on the permitted activity. The development of a temporary permit system was a response to public support for a system that would allow for groups to provide short-term outfitter and guide service. For example, a temporary user could include educational institutions, youth groups, outdoor programs and nonprofit outfitters who only provide the occasional trip.

Locations

The White Salmon River is located south of Trout Lake in Klickitat County, Washington. The portion of the Lower White Salmon River that is under Forest Service jurisdiction begins just north of BZ Falls, and ends downstream at Buck Creek, just north of Northwestern Lake.

The Klickitat River Wild and Scenic River section includes a 12 mile stretch of the lower river that starts near Pitt and ends at the Columbia River in Klickitat County, Washington.



Proposed Action

White Salmon River - The Forest Service proposes to reissue the existing eight special use permits for whitewater boating and the one permit for fishing. The Forest Service would like to reserve the 10th permit to serve as a pool of use days for temporary use permits.

Table 1: White Salmon River Permit Allocation – Number of Clients per Year

	Maximum Use Year between 2005 - 2009	Permit Allocation: Max. year plus 15%
Company 1	7,826	9,000
Company 2	7,544	8,676
Company 3	4,362	5,016
Company 4	2,191	2,520
Company 5	1,443	1,659
Company 6	1,040	1,196
Company 7 *	619	712
Company 8	612	704
Company 9	445	512
Company 10	72	83
TOTAL	26,154	30,077

* *Company 7 would be converted to the pool of use for temporary permits.*

Klickitat River – The Forest Service proposes to reissue the existing six permits (three kayaking and three fishing) and to create a temporary pool of use to meet the new policy created to accommodate temporary user groups.

Table 2: Klickitat River Permit Allocation – Number of Clients per Year

	Maximum Use Year between 2005 - 2009	Permit Allocation: Max. year plus 15%
Company 1	315	362
Company 2	236	271
Company 3	229	263
Company 4	117	135
Company 5	18	21
Company 6	6	7

On both rivers, each permit will have a limit placed on the annual number of clients served in order to meet the Forest Service outfitter guide policies issued in 2008. This will be the first time use limits have been placed on these permits. The allocation for the permits would be based on each company's annual peak use between 2005 and 2009, plus an additional 15-percent. The 15-percent is intended to accommodate potential business growth and recognize that the recent economic situation has hindered growth for some companies. Under the terms of the new 10-year permit, the allocated use will be re-evaluated during the 5th year of the 10-year permit. If the use allocated at the beginning of the permit term is not being fully utilized, the allocation may be decreased to reflect actual use.

The Forest Service recognizes the future conditions within the Lower White Salmon Wild and Scenic River may change significantly when Condit dam is removed. If the environment or conditions change significantly a new review of the permits will be undertaken.

Why Are Comments Important?

Your comments can help bring awareness to possible issues with this proposal. Site-specific comments are the most helpful. For example, simply stating that you are opposed to issuing a permits outfitter guide services is not as helpful as identifying specific issues related to the proposed action.

The Forest Service comment period will end **September 23rd, 2010**. Comments with the subject heading "River Permits" can be emailed to: comments-pacificnorthwest-columbia-river-gorge-nsa@fs.fed.us. Written comments may also be mailed to Jennifer Wade at: 902 Wasco, Suite 200, Hood River, OR 97031. For more information, Jennifer can be reached at jenniferwade@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

/s/ Daniel T. Harkenrider
DANIEL T. HARKENRIDER
Area Manager

Vicinity Map

