

**Draft Nez Perce–Clearwater National Forest  
Forest Plan Assessment**

**16.0 Roadless Areas**

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## 16. ROADLESS AREAS

### 16.1 INTRODUCTION

This section includes information about roadless areas as identified in the Idaho Roadless Rule (Rule) (36 CFR 294) for the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests. Guidance for adhering to and modifying the Idaho Roadless Rule is found in the Rule and the *Roadless Area Conservation National Forest System Lands in Idaho Final Environmental Impact Statement* (Forest Service 2008).

#### 16.1.1 Existing Information

The Idaho Roadless Rule defines area boundaries and management themes for identified roadless areas on National Forests throughout Idaho. The following documents provided guidance regarding the Idaho Roadless Rule:

- Draft Clearwater National Forest Proposed Land Management Plan (Forest Service 2007)
- Summary of Final Changes to Management Themes on the Clearwater National Forest (Dickerson 2008)
- Summary of Final Changes to Management Themes on the Nez Perce National Forest (Dickerson 2008)
- Roadless Area Conservation National Forest System Lands in Idaho, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Volumes 1 and 2. (Forest Service 2008)

#### 16.1.2 Informing the Assessment

For the roadless resource, the best available science was used to inform the Assessment.

The Idaho Roadless Rule was passed after the 1987 Forest Plans for both Forests; thus, the roadless area boundaries in the Rule differ from the 1987 Forest Plan boundaries. The Idaho Roadless Rule boundaries more closely resemble the analysis boundaries for roadless from the 2007 Forest Plan revision effort.

In 2008, the Idaho Roadless Rule established management direction for roadless areas in Idaho. The Rule designates 250 Idaho Roadless Areas (IRAs) and establishes 5 management themes that provide prohibitions with exceptions or conditioned permissions governing road construction, timber cutting, and discretionary mineral development. The themes include Wild Land Recreation (WLR), Primitive (Prim), Backcountry/Restoration (BCR), General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland (GFRG), Special Areas of Historic and Tribal Significance (SAHTS), and Forest Plan Special Areas (FPSA).

The Idaho Roadless Rule identifies the relation of the Rule to land management plans as follows:

*The provisions set forth in this subpart shall take precedence over any inconsistent land management plan component. Land management plan components that are not inconsistent with this subpart will continue to provide guidance for projects and activities within Idaho Roadless Areas; as shall those related to protection of threatened and endangered species. This subpart does not compel the amendment or revision of any land management plan. (36 CFR 294.28d)*

Based on the Rule, the Nez Perce–Clearwater National Forests Plan should be revised to provide consistent management direction with the Idaho Roadless Rule. The Regional Forester has

established direction in FSM 1920 regarding how to consider the Rule during the revision process (FSM-R1-1920-2012-1)<sup>1</sup>. In addition, the Rule should be corrected to change the lands identified as eligible wild and scenic river corridors to Forest Plan Special Areas (see discussion below).

### **16.1.3 Current Conditions**

Roadless areas on the Forest conform with and are managed according to the boundaries and themes defined in the Idaho Roadless Rule.

## **16.2 IDAHO ROADLESS AREAS**

Idaho Roadless Areas were based on the most current inventory of roadless lands. For the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests the lands were based on an inventory completed in 2005 in preparation of Forest Plan revision (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, p. 68). Table 1 displays the differences between the acres found in the Existing Plan inventory (Forest Service 1987a,b) and the updated inventory used in the Idaho Roadless Rule (Forest Service 2008, Volume 2, Appendix A).

Based on the updated inventory, the Idaho Roadless Rule designated approximately 497,000 acres in 19 roadless areas as Idaho Roadless Areas on the Nez Perce National Forest and 984,400 acres in 16 roadless areas on the Clearwater National Forest (36 CFR 294.29)

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<sup>1</sup> The Idaho Roadless Rule FEIS identified an inconsistency between the existing Clearwater Forest Plan and the Idaho Rule where the existing plan prohibits road construction, but the rule permits it (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, p. 69). The Rule generally has additional prohibitions or conditioned permissions than the existing plans.

**Table 1. Idaho Roadless Areas Compared with the Existing Plan inventoried Roadless Areas on the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests**

New roadless name	2007 (acres)	Forest plan (acres)	Difference (acres)	Reason <sup>a</sup>
<b>Nez Perce National Forest</b>				
Clear Creek	9,170	12,080	-2,910	M
Dixie Summit—Nut Hill	12,955	12,224	731	M
East Meadow Creek	96,820	96,696	124	M
Gospel Hump	46,335	52,590	-6,255	M
John Day	10,295	14,892	-4,597	M
Lick Point	6,876	7,891	-1,015	M
Little Slate Creek	12,243	20,509	-8,266	D <sup>b</sup>
Little Slate Creek North	5,927	0	5,927	D <sup>b</sup>
Mallard	19,617	22,864	-3,247	M
West Fork Crooked River	9,500	0	9,500	U
North Fork Slate Creek	10,427	12,783	-2,356	M
O'Hara—Falls Creek	33,244	25,345	7,899	M, S
Rackliff—Gedney	53,588	54,600	-1,012	M
Rapid River	20,966	18,186	2,780	U, S
Salmon Face	9,165	9,578	-413	M
Silver Creek—Pilot Knob	21,000	22,320	-1,320	M
West Meadow Creek	115,949	109,041	6,908	M, U
Middle Fork Face	0	10,405	-10,405	D <sup>c</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>494,077</b>	<b>502,004</b>	<b>-7,927</b>	—

New roadless name	2007 (acres)	Forest plan (acres)	Difference (acres)	Reason <sup>a</sup>
<b>Clearwater National Forest</b>				
Bighorn—Weitas	254,846	253,963	883	M
Eldorado Creek	6,813	6,740	73	G
Hoodoo	153,869	150,644	3,225	M
Lochsa Face	75,934	74,697	1,237	M
Lolo Creek	68	69	-1	G
Mallard—Larkins	126,312	137,347	-11,035	M
Meadow Creek—Upper North Fork	43,220	46,438	-3,218	M
Moose Mountain	22,018	21,011	1,007	U
North Fork Spruce—White Sand	35,806	34,259	1,547	U
North Lochsa Slope	117,663	115,435	2,228	M
Pot Mountain	51,052	51,425	-373	M
Rackliff—Gedney	36,355	35,804	551	M
Rawhide	6,030	5,830	200	U
Siwash	8,987	9,460	-473	M
Sneakfoot Meadows	23,298	22,819	479	M
Weir—Post Office Creek	22,070	22,347	-277	M
<b>Total</b>	<b>984,341</b>	<b>988,288</b>	<b>-3,947</b>	<b>—</b>

<sup>a</sup> U = additional unroaded acres adjacent to an inventoried roadless area; D = development, including road construction, timber harvest, mining or other developments reducing roadless characteristics; M = used when there are multiple reasons; G = change caused by improved mapping technology or a boundary moved to a manageable location on the landscape; S = forest plan special area

<sup>b</sup> This area was split from Little Slate Creek.

<sup>c</sup> This area was removed from the inventory during the Forest Plan Revision process as a consequence of development.

### 16.3 CLASSIFICATIONS WITHIN IDAHO ROADLESS AREAS ON THE NEZ PERCE AND CLEARWATER NATIONAL FORESTS

Tables 2 and 3 provide a list of the IRAs on the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forest and their classifications.

**Table 2. Nez Perce National Forest; Idaho Roadless Areas; Acres by Classification**

Roadless Area	Number	Acres	Wild Land Recreation	Primitive	Backcountry/ Restoration	General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland	Special Areas of Historic and Tribal Significance	Forest Plan Special Areas
Clear Creek	844	9,200	—	—	9,200	—	—	—
Dixie Summit—Nut Hill	235	13,000	—	—	12,000	—	—	1,000
East Meadow Creek	845	96,800	—	96,300	—	—	—	500
Gospel Hump	921	46,300	—	—	46,300	—	—	—
Gospel Hump Adjacent to Wilderness	—	2,400	—	—	2,400	—	—	—
John Day	825	10,300	—	—	10,300	—	—	—
Lick Point	227	6,900	—	—	6,900	—	—	—
Little Slate Creek	851	12,200	—	—	12,200	—	—	—
Little Slate Creek North	856	5,900	—	—	4,700	—	—	1,200
Mallard	847	19,600	—	—	19,600	—	—	—
North Fork Slate Creek	850	10,400	—	—	10,400	—	—	—
O'Hara—Falls Creek	226	33,200	—	—	23,800	—	—	9,400
Rackcliff-Gedney	841	53,600	—	—	51,900	—	—	1,700
Rapid River	922	21,000	16,700	—	—	—	—	4,300
Salmon Face	855	9,200	—	—	9,200	—	—	—
Selway Bitterroot	—	600	—	600	—	—	—	—
Silver Creek—Pilot Knob	849	21,000	—	—	—	—	21,000	—
West Fork Crooked River	—	9,500	—	—	9,500	—	—	—
West Fork Meadow Creek	845	115,900	—	—	115,600	—	—	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>497,000</b>	<b>16,700</b>	<b>96,600</b>	<b>344,000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>21,000</b>	<b>18,400</b>

**Table 3. Clearwater National Forest; Idaho Roadless Areas; Acres by Classification**

Roadless Area	Number	Acres	Wild Land Recreation	Primitive	Backcountry/ Restoration	General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland	Special Areas of Historic and Tribal Significance	Forest Plan Special Areas
Bighorn—Weitas	306	254,800	—	—	246,400	—	8,000	400
Eldorado Creek	312	6,800	—	—	5,500	—	1,300	—
Hoodoo	301	153,900	151,900	—	—	—	2,000	—
Lochsa Face	311	76,000	—	27,400	40,400	—	100	8,100
Lolo Creek	805	100	—	—	100	—	—	—
Mallard—Larkins	300	126,300	59,100	31,600	35,600	—	—	—
Meadow Creek—Upper North Fork	302	43,200	—	42,800	400	—	—	—
Moose Mountain	305	22,000	—	14,000	8,000	—	—	—
North Fork Spruce White Sands	309	35,800	9,500	5,800	20,500	—	—	—
North Lochsa Slope	307	117,700	—	82,500	15,100	—	14,300	5,800
Pot Mountain	304	51,100	—	—	50,900	—	—	200
Rackcliff—Gedney	841	36,400	—	—	32,500	—	—	3,900
Rawhide	313	6,000	—	5,100	900	—	—	—
Siwash	303	9,000	—	—	9,000	—	—	—
Sneakfoot Meadows	314	23,300	9,600	6,500	5,200	—	—	2,000
Weir—Post Office Creek	308	22,000	—	—	19,600	—	1,900	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>984,400</b>	<b>230,100</b>	<b>215,700</b>	<b>490,100</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>27,600</b>	<b>20,900</b>

### 16.3.1 *Wild Land Recreation*

Lands in the WLR classification generally exhibit outstanding roadless characteristics. Generally, these are the same areas recommended as wilderness in the existing plans. Road construction; road reconstruction; and timber cutting, sale, or removal is generally prohibited (36 CFR 294.23(a), 294.24(a), and 294.25(c)).

On the Nez Perce National Forest, only the Rapid River IRA was classified as WLR (16,700 acres). This area was not recommended as wilderness in the existing Forest Plan (Forest Service 1987b). This area was changed from Prim to WLR classification between the draft and final EIS for the Idaho Roadless Rule because of the very high quality of the roadless area and tribal interests (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, p. 50; Dickerson 2008).

On the Clearwater National Forest, about 230,100 acres were classified as WLR in portions of four roadless areas. The Clearwater Forest Plan Management Area (MA) B2 includes lands recommended as wilderness. Table 4 displays the acres classified as WLR and the acres of recommended wilderness in the existing Forest Plan (Forest Service 1987a).

**Table 4. Comparison of Wild Land Recreation (WLR) and Recommended Wilderness (1987 Forest Plans)**

<b>Idaho Roadless Area</b>	<b>WLR (acres)</b>	<b>Recommended Wilderness (acres)</b>
Hoodoo	151,900	111,300
Mallard Larkins	59,100	65,800
North Fork White Sands	9,500	9,500
Sneakfoot Meadows	9,600	9,600

In the Hoodoo IRA, the Idaho Roadless Rule classifies 151,900 acres as WLR; the existing Forest Plan only recommended 111,300 acres as Wilderness. However, the 2007 draft Forest Plan proposed additional acres to be added as recommended wilderness in the Great Burn (Forest Service 2007, pp. 2-53 and 2008, Volume 1, p. 354). The final Rule reflects the areas recommended for wilderness in the 2007 draft Forest Plan for the Clearwater National Forest.

In the Mallard Larkins IRA, the proposed Idaho Roadless Rule placed 6,400 acres that were recommended as Wilderness in the 1987 Forest Plan into a BCR theme based on comment from the County Commissioners. The final Idaho Roadless Rule reclassified these lands as Prim (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, p. 354; Dickerson 2008). The Idaho Roadless Rule FEIS evaluated the potential effect of reducing protections on these acres in this Mallard Larkins IRA (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, pp. 355–356 and Volume 3, pp. C3-139 through C3-143).

In the North Fork White Sands and Sneakfoot Meadows IRAs the same areas recommended as Wilderness were classified as WLR (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, p. 354).

### 16.3.2 *Primitive*

The Prim theme prohibits road construction and road reconstruction unless associated with other rights (36 CFR §294.23(a)). It also prohibits timber cutting, sale, or removal except in three limited situations and for personal or administrative use (36 CFR §294.24(b)).

On the Nez Perce National Forest, about 16,700 acres in the East Meadow Creek and Selway Bitterroot IRAs are classified as Prim (Table 2). On the Clearwater National Forest, about

215,700 acres are classified as Prim in 8 separate IRAs (Table 3). This total reflects the change between the draft and final EIS for the Idaho Roadless Rule where approximately 148,700 acres were changed from BCR to Prim in 5 IRAs: Mallard Larkins, Meadow Creek Upper North Fork, Moose Mountain, North Lochsa Slope, and Rawhide (Dickerson 2008).

### **16.3.3 Special Areas of Historic and Tribal Significance**

The SAHTS classification has the same prohibitions and exceptions as Prim; however, these lands were classified as SAHTS because of their important tribal and historic characteristics.

Two areas are classified as SAHTS in the Idaho Roadless Rule: Pilot Knob and the Nimiipuu and Lewis and Clark Historic Trails. Pilot Knob is located on the Nez Perce National Forest in the Silver Creek–Pilot Knob IRA. The entire 21,000 acre IRA was classified as a SAHTS because of its historic and prehistoric cultural resource and concerns from the Nez Perce Tribe over its management (Forest Service 2008, Volume 3, pp. 3–320).

The Nimiipuu and Lewis and Clark National Historic Trails are located in the Bighorn–Weitas #306, Eldorado Creek #312, Hoodoo #301, North Lochsa Slope #307, and Weir-Post Office Creek #308 IRAs on the Clearwater National Forest. These trails were classified as SAHTS to recognize their cultural and historic importance (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, p. 46).

### **16.3.4 Backcountry/Restoration**

The BCR theme permits road construction; road reconstruction; and timber cutting, sale, or removal under certain situations (36 CFR 294.23(b), 294.24(c), and 294.25(d)). In particular, the Rule permits temporary road construction and timber cutting to reduce hazardous fuels within a community protection zone (CPZ) (36 CFR 294.23(b)(2) and 294.24(c)(i)). The CPZ generally includes those lands within 1.5 miles of a community. About 344,000 acres on the Nez Perce National Forest are classified as BCR of which about 34,400 acres (10%) were identified as potentially meeting CPZ criteria (Forest Service 2008, Volume 1, pp. 54, 93, 129). On the Clearwater National Forest approximately 490,100 acres are classified as BCR, of which 1,800 acres (<1%) were identified as potentially meeting the CPZ criteria (Forest Service 2008, Volume 2, pp. E-20 and E-29).

### **16.3.5 General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland**

Lands classified as GFRG would be managed in accordance with the Forest Plan. The Idaho Roadless Rule did not classify any lands on the Nez Perce or Clearwater National Forest as GFRG.

### **16.3.6 Forest Plan Special Areas**

FPSA are to be managed in accordance with the Forest Plan (36 CFR 294.28(f)). On the Nez Perce National Forest, these areas includes about 9,300 acres of research natural areas (RNAs) and 9,100 acres in designated Wild and Scenic River Corridors.

On the Clearwater National Forest, these areas include about 4,000 acres in RNAs and 16,000 acres in designated Wild and Scenic River Corridors (Forest Service 2008, Volume 2, pp. Q-1 and Q-2).

The Idaho Roadless Rule generally classified all designated and eligible Wild and Scenic River Corridors as FPSA. However, on the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests, only designated

Wild and Scenic Rivers were classified as FPSA. Based on these designations there is a need to change to the Idaho Roadless Rule to reclassify eligible rivers as FPSAs.

#### 16.3.6.1 Trends and Drivers

Social and political interest in IRAs, specifically where they may or may not be recommended for Wilderness areas, is the primary driver for interests to either increase or decrease the amount of roadless areas managed on the National Forests.

#### 16.3.6.2 Resource Specific Information

A need may exist to align Forest Plan roadless area boundaries with Idaho Roadless Rule boundaries and verify management themes if any of these areas have been managed differently or are proposed to be managed differently than the 2008 themes applied in the Idaho Roadless Rule.

A capability assessment was conducted for all roadless areas in the 1987 Forest Plans. These assessments were updated for the 2007 Forest Plan revision effort. It is necessary to review and validate all roadless area capability assessments and to use these assessments to recommend for wilderness any areas that meet the capability for wilderness and which the Forest chooses to recommend for wilderness as part of the current Forest Plan revision effort.

1987 Capability Analyses are available as hard copy documents.

2006 Capability Analysis (Draft FP revision effort) are available at:  
[www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/index.shtml)

#### 16.3.6.3 Information Needs

None identified at this time.

## Literature Cited

### (Under Development)

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