

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGY	40
2.1 Introduction.....	40
2.1.1 Prospectus	40
2.1.2 Performance Risks.....	41
2.2 Special Areas	42
2.2.1 Eligible Wild, Scenic and Recreation Rivers.....	42
2.2.2 Other Special Areas Designations	42
2.3 Ecosystem Integrity and Sustainability	43
2.3.1 Forest Vegetation.....	43
2.3.2 Grassland and Shrubland Vegetation.....	46
2.3.3 Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat.....	47
2.3.4 Invasive Weeds	49
2.3.5 Soil Productivity.....	50
2.3.6 Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems	50
2.4 Cultural, Social and Economic Conditions	61
2.4.1 Road Management	61
2.4.2 Motorized and Non-Motorized Recreation Uses	61
2.4.3 Developed Recreation Sites.....	62
2.4.4 General Forest Area Recreation.....	62
2.4.5 Recreation Special Uses.....	63
2.4.6 Scenery Resources	64
2.4.7 Heritage Resources	64
2.4.8 Economic Contribution	65
2.4.9 Timber Availability.....	65
2.4.10 Wildland Fire, Fuels and Air Quality	66
2.4.11 Livestock Management.....	67
2.4.12 Minerals	68
2.4.13 Lands	68
2.4.14 Utilities and Communications Sites.....	69
2.4.15 Administrative Facilities	69

2.5 Tribal Treaty Rights and Trust Responsibilities	70
2.6 Suitable Land Uses	72
2.6.1 Riparian Conservation Areas	72
2.6.2 Water Impoundments and Diversions.....	72
2.6.3 Road Management	73
2.6.4 Motorized and Non-Motorized Recreation Uses	73
2.6.5 Timber	74
2.6.6 Livestock Management	75
2.6.7 Minerals	75
2.6.8 Utility Corridors	75
2.7 Geographic Areas	76
2.7.1 Coolwater Geographic Area	77
2.7.2 Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Geographic Area	78
2.7.3 Gospel-Hump Wilderness Geographic Area	79
2.7.4 Lower Salmon East Geographic Area	80
2.7.5 Lower Salmon West Geographic Area	81
2.7.6 Mallard-Jersey Geographic Area.....	82
2.7.7 Meadow Creek Geographic Area	83
2.7.8 Middle Fork Clearwater Geographic Area.....	84
2.7.9 Pilot Knob Geographic Area.....	85
2.7.10 Red River Geographic Area	86
2.7.11 Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Geographic Area	87
2.7.12 Selway Front Geographic Area	88
2.7.13 South Fork Clearwater Geographic Area.....	89

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGY

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 describes the strategic direction that will be employed over the next 10-15 years to achieve desired conditions described in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 includes 3 plan components.

Special Areas – Special areas are those places with unique characteristics. They may be designated administratively, by statute or by a process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable laws. This section includes recommendations for additional special area designations (i.e. wilderness).

Objectives – These statements describe the management activities or actions that are needed to achieve desired conditions. In most instances, they are specific and measurable.

Suitability – An area may be defined as “generally suitable” for uses that are compatible with desired conditions and objectives for that area. Conversely, they may be identified as “generally unsuitable” if they are incompatible with desired conditions and objectives.

The chapter concludes with smaller, place-based **geographic areas**. Geographic areas provide an opportunity to clarify management intent and display it so Forest users can understand what activities are likely to occur in an area.

As in Chapter 1, headings for plan components will be shaded in gray. Additionally, the text of plan components will be in bold type. Tables included within the text of plan components are considered to be part of the plan component.

2.1.1 Prospectus

The prospectus describes the program areas for the Nez Perce National Forest. Each program area may include some or all of the following sections:

Introduction: The introduction is brief statement about the scope and strategy for achieving desired conditions. *This section is intended to provide context. It is not a plan component.*

Performance History: This section describes past management activities and trends. The past history and trends influence how objectives are defined and how the Plan will be implemented for the program area. *This section is intended to provide context. It is not a plan component.*

Program Emphasis: Emphases are identified by program area. These statements represent possible ways to work toward desired conditions and objectives. They are not statements of proposed actions, nor do they preclude alternative approaches. The importance of program emphases may increase or decrease due to changes in conditions. *This section is intended to provide context. It is not a plan component.*

Objectives (Plan Component): Objectives describe the focus of unit management over the next 15 years. Most are measurable and time specific.

Performance Risks: These are factors which may impede implementation of the Plan and prevent the program area from achieving its objectives. General performance risks are identified in the following section. Where there are unique performance risks, they are identified by topic. *This section is intended to provide context. It is not a plan component.*

2.1.2 Performance Risks

Performance risks, or circumstances beyond the Nez Perce National Forest's control, may affect the Forest's attainment of program objectives. Major program risks are described below. **These risks apply to all program areas.**

- **Flat or declining agency budgets**
- **Changes in, or losses of, partnership funding**
- **National or regional initiatives that change Forest priorities**
- **Litigation and resulting case law**
- **New laws or regulations**
- **Changes in designations or regulations in existing laws (e.g. listings of species as “threatened” or “endangered” under the Endangered Species Act)**
- **Changes in resource condition caused by natural processes (e.g. fire, landslides, floods, insects and disease, etc.)**
- **Changes in elected officials or key personnel in tribal, federal, state or local agencies and/or government**
- **Inability to control chance events, climate change, and ecosystem processes (e.g. fire, landslides, floods, insects and disease, etc.)**
- **In some cases, changes to ecosystems may be irreversible and complete restoration is not possible**
- **Desired land management treatment may not be compatible with complex and changing social values**

Additional risks specific to a program area may be described in subsequent write-ups.

2.2 Special Areas

Special Areas (PLAN COMPONENT)

This section recommends special areas. Special areas are places within the National Forest System designated for their unique or special characteristics. Special areas are designated administratively, by statute or by local responsible officials. Statutorily designated areas include those of national importance requiring congressional action such as wilderness and wild and scenic rivers. Administratively designated areas are regionally important requiring Secretary of Interior, Forest Service Chief or Regional Forester approval. Examples of these include research natural areas, scenic byways and experimental forests. Responsible official designated areas include locally important areas such as botanical or geological areas.

Special area designations are not final decisions authorizing projects and activities. Strategic guidance is provided for both existing and recommended special areas within plan components throughout this document.

2.2.1 Eligible Wild, Scenic and Recreation Rivers

The table in section 2.2.1 is a plan component.

Map 2.2.1 Designated and Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers and Potential Classification

Table 2.2.1b Eligible River Segments and Potential Classification

Name River Segment	Classification (miles)			Total (miles)
	Wild	Scenic	Recreation	
Bargamin Creek	21.5			21.5
Johns Creek	19.6			19.6
Lake Creek	9.7		3.9	13.6
Meadow Creek	41		3.2	44.2
Moose Creek Complex	92.9			92.9
Running Creek	16.3			16.3
Salmon Creek			26.2	26.2
Slate Creek	6.4		15.9	22.3
South Fork Clearwater River			62.8	62.8
North/South Forks White Bird Creek			18.3	18.3
West Fork Gedney Creek	13		0.6	13.6
Total	220.4		130.9	351.3

2.2.2 Other Special Areas Designations

There are no other special areas designations recommended. Existing designated areas will be managed according to existing plans.

2.3 Ecosystem Integrity and Sustainability

2.3.1 Forest Vegetation

The vegetation strategy is to manage for desired ranges of species and tree size classes, patch sizes, and within patch forest structural complexity in the proportion, scale and variability commensurate with natural disturbance settings using timber harvest and fire.

Performance History

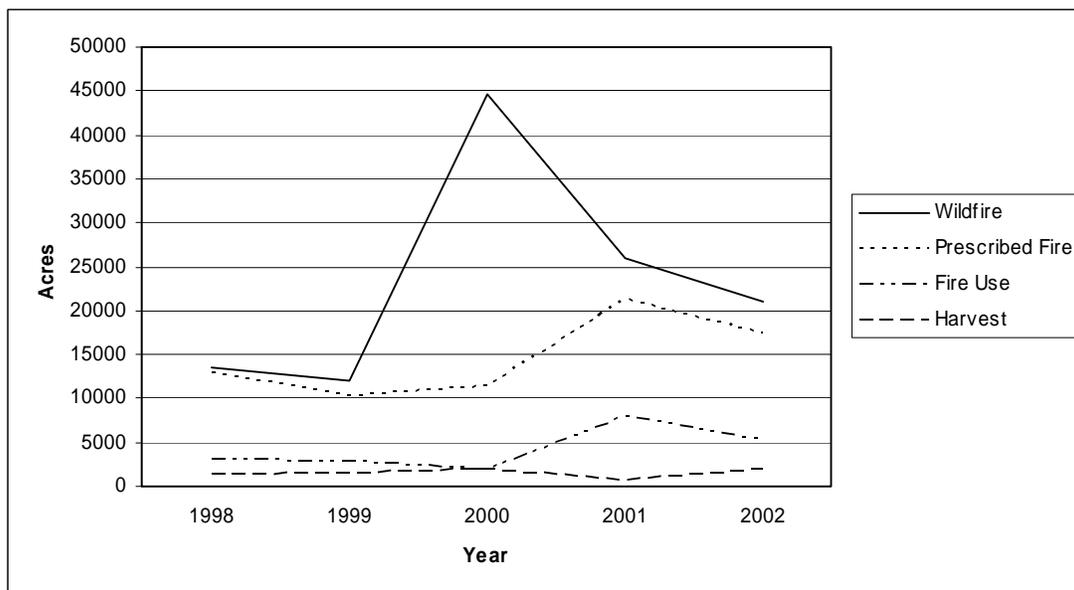
The current vegetation management strategy focuses on conserving or restoring forest composition and structure through fire use, prescribed fire, and harvest. Work has ranged from improving vigor of large, old trees by giving them more growing space, to thinning younger, dense stands with fire or harvest. Reforestation of harvest areas or burned sites emphasized diversity and resistance to both diseases and fire. Current harvest prescriptions are designed to follow natural disturbance patterns for size and forest structure outside of riparian buffer strips. Harvest is often followed with prescribed fire or other treatments that reduce slash loads to desired levels.

Advancing succession and fire suppression have resulted in disproportionate amounts of mid-seral shade-tolerant forest and losses of snag-rich early seral forest and late seral forest dominated by intolerant larch or pine. Mountain pine beetle combined with white pine blister rust has accelerated loss of whitebark pine in the past five years. Western white pine was decimated by blister rust prior to development of the 1987 Forest Plan.

Outside of fire use areas, fire is managed with appropriate suppression strategies. Wildfires have sometimes burned in uncharacteristically severe patterns in dry settings, so that they have killed large, old ponderosa pine trees that historically would have lived through the fire.

Timber harvest, prescribed fire and fire use averages 14,650 acres treated annually over the past 5 years. Including wildfires, that average increases to 23,404 acres annually.

Figure 2.3.1 Vegetation Disturbance History: Nez Perce National Forest (1998-2002)



Program Emphasis

All Breaklands

Existing large, old ponderosa pine should be conserved and the regeneration of additional ponderosa pine encouraged where it has been lost. Ponderosa pine forest structure should be restored to a fire-resistant, resilient condition. Size class distributions should be restored on north aspects. This may be accomplished by reducing large and medium size classes and increasing small size classes and the seral shrub component. Seral grasses and shrubs should be increased on southerly aspects, primarily by reducing tree density and using fire to reinvigorate decadent shrubs and grasses.

Conservation measures could include thinning or underburns on southerly aspects to encourage development of ponderosa pine forests that have large, old trees in single- or two-storied structure. Species to conserve generally include western larch, ponderosa pine, western redcedar and Douglas-fir on appropriate habitat types. Restoration on north aspects should emphasize decreasing grand fir or cedar dominance while increasing shade-intolerant species such as ponderosa pine, western larch and Douglas-fir.

Restoration could include planting or planning for natural regeneration of ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir or western larch where appropriate, and culturing with fire or mechanical methods to encourage development of large trees with single- or two-storied stand structure.

Uplands

Larger patches of seral shrubs and seedling/sapling size class should be restored. Seral species, particularly ponderosa pine and western larch, should also be restored. Grand fir dominance should be reduced. The large and small size classes, as well as seral shrubs, should be increased while the middle size class is decreased.

Conservation could include reducing the number of trees per acre while favoring shade-intolerant species. Species to conserve generally include old ponderosa pine and western larch, in addition to grand fir needed to meet desired conditions.

Oldest forests, particularly very large, very old western redcedar, grand fir, ponderosa pine and western larch, should be conserved.

Subalpine

Restore lodgepole pine killed by mountain pine beetle. Restore whitebark pine killed by mountain pine beetle or white pine blister rust. Restore other seral species, particularly western larch and Douglas-fir. Reduce subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce dominance. Decrease middle size classes and increase small size classes. Develop a range of age classes in large patches in lodgepole pine. Conserve whitebark pine and western larch. Generally, reducing fuel loads in dead lodgepole pine forests will allow more flexibility in developing multiple age classes, and will allow regeneration of other appropriate species.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)**Breaklands**

1. **Within 10 years following Plan approval, vegetation will be treated on about 100,000 acres (13% of the total breaklands acreage) using a combination of prescribed fire, timber harvest and wildland fire use. These treatments will initiate the restoration process. Restoration activities favor ponderosa pine on southerly aspects and Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine and western larch on northerly aspects.**

Uplands

2. **Within 10 years following Plan approval, vegetation will be treated on about 16,000 acres (3% of the total uplands), using a combination of timber harvest, prescribed fire or wildland fire use to restore seral species (ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine and western white pine) and reduce grand fir dominance. These treatments will initiate the restoration process. Restoration includes establishing additional trees of those species; conserving existing large, old trees; or favoring retention of these species in thinning.**

Subalpine

3. **Within 10 years following Plan approval, vegetation will be treated on about 47,000 acres (5% of the subalpine acreage) using a combination of timber harvest, prescribed fire or wildland fire use. These treatments will initiate the restoration process. Restoration activities favor whitebark pine at higher elevations; western larch and Douglas-fir on more moderate sites; or reestablish young lodgepole pine stands. Restoration may also be designed to encourage development of multi-storied stands.**

Performance Risks**Forest-wide**

Weather and climate conditions may not match the required burning prescription requirements often enough to allow this level of treatment.

Wildland fire use opportunities may not be available due to local weather conditions or national wildfire activity.

Wildfire may burn more or less acres than anticipated.

Breaklands

Steep breaklands have inherent slope stability risks which may limit treatment opportunities.

Ponderosa pine stands continue to be at risk to wildfire.

Using timber harvest to remove small size trees may not be economically feasible.

Uplands

Delays in treatment would allow ponderosa pine, western larch, and western white pine populations to slowly decline as surrounding trees compete with and weaken them.

Prescribed fire implementation windows often overlap the wildfire season when risk of fire escape is high.

Subalpine

Lack of a market for dead lodgepole will limit restoration opportunities, leaving an increased wildfire risk for the next 10 to 15 years. Western larch populations would slowly decline as surrounding trees compete with and weaken them. White pine blister rust may limit whitebark pine regeneration. Most whitebark pine is found in wilderness, where active restoration is difficult. Populations of whitebark pine could decline to scattered individuals. Prescribed fire implementation windows often overlap the wildfire season, when risk of fire escape is high.

2.3.2 Grassland and Shrubland Vegetation

The strategy is to manage these vegetation types to restore or conserve native vegetation within natural ranges.

Performance History

Grasslands have expanding invasive weed populations that are reducing the distribution and extent of native grasses and forbs, and affecting soil stability and wildlife population dynamics.

Over the past 5 years, management activities have been focused on the dry breakland grasslands to reduce invasive weed populations and prevent new invasions.

Program Emphasis

The highest priority for weed management should be dry grasslands. (Priorities for weed management are in the Invasive Weeds section 2.3.4). Periodic low-intensity burning of trees that are beginning to dominate could facilitate the development of open, park-like stands.

As invasive weeds are treated, native species should be restored.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years following Plan approval, invasive weeds will be replaced by native grasses and forbs on 1000 acres of the Forest.**
- 2. Within 15 years following Plan approval, vegetation on at least 10,000 acres of south-aspect breaklands will be treated to develop open, park-like stands.**

2.3.3 Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat

This strategy is designed to ensure that terrestrial wildlife habitats and species are recovered and conserved in collaboration with other Forest, tribal, and state resource management strategies.

Performance History

The Nez Perce National Forest has managed wildlife habitat through active vegetation treatments such as timber harvest and prescribed fire, and by managing wildfires as they occur across the Forest. The average annual acres of funded wildlife habitat improvements were approximately 2200 acres during the first planning period. Over the last 5 years, the Forest has continued improving habitat at this approximate level. In addition, a combination of timber harvest, prescribed fire and wildland fire use has averaged 25,829 acres per year of habitat-altering actions for the past 5 years.

The trend is to shift habitats toward desired species composition and size class distribution; minimize adverse impacts to and recover riparian habitats; use disturbance processes to manage habitats; and maintain and restore unique habitats. There are positive trends in restoring dry ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir and whitebark pine habitats, conserving old forest habitats and increasing the representation of western larch.

Program Emphasis

Habitat management should be based on achieving desired conditions for vegetation, invasive weeds and watershed management. Address unique habitat and species needs not covered by broader approaches. Terrestrial wildlife needs should be integrated with other land management strategies during the early development, design and implementation phases of management actions.

Old forest and unique habitats should be conserved; a variety of habitats should be improved and maintained.

Appropriated funding, as well as non-Forest Service funding sources, should be used to maintain or treat habitat so it trends toward desired forest and non-forest vegetative conditions. Locations and priorities will be determined through Forest and project-level analyses.

Management activities should provide ecological conditions that contribute to recovery or conservation of federally-listed species and provide habitat for species of concern and species of interest.

2.3.3.1 Habitat Improvement

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, elk habitat should be improved on at least 10,000 acres annually through timber harvest, prescribed fire or fire use.**

2.3.3.2 Wildlife Security

Performance History

The Nez Perce National Forest has managed terrestrial wildlife security through a combination of seasonal timing restrictions and year-long road closures.

There is a positive trend recognizing the need for providing wildlife security for the most vulnerable species, at the most vulnerable times and in the most important places. There is a positive trend in integrating security needs with other resource management strategies, and in identifying and protecting unique habitats for species with special security needs.

Program Emphasis

Improve wildlife security in the developed areas of the Forest during critical time periods and in critical places. Coordinate travel management to address wildlife security needs, recreation needs and watershed improvement needs. Additional security needs, based on local or special circumstances or situations, are addressed at the project-level.

Projects should identify specific actions needed to provide security when they are not covered by the broader travel management approach. Collaborate with tribal governments and state agencies to identify site-specific needs for wildlife security.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 15 years following Plan approval, wildlife habitat security should be improved in 15 subwatersheds that currently have low or very low security levels.**

Performance Risks

Cooperative habitat improvements with the Tribe, federal and state agencies are dependent on the contribution of monetary and non-monetary resources. Appropriated Forest Service funding may be insufficient to accomplish program objectives. External funding and other support are not guaranteed.

Decisions beyond the control of the Forest could result in the listing of new species as threatened or endangered in spite of the presence of plan components to conserve habitat for all wildlife species.

Conflicts between wildlife security needs, and recreation and other access management needs could affect the Forest's ability to accomplish program objectives.

2.3.4 Invasive Weeds

This strategy is designed to integrate invasive weed management with other Forest resource management strategies. It also complements and supports weed management with state, tribal and county efforts within the Salmon River and Clearwater River Basins and the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Cooperative Weed Management Areas where possible.

Performance History

The Nez Perce National Forest has managed invasive weeds through the development and implementation of the cooperative weed management area programs with the Nez Perce Tribe; county, federal, state agencies; and private groups. An average of 410 acres of invasive weed treatments was accomplished during the first decade. Invasive weed treatments have averaged 1123 acres annually over the last 5 years.

Program Emphasis

Newly-discovered weed invaders should not be allowed to become established and should be eradicated whenever possible; established infestations should be contained or controlled. Representative and resilient native vegetation, or desired non-native vegetation, should be restored in areas infested by invasive weeds.

Weed transportation mechanisms should be managed.

Forest personnel should support the cooperative weed management approach, coordinating with existing partners and forming new partnerships to develop improved detection and treatment tools.

Forest employees, user groups and the public should be educated about the identification of, and risks from, invasive weeds.

During the development and implementation of projects, invasive weed prevention and control should be integrated with other resource considerations.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, 1000 acres of invasive weeds are treated annually.**

Performance Risks

Cooperative weed treatments involving tribal governments; county, federal and state agencies; and private groups are dependent on the contribution of monetary and non-monetary resources. Appropriated Forest Service funding may be insufficient to accomplish program objectives. External funding and other support are not guaranteed.

In spite of the presence of plan components to prevent, eradicate, contain or control weeds on Forest lands, the establishment of new weed species could occur from adjacent private lands.

Changes in existing and new state-designated noxious weeds could occur, requiring subsequent changes to plan components.

2.3.5 Soil Productivity

The strategy is to maintain long term soil productivity through managing soil conditions to support species, communities and processes (including hydrologic functions) within the frequency and scale of natural processes and disturbances.

Performance History

Management of existing landslides and steep slopes to prevent human-caused erosion includes decommissioning of roads and vegetation management designed to maintain tree roots holding soil in place.

Prescriptions for fire management and timber harvest are designed and implemented to keep detrimental soil disturbances within recognized guidelines. Soils detrimentally impacted by past management are restored where technology exists, but prevention of detrimental impacts is the preferred management strategy to maintain soil productivity.

Limited soil restoration has occurred on areas of concentrated soil impacts: landings, skid trails, non-system roads, and mine sites or grazing areas. Treatments planned or implemented include soil decompaction, re-contouring of excavated skid trails and landings, woody material placement and organic amendments.

Program Emphasis

New projects should be designed to maintain soil productivity (physical, chemical, and biological slope stability, soil structure and nutrients). Soil restoration projects should be considered where past disturbances have compacted or displaced soil, where erosion has been accelerated or where activities have negatively affected soil wood regimes or soil biochemistry such that the recovery of native vegetation is retarded or weed establishment facilitated. Roads on landslide-prone lands should be stabilized or removed.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years following Plan approval, landslide prone areas should be stabilized through the rehabilitation or removal of 100 miles of existing roads.**
- 2. Within 10 years following Plan approval, soil will be improved on at least 500 acres.**

Performance Risks

Program priorities may prevent implementation.

2.3.6 Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems

2.3.6.1 Watershed Restoration

Map 2.3.6.1 Highest Priority Subwatersheds Identified for Restoration

This strategy is designed to assure the Nez Perce National Forest improves biological integrity and physical processes in restore-designated subwatersheds. The strategy

represents the compilation and integration of watershed and aquatic program objectives and management emphasis.

Performance History

Water management, habitat protection and instream restoration accomplishments over the past 10 years are described in the accompanying watershed and aquatic ecosystem prospectuses. Current assessments suggest about 45% of the subwatersheds are in need of restoration (Table 2.3.6.1a).

Table 2.3.6.1a Existing Conditions of Aquatic Ecosystem: Number of Subwatersheds By Designation

Subbasin Name	Aquatic Conservation Themes (No. Subwatersheds)	
	Conserve	Restore
Lower and Little Salmon River	2	20
Middle Salmon River	20	3
South Fork Clearwater River	6	20
Upper and Lower Selway River	38	5
Middle Fork Clearwater River	0	4

Program Emphasis

Existing high quality habitats that provide for strong and resilient populations of bull trout, steelhead trout, Chinook salmon, westslope cutthroat trout, redband trout and Pacific lamprey should be maintained. Watersheds and aquatic habitats that have the highest biological diversity and recovery potential should be the first considered for restoration. (Table 2.3.6.1b).

Table 2.3.6.1b Highest Priority Watersheds Identified for Restoration.

Lower and Little Salmon River	Middle Salmon River	South Fork Clearwater River	Upper and Lower Selway River	Middle Fork Clearwater River
Slate Creek	Upper Crooked Creek	Newsome Creek	O'Hara Creek	Clear Creek
White Bird Creek		Crooked River		
		Red River		
		American River		
		Mill, Wall, and Meadow Creeks		

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 75% of identified improvement projects will be completed in 10 restore-designated subwatersheds.**

Performance Risks

The subwatershed restoration objectives are dependent upon accomplishments as displayed in the accompanying watershed and aquatic ecosystem strategy elements. Achievement of “conserve” status may be influenced by natural processes such as landslides, catastrophic fires and floods, increased private lands development, increased recreation and access demands, and mixed or conflicting resource management objectives.

2.3.6.2 Water Quality

This strategy is designed to assure that Nez Perce National Forest management actions contribute to fully supporting existing and designated beneficial uses by providing water of appropriate quality.

Performance History

Approximately 1152 miles of stream¹ within the Nez Perce National Forest have been listed as impaired or not meeting standards by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) Report 2005). Idaho Department of Environmental Quality has determined that those lakes and stream segments do not meet water quality standards for their designated and beneficial uses. Past achievements meant to improve conditions include: (1) riparian plantings to increase streamside shade; (2) erosion control through decommissioning and re-constructing streamside roads; (3) culvert replacement or removal; (4) riparian area fencing; and (5) mining reclamation (see related aquatic strategies).

The state of Idaho has the lead in total maximum daily load development and approval. Total maximum daily load assessments have been completed or are under development and are used as guidance to improve impaired conditions. The Forest Service shares the responsibility for completion of subbasin total maximum daily load implementation plans with land managers and landowners within each of the above-listed subbasins.

Program Emphasis

Work should be focused toward completing actions necessary to improve impaired water bodies. Water body status assessments should be completed in cooperation with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality through water quality assessments, total maximum daily loads, restoration plans, best management practice implementation and monitoring. The state’s antidegradation policy requires that existing beneficial uses be maintained and protected on all water bodies.

Changes in the Forest’s priority list are expected to occur routinely as areas of detrimental disturbance are improved and new projects identified, along with the biannually updated 303(d) /305(b) integrated report.

¹ Officially referred to as assessment units, which includes the full range of surface water categories such as rivers, creeks, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, etc.

The Forest's subbasin priorities for completion of total maximum daily load implementation plans and identified potential actions should be:

1. South Fork Clearwater River
2. Middle Salmon River and Chamberlain
3. Little Salmon River
4. Lower Salmon River

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

1. **Within 15 years of Plan approval, 90% of all total maximum daily load implementation plan action items will be completed.**

Performance Risks

Routine changes to the list of impaired water bodies may alter progress toward meeting the objective, but will not require revisions to the Land Management Plan.

2.3.6.3 Drinking Water

This strategy is designed to assure the Nez Perce National Forest provides high quality drinking water in compliance with applicable provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Performance History

Watersheds providing surface water for municipal use from the Nez Perce National Forest include Wall Creek and Big and Little Elk Creeks, which serve the communities of Clearwater and Elk City, respectively. The downstream communities of Kamiah, Orofino and Lewiston also derive their domestic supplies directly from the surface water originating within the Nez Perce National Forest.

In addition to community surface water supply, there are groundwater drinking water sources for 7 campgrounds and ranger stations within the Forest's boundaries. More than 133 individual groundwater wells, streams and springs in or near the Forest provide domestic water to families and ranches.

Program Emphasis

All potential sources of drinking water contamination should have a low likelihood of releasing such contaminants at levels that could pose a concern relative to public drinking water sources. Sanitary surveys should be completed by a licensed professional engineer to determine safety and environmental compliance, and identify corrective actions necessary to prevent contamination of public water systems.

The highest priority should be given to the protection of municipal and other potable water supplies to ensure that land management activities do not cause permanent deterioration in quality or quantity. Source water protections should assure that no public water system has to provide more drinking water treatments other than those that are necessary to address naturally occurring pollutant concentrations.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, sanitary surveys will be completed on 11 ground water public supplies annually.**

Performance Risks

Aging water systems may require additional repair or reconstruction beyond the financial ability of user groups. Disturbance events such as wildland fires, landslides and flood flows may result in temporarily deviations from state water quality standards.

2.3.6.4 Instream Flow and Water Rights

This strategy is designed to assure that the Nez Perce National Forest, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, tribes and holders of valid water rights, provides instream flows to support existing and designated beneficial uses. These include consumptive and non-consumptive uses such as healthy riparian and aquatic habitats, the stability and effective function of stream channels, and the ability to route flood discharges.

Performance History

Over 850 water right points of diversion have been recorded within the Nez Perce National Forest (Table 2.3.6.4).

Table 2.3.6.4 Number of Water Rights (By Category and Ownership)

Owner	Number Water Rights and Claims			Totals
	Decreed	Statutory	License	
Federal Government	618	29	6	653
All Others	57	64	84	205

Both consumptive and non-consumptive water rights issues are currently being addressed through legal processes. Water rights for national forest purposes are claimed under state water law and federal reserve rights doctrine. Historic claims are being processed under the Snake River Basin Adjudication. These include consumptive and non-consumptive claims. Consumptive claims are mostly filed under state water law, with the exception of certain reserved claims for administrative purposes. Non-consumptive claims include reserved rights for wild and scenic rivers. Non-reserved instream flow claims are being processed through the state comprehensive water planning process and the Nez Perce tribal settlement agreement under the Snake River Basin Adjudication. Instream flows for resource protection are also applied as conditions of special use permits.

Program Emphasis

State water rights records for Nez Perce National Forest purposes should be up to date and the water should be put to beneficial uses as needed for those rights.

Current consumptive and non-consumptive uses of water and water rights by the Nez Perce National Forest, and others on the Forest, should be managed according to the state's allocation process.

Forest managers should coordinate with tribal, federal, state and local governments to identify and secure instream flows needed to maintain riparian resources, channel conditions and aquatic habitat.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 15 years of Plan approval, all Nez Perce National Forest federal reserved and state water law claims and license applications will be processed for adjudication.**
- 2. Within 15 years of Plan approval, all special use permits and other authorizations will include instream flow and other water protection measures necessary to protect aquatic resources.**

Performance Risks

Federal water rights on the national forests are processed by the Boise Adjudication Team, and performance is based upon workload priorities. The Boise Adjudication Team is not a permanent administrative structure, and the workload will likely revert to the Regional Office and Forest within the planning horizon.

2.3.6.5 Watershed Condition

This strategy is designed to assure that Nez Perce National Forest management actions continue to provide water quantity and quality that support recreational uses, healthy riparian and aquatic habitats, the stability and effective functioning of stream channels, and the ability to route flood flows.

Performance History

Forest roads were selected as a primary indicator of watershed condition because they have the longest lasting impact and are a common feature associated with most Forest management activities. The Forest's road management emphasis over the past 10 years has been the reduction of adverse effects associated with the transportation system. This has primarily been accomplished by removing unneeded roads or reconstructing permanent roads².

Between 1996 and 2005, over 250 miles of road have been decommissioned. About 2000 miles are in intermittent service status (level 1 maintenance status).

Watershed improvement projects (e.g., soil improvements or riparian planting) have been completed through appropriated funding combined with the Nez Perce Tribe and other external parties. The Nez Perce National Forest has completed an average of 121 acres per year over the past 5 years, with an average of 23 acres accomplished with soil and water appropriated funding.

² There an estimated (2006) 1000 to 1500 miles of unneeded roads.

Program Emphasis

The Nez Perce National Forest should emphasize the management of road systems to improve watershed function in managed areas. Soil improvement projects can be expected to continue (see Soil Productivity strategy). Vegetation management should focus on conserving or restoring species composition, age structure and natural opening patterns that promote near natural variations in water yield.

Road decommissioning and relocation activities should be prioritized based upon landscape setting and disturbance regimes. Higher priorities for decommissioning should be assigned to local and unclassified roads in watersheds containing threatened fish species and where land types are at higher risk of slope failure.

Priorities for road maintenance should be directed toward arterial, collector and a few selected local roads. The risk of road failure and subsequent downstream impacts to aquatic habitats can be reduced by emphasizing the removal or replacement of undersized or aging road culverts.

Streamside roads in high sediment hazard settings should continue to be the highest priority locations for road decommissioning and maintenance. Program priorities may change from decommissioning to reconstruction of permanent system roads as decommissioning objectives are achieved.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 150 miles of road will be decommissioned.**
- 2. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 100 miles of arterial, collector and permanent local roads will be reconstructed.**
- 3. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 1800 acres of soil and watershed improvements will be completed.³**

Performance Risks

External partnerships are critical to achieving objectives. Past road decommissioning accomplishments are the result of substantial partnership funding, particularly with Bonneville Power Administration and the Nez Perce Tribe.

2.3.6.6 Special Water Features and Riparian Vegetation

This strategy is designed to assure that Nez Perce National Forest maintains or improves:

- Floodplains and water tables to dissipate floods and sustain the natural timing and variability of water levels in riparian, wetland, meadow and aquatic habitats;**

³ A compilation of road decommissioning, riparian habitat, soil and water objectives accomplished through all available funding sources.

- **Special habitats (springs, seeps, ponds, lakes, bogs and wetlands) so that aquatic-dependent plant and animal species are sustained across the landscape; and**
- **Vegetation in riparian conservation areas to assure they are composed of a diverse structure of native plant communities that perpetuate the distribution of woody debris, soil cover, bank stability and thermal characteristics of resilient aquatic and riparian ecosystems.**

Performance History

Disturbances have caused long-term loss of streamside vegetation with resulting accelerated surface water flows and surface soil erosion. Compacted soil surfaces from streamside roads, trails, livestock grazing and facility developments have also slowed or intercepted subsurface water movement, effectively disconnecting the stream from its floodplain. A similar cause-and-effect relationship applies to springs, seeps and wetlands.

Roads in riparian conservation areas: An estimated 20 miles of local and unclassified roads within riparian conservation areas have been permanently removed between 1996 and 2005 for an estimated 80 acres of riparian conservation area improvement.

Mining impacts in riparian conservation areas: Over 20 miles of stream and adjacent riparian vegetation have been improved from the mid-1980s to 2005. However, the magnitude of the stream and riparian habitats disturbance from mining provides additional opportunities for future improvements.

Facilities in riparian conservation areas: Past actions to correct these impacts include erosion control, plantings, dispersed campsite improvements and trail surface water bars. Hazard tree removal has been addressed on a site-by-site basis.

Streamside timber harvest in riparian conservation areas: An unknown amount of streamside vegetation planting to improve stream shade and potential large wood has been completed.

Invasive plant species in riparian conservation areas: Invasive plant species in riparian habitats are present along roads and on disturbed soil surfaces. See invasive species strategy.

Livestock grazing impacts in riparian conservation areas: An unknown amount of fencing has been constructed to minimize streamside vegetation browsing and bank trampling by domestic livestock.

Program Emphasis

Riparian conservation areas containing federally threatened species should have the highest priority for protection and improvement⁴.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 100 acres of flood plains, wetlands and riparian vegetation will be improved.**

Performance Risks

Past stream and riparian improvements are the result of substantial partnership funding, particularly with the Nez Perce Tribe. Appropriated Forest Service funding alone has been, and is expected to continue to be, insufficient to accomplish target objectives.

2.3.6.7 Aquatic Habitats

This strategy is designed to assure the Nez Perce National Forest maintains or improves aquatic habitats and water quality.

Performance History

The condition of stream habitats within the Nez Perce National Forest is good to excellent in the conserve-designated subwatersheds. Within restore-designated subwatersheds, the streams downstream of roads and managed forest landscapes generally exhibit habitat features that are less than desired. These stream segments of concern have been the focus of stream improvement projects and monitoring.

The aquatic management strategy has been to improve stream conditions through direct habitat improvement projects and through implementation of the protection measures. Between 2000 and 2005, 82 stream miles and 81 lake acres have been improved. Examples of improvement activities include reconstructing streams, providing fish passage at road stream crossings and fencing riparian areas.

Program Emphasis

Intact and functioning stream reaches should be conserved; stream reaches that do not meet, or are trending away from, desired stream habitat features should be restored. Natural disturbance processes should be the primary factor shaping aquatic habitats in identified “conserve” subwatersheds.

Forest personnel should cooperate with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game invasive fish species control projects in high mountain lakes to reduce risks to native fishes.

⁴ Additional information regarding Threatened and Endangered species, species of concern and species of interest can be found in Supporting Documentation:

http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/sup_docs/index_water_nez.shtml,

http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/sup_docs/index_wildlife_nez.shtml and

http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/sup_docs/index_rare_plants_nez.shtml.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 150 miles of streams and 50 lake acres will be improved.**

Performance Risks

Substantial partnership involvement provides support for stream and lake habitat improvement programs, especially those contributions from the Nez Perce Tribe and Idaho Department of Fish and Game. External partnerships are critical to achieving objectives.

2.3.6.8 Fish Passage

This strategy is designed to assure that Nez Perce National Forest aquatic habitats support well-distributed populations of native and desired nonnative animal species.

Performance History

Native fish species currently have unrestricted access to 80% of suitable stream habitat (2200 miles). However, an estimated 380 stream crossings impede fish migration or movement within 285 stream miles. The Nez Perce National Forest has improved fish access to about 20 miles of suitable stream habitat by replacement of 10 large crossing structures and removal of about 20 smaller road crossing structures from 2000 to 2005. It is estimated that at least 35 additional fish barriers (road culverts) have been removed during road decommissioning.

Program Emphasis

Federal law requires that design, construction and maintenance of road crossings not disrupt the migration or other movement of aquatic life inhabiting the water body.

Stream crossings restricting passage of threatened and endangered species, or species of concern and interest should be considered the highest priority for removal or replacement.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 40 stream crossings which impede migration or movement of native fish species will be improved.**

Performance Risks

External partnerships are critical to achieving objectives. Partnership funding for stream crossing replacements is determined year to year. Current sources of funding include the Forest Service, Nez Perce Tribe and Bonneville Power Association. Opportunities for measurable increase in habitat decreases as high priority crossing removal and replacements are completed.

2.3.6.9 Partnerships

This strategy is designed to address the Nez Perce National Forest fisheries, wildlife and watershed program coordination with tribal, federal, state and county management actions. Types of coordinated program elements include annual monitoring actions, ongoing research projects and habitat and watershed improvement projects. Issues, such as the threats invasive aquatic species pose to native aquatic animal populations, are also addressed cooperatively.

Performance History

Biannual meetings with the Nez Perce Tribe and federal and state agencies have occurred to facilitate data transfer and to coordinate project planning, project implementation, and monitoring. This coordination is designed to facilitate efficient data collection, and share human and financial resources in accomplishment of mutual program goals. In addition to annual meetings, individual project coordination with interagency and tribal partners has facilitated project implementation. These projects include habitat improvements such as fish migration barrier removals, road decommissioning, riparian planting and invasive species eradication. Another part of the program of work includes interagency planning and monitoring reviews (such as development of total maximum daily load plans), best management practices audits and compliance monitoring.

Program Emphasis

Watershed, wildlife and aquatic resource improvement projects should be completed cooperatively with tribal, state and external partners. Although not directly responsible for fish and wildlife population management, the Nez Perce National Forest considers providing quality habitats a high priority that will contribute toward recovery of native species.

Highest priority watershed improvements should be coordinated with state of Idaho total maximum daily load implementation planned actions.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following plan approval, watershed, wildlife and aquatic resource management actions will be coordinated with tribal governments and federal and state agencies through an annual meeting.**

Performance Risks

The Forest Service participates with the Nez Perce Tribe and federal and state agencies through the contribution of resources (e.g. partial funding, materials, and labor). Internal and external funding sources are not guaranteed.

2.4 Cultural, Social and Economic Conditions

2.4.1 Road Management

Performance History

Road construction and maintenance contribute to completing Forest resource management activities, law enforcement and public access. Road construction has declined substantially in the past several years. This decline has coincided with the reduction in the volume of timber harvested annually. Funding from Congress has been insufficient to complete annual road maintenance to meet road management objectives for the entire classified road system of 3864 miles.

Program Emphasis

The Forest road system should provide for public safety, minimize impacts to other resources and meets the Forest Plan goals and objectives for other resources. Road management objectives should be met on as many miles of road as possible, dependent on annual appropriations. New road construction, primarily temporary roads, should support implementation of Forest Plan desired conditions for resource management and public access, and be cost-efficient. Some new permanent roads may be constructed as authorized by site-specific project analysis. The 2005 Roads Analysis Report identified 275 miles of roads that should be considered for reduced maintenance or decommissioning.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, 900 miles of system roads will be maintained annually.**

2.4.2 Motorized and Non-Motorized Recreation Uses

Performance History

Outside of designated wilderness, the 1987 Plan authorized motorized use across the majority of lands, roads and trails on the Forest. As motorized use increased dramatically the past 5-10 years and restrictions were implemented to protect fish and wildlife habitat and road facilities, selected areas and routes have been restricted to seasonal motorized use or closed yearlong. Technological advances in motorized equipment, particularly off-highway vehicles and snowmobiles, have made it possible for users to travel over terrain and in conditions that in the past were too rough and difficult for motorized uses. Non-motorized uses such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are growing in popularity and experiencing advances in equipment technology. The Fish Creek area provides both groomed cross-country skiing and snowmobile trails. Extensive groomed snowmobile trails are located around Elk City and Dixie. In the past 2-3 years, approximately 40% of the trails have received maintenance.

Program Emphasis

The Forest should provide opportunities for motorized and non-motorized uses on safe trail facilities, while protecting other Forest resources. Diverse motorized recreation opportunities should be provided in both the non-winter and winter seasons, on designated routes, and in areas suitable for winter motorized use off designated routes as provided in travel management regulations. Opportunities for non-motorized uses on roads and trails should exist.

The access strategy is shown on [Map 2.4.2](#). Areas on the Forest are categorized as follows: Roads that are also part of the trail system are included in the Road Management, section 2.4.1.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities will be provided annually on approximately 1250 miles of designated system trails that receive maintenance.**

2.4.3 Developed Recreation Sites

Performance History

Developed sites have been provided and improved in a variety of settings consistent with public use and as funding permits. Over the past 10 years, deferred maintenance projects in developed sites have addressed some of the maintenance needs. There are a few existing sites needing improvement.

Program Emphasis

A wide range of developed recreation opportunities should be offered by the Nez Perce National Forest, including fee and non-fee sites. Resources should be protected and health and sanitation requirements met. Recreation sites should be maintained and improved to: (1) reduce remaining deferred maintenance items, (2) improve health and safety components (e.g. water system upgrades, sanitation improvements), and (3) achieve riparian conservation area and wildlife desired conditions. Sites should be managed according to approved plans that meet national standards and critical elements.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, all recreation fee sites will be managed according to site facility master plans.**

2.4.4 General Forest Area Recreation

Performance History

Recreation in the general Forest area is usually described as dispersed recreation. This type of use is growing at day use and overnight use sites outside of developed sites that have fees and stricter management. Dispersed recreation allows more options in locations and types of activities available to users. It is provided in a setting with minimal development and is free of charge.

Program Emphasis

General Forest area recreation is managed in areas of concentrated across the Forest. These sites and areas are low-standard camping and picnic areas, trailheads, etc. and are managed to prevent resource damage from public use, not for user convenience. The emphasis is to allow safe and sanitary recreation use while preventing impacts to soil, water, plant, wildlife and heritage resources.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, natural and social resource conditions at 50 dispersed, concentrated-use recreation sites will be improved annually through: 1) minimal facility improvements needed to address resource, safety and sanitation concerns; 2) information and education efforts; and 3) law enforcement activities.**

2.4.5 Recreation Special UsesPerformance History

Outfitters and guides provide visitors seeking additional services a quality experience as an extension of the agency's mission. Outfitters and guides help the Forest Service assure that the public has reasonable access to recreation opportunities, that the use is of the highest quality and that resources are protected. The outfitter and guide program on the Nez Perce National Forest offers world class land-based and river-based recreation opportunities to the public.

Red River Hot Springs is an example of a resort authorized by special use permit. It provides a unique developed recreation opportunity to visitors.

Recreation events are permitted annually for organized motorized and non-motorized trail events and group events.

Performance Emphasis

Forest personnel should provide timely feedback when processing applications for new proposals and when administering existing permits. They should coordinate with the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board and new and existing permittees when processing changes in ownership of outfitting and guiding businesses. Permits should be administered to assure compliance with permit requirements.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, 50 recreation special use permits will be administered annually according to terms and conditions of the permit. Results will be documented.**

2.4.6 Scenery Resources

Map 2.4.6 Scenic Integrity Levels

Performance History

Scenery is managed following processes in the Scenery Management System. Landscapes are managed to generally portray the natural range of variation of vegetation and landscape character diversity. Disturbance processes - fire, insects and disease, and management projects - alter landscapes. Natural disturbance process effects and management actions are integrated to trend the landscape settings toward desired conditions.

Program Emphasis

Projects should meet or exceed scenery integrity levels. High priority should be assigned to developed sites, designated areas (e.g. Selway and Salmon Wild and Scenic Rivers), and high priority travel corridors (e.g. the South Fork Clearwater River).

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 95% of landscape-disturbing projects will meet or exceed scenic integrity levels.**

2.4.7 Heritage Resources

Performance History

Heritage resources have been managed with the goal of protecting and sustaining these resources and providing an appropriate level of interpretation to the public. There are several specific laws and treaties that direct how this is to be accomplished.

Past management activities have emphasized: (1) examining and conducting inventories in areas of proposed projects; (2) providing direction for project implementation to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations; (3) increasing public awareness of heritage resources; and (4) assessing heritage sites for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Average accomplishments for the years 2003-2004 were 25 projects reviewed, 2530 acres surveyed, 17 new sites recorded, and 42 heritage sites managed to standard.

Program Emphasis

Heritage resources should be protected and sustained. Project level inventory, site evaluation, effects determination and mitigation are legally mandated programs that should continue. These activities contribute to other Forest resource programs. Public understanding about heritage resources should be enhanced through interpretation efforts. Sites should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, historic properties will be managed to standard according to the current heritage program strategy for the Nez Perce Forest on an annual basis.**

2.4.8 Economic Contribution

The strategy is to contribute goods and services to local economic systems.

Performance History

The Nez Perce National Forest contributes to economic systems by employing people, contracting for services, providing products (e.g., timber, minerals, etc.). The Forest also provides a setting and services that facilitate use (e.g., recreation visits, etc.) of the area.

The economic health and well-being of north-central Idaho is a topic of ongoing interest. Changes in national forest management, particularly declining levels of timber harvest in the late 1990s, are of concern to local communities because of resulting impacts to local economies.

Program Emphasis

The Forest should provide sustainable levels of products, services, uses and benefits to local economic systems. Forest personnel should support local economic development efforts and communicate with local elected officials about accomplishments and expected changes in Forest employment levels and programs.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

No program objectives are identified. Refer to desired conditions for program guidance.

Performance Risks

Forest programs constantly evolve, with changes impacting local communities and economies. Unique factors that could influence the Forest's contribution to employment and labor income include:

- **Changes in community infrastructure,**
- **Changes in technology, including changes in industry technology (e.g., automation) and**
- **Influences of a global marketplace.**

2.4.9 Timber Availability

The strategy is that timber harvest will be the primary tool used for vegetation management on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest may be used on other lands suitable for harvest. Volumes removed will be produced by managing for desired conditions for species composition, size classes, disturbance scale and stand structure. (Additional information regarding the possible types of harvest activities are in

Supporting Documentation

http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/sup_docs/index_other_nez.shtml.

Performance History

The Nez Perce National Forest has annually sold an average of 14 million board feet from 1500 acres (1998 through 2002 Forest Plan monitoring reports). Timber sales were not planned for riparian areas or inventoried roadless lands.

Program Emphasis

Timber volume should be made available from lands suitable for timber production or from lands managed for other resource objectives using silvicultural prescriptions that are designed to achieve desired forest conditions. Timber harvest is a management tool that can be used to reduce fuels and fire risk in wildland-urban interface settings.

When resource objectives can be met, Forest managers should consider opportunities to use commercial timber sales to remove dead trees.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, a timber sale program quantity (TSPQ) of 21.8 million board feet, or approximately 4.19 million cubic feet, of commercial timber may be offered for sale from the total suitable land base on an annual basis.**
- 2. Within 10 years of Plan approval, fire risk should be reduced on 1000 to 2000 acres in the wildland-urban interface.**

Performance Risks

Economic viability of individual timber sales may vary due to fluctuations in lumber markets and logging costs, so that some sales may not be purchased when offered.

2.4.10 Wildland Fire, Fuels and Air Quality

Performance History

The current fire management strategy has made increasing use of fire – both prescribed fire and wildland fire use – to reduce fuel loads and restore landscape patterns. The highest priority lands for fuels reduction have been the wildland-urban interface areas and dry forest types. Several projects have been planned and completed on the Forest.

Wildfires have been managed with appropriate suppression strategies. Harvest is often followed with prescribed fire or other treatments that reduce slash loads to desired levels.

The Forest, in collaboration with the Montana-Idaho Airshed Group, has self-regulated activities to mitigate smoke impacts in Idaho and Montana.

Program Emphasis

Forest managers should safely use fire and mechanical fuels treatments to manage vegetation to meet desired conditions. Fuel reduction resulting in reduced fire risk in the

wildland-urban interface should be the highest priority. Use of fire – both prescribed fire and wildland fire use – to introduce natural fire processes and modify or maintain forest stand structure and composition should also be a high priority.

County and community wildland fire mitigation plans as well as Fire Regime Condition Class should be considered when prioritizing hazardous fuels reduction projects.

Forest personnel should coordinate smoke management through the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group and, when smoke is expected to impact reservation lands, the Nez Perce Tribe.

Collaboration with federal, state and local partners should increase the fire management organization's efficiency.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, fire risk in the wildland-urban interface will be reduced through the mechanical treatment of at least 500 acres annually.**
- 2. Within 10 years of Plan approval, vegetation on 40,000 acres or more will be restored through the use of prescribed fire.**
- 3. Within 10 years of Plan approval, landscape patterns and processes will be maintained on at least 50,000 acres through wildland fire use.**

Performance Risks

Climatic conditions may not result in burning conditions within the prescribed parameters.

Fire activity locally, regionally, or nationally may prevent implementation of burning plans.

Atmospheric conditions may reduce smoke dispersion and delay prescribed burning.

Agricultural burning is not coordinated through the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group, and may impact the agency's ability to implement management activities.

2.4.11 Livestock Management

This strategy is designed to permit livestock grazing on a sustainable basis while ensuring the ecological health and diversity of forested and non-forested ecosystems.

Performance History

The Nez Perce National Forest has managed livestock through the authorization and administration of grazing permits, structural rangeland improvements and management of rangeland vegetation resources across the Forest. The Forest has administered grazing permits on 25-28 active allotments since 2000, with an animal unit month average of 25,174. Monitoring indicates that the majority of riparian areas were within forage utilization and stream bank disturbance standards over the past 5 years.

Program Emphasis

Livestock grazing should occur on a sustainable basis, maintaining or restoring native and desired non-native vegetation, productive soils and water quality, and limiting the spread and establishment of invasive weeds. Impacts to recreation, aquatic and wildlife habitats should be minimized.

Forest personnel should complete long-term trend monitoring; plan, implement and maintain structural and non-structural improvements; and prepare, update and adjust allotment management plans and annual operating instructions.

Program Objective (PLAN COMPONENT)

No program objectives are identified. Guidance is integrated into plan components for other resource areas.

2.4.12 Minerals

Performance History

Mineral activity has been fairly stable over the past 5 years. There are more placer mineral operations than hard rock operations on the Forest. Levels of activity increase when the value of gold, silver and precious metals increases. Placer operations occur annually on the South Fork Clearwater, Red and American Rivers and the numerous tributaries to these rivers. In 2000 there were 20 active plans of operations for mineral projects.

Program Emphasis

Process all plans of operations and exploration permits in a timely manner. Maintain close coordination with local mining groups, applicable state and federal agencies and the Nez Perce Tribe. Meet the demand for minerals materials while meeting Forest Plan desired conditions and objectives for other resources. Submitted plans of operations, exploration permits and mineral material applications are processed and administered annually.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, 15 plans of operation and exploration permits will be processed and administered annually.**

2.4.13 Lands

Performance History

Right-of-way acquisitions, land purchases, land exchanges, issuance of non-recreation special use permits and acquisition/management of scenic easements are the principal lands activities on the Forest. Rights-of-way management and scenic easement management are the primary activities.

Program Emphasis

The Forest should consider land consolidation actions that will increase the protection of watersheds and improve the effectiveness of Forest management. Consolidation of National Forest System lands should not result in tax increases for county residents to compensate for changes in federal land boundaries. Existing scenic easements should be managed.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 5 years of Plan approval, secure wildlife habitat through the completion of at least one land purchase or exchange, on a willing-participant basis, of homesteads and/or parcels that contain important wildlife habitat.**
- 2. Following Plan approval, 2 miles of national forest boundary will be maintained annually.**
- 3. Following Plan approval, 10 scenic easement inspections will be completed annually.**
- 4. Following Plan approval, 150 non-recreation special use permits will be administered (issued, re-issued or managed) annually.**

2.4.14 Utilities and Communications Sites

Performance History

There are 17 communication sites on the Nez Perce National Forest. Over the past few years existing communication sites have been upgraded with new technology to improve administrative communication capabilities and public safety.

The July 3, 2003 Western Utility Group Priority Corridor Map does not identify any future needs for additional utility corridors on the Nez Perce National Forest.

Program Emphasis

Utility and communication sites should be maintained and protected from disturbance events such as fire. Desired conditions for other resources should be considered when determining the locations of new utility corridors or communication sites.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, 100% of communication sites will be maintained according site management plans on an annual basis.**
- 2. Following Plan approval, existing communication sites that conflict with Forest Plan desired conditions will be relocated when it is economically and technically feasible to do so.**

2.4.15 Administrative Facilities

Performance History

Administrative facilities on the Forest are currently being evaluated to determine those that are needed to contribute to accomplishing the Forest's mission and to assist with implementation of the Forest Plan.

Program Emphasis

Administrative site improvements should result in safe, adequate facilities for the public and Forest Service employees. Current facility master plans should be implemented to ensure the agency retains administrative buildings that are cost-effective.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Within 10 years of Plan approval, health and safety improvements will be completed at 100% of administrative facilities.**
- 2. Within 10 years of Plan approval, 20% of unneeded facilities (as identified in the Nez Perce Facility Master Plan) are removed.**

2.5 Tribal Treaty Rights and Trust Responsibilities

The strategy is to manage National Forest system lands while recognizing the rights of the Nez Perce Tribe and fulfilling legally-mandated trust responsibilities. This includes providing sustainable levels of fish, wildlife and non-timber forest products for traditional uses.

Performance History

Over the years the Forest has gained a better understanding of tribal interests, treaty rights and the Forest's obligation to consult on a government-to-government basis. Line officers (the Forest Supervisor and rangers) routinely communicate with elected Nez Perce tribal leaders and staff regarding management projects and related issues. Forest resource specialists often coordinate with tribal counterparts. Together, in partnership, they accomplish many positive resource projects on the Forest. A Forest Service tribal liaison serves as a communications conduit with the Nez Perce Tribe and provides advice to Forest Service employees. The Tribe is supportive of many Forest projects.

While communication and coordination are occurring, improvement is needed. The Forest Service and Nez Perce Tribe do not always understand or accept each other's overall philosophies and processes. Tribal officials often desire involvement earlier in the development of projects. The Forest and the Tribe have not agreed to a formal consultation process. Tribal concerns continue regarding several issues (i.e., tribal treaty rights, the availability of traditional plants and the protection of cultural resources).

Program Emphasis

Forest personnel should coordinate and consult with the Nez Perce Tribe. Resources associated with tribal treaty rights should be protected. Partnership and contract opportunities should be actively pursued. Wild edibles/medicinals, decorative materials, and other products should be available for tribal use consistent with treaty rights. Non-timber forest products should be available for personal use to the general public. Law enforcement actions should prevent illegal commercial uses.

Program Objectives (PLAN COMPONENT)

- 1. Following Plan approval, government-to-government relations will be maintained and improved through an open discussion of issues at an annual meeting between the Forest Supervisor and leaders of the Nez Perce Tribe.**

Performance Risks

Unique performance risks include:

- **Disagreements regarding the agency's consultation process,**
- **Fluctuations in tribal budgets and limited resources may affect tribal participation in agency projects and partnerships, and**
- **Illegal commercial uses of forest products and resources may affect exercise of tribal treaty rights.**

2.6 Suitable Land Uses

Suitable Uses (PLAN COMPONENT)

National Forest System lands within this Plan area are “generally suitable” for a variety of multiple uses. **The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.**

Table 2.6 is a plan component.

Table 2.6 Suitable Land Use Summary

Suitable Use Category	Acres	Percent of Forest
Total National Forest System Lands	2,111,500	100%
Generally Suitable for Timber Harvest (Map 2.6.5)	1,050,700	50%
Generally Suitable for Timber Production	485,400	23%
Generally Not Suitable for Timber Production	1,626,100	77%
Generally Suitable for Timber Harvest - Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions	465,600	22%
Generally Suitable for Motorized Travel on Designated Routes (Map 2.6.4)	219,300	10%
Generally Suitable for Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities - Mix of Motorized and Non-motorized Uses	938,400	45%
Generally Suitable for Non-motorized Uses	953,800	45%
Generally Suitable for Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.6.6)	558,300	26%

2.6.1 Riparian Conservation Areas

Riparian conservation areas are generally suitable for activities that improve, restore or maintain aquatic and riparian ecosystems desired conditions. (See Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems guidelines.)

2.6.2 Water Impoundments and Diversions

New, permanent water impoundments and diversions are generally suitable outside of: (1) eligible or designated wild and scenic rivers, (2) municipal watersheds, (3) Idaho state protected rivers, and (4) designated wilderness.

2.6.3 Road Management

Activities necessary to maintain and manage roads are generally suitable where roads currently exist, including inventoried roadless areas.

The construction of new, permanent roads is generally suitable outside of: (1) research natural areas, (2) designated wilderness, and (3) inventoried roadless areas⁵.

The construction of temporary roads is generally suitable outside of research natural areas and designated wilderness.

2.6.4 Motorized and Non-Motorized Recreation Uses

Map 2.6.4 – Motorized and Non-Motorized Recreation Uses

The Nez Perce National Forest is generally suitable for a variety of motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities. These opportunities have been stratified into three suitability categories: (1) generally suitable for motorized uses, (2) generally suitable for multiple (motorized and non-motorized) uses, and (3) generally suitable for non-motorized uses. In accordance with this suitability scheme, motorized recreation opportunities are provided on approximately 55% of the Nez Perce National Forest's land base. Specifically,

- **Motorized uses are generally suitable on 10% of the Nez Perce National Forest. In these areas, the mode of travel is motorized, or non-motorized, with an emphasis on motorized travel. Non-motorized users can expect to encounter motorized traffic. There may be seasonal or yearlong restrictions⁶ to motorized travel to meet resource needs, but the roads involved are expected to serve motorized travel at some point.**
- **Multiple opportunities are generally suitable on 45% of the Nez Perce National Forest. In these areas there should be similar opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized users to experience attractions like ridges, vistas, streams, etc. Motorized use is not desired on some routes to minimize the interaction between motorized and non-motorized traffic.**
- **Non-motorized uses are generally suitable on 45% of the Nez Perce National Forest. (This includes 877,000 acres of designated wilderness, or more than 40% of the Forest's land base.) These areas should be available only to non-motorized uses, both summer and winter, without exception.**

⁵ The Forest's proposed guidance regarding the construction of new, permanent roads in Inventoried Roadless Areas is consistent with testimony given by Idaho Governor Jim Risch regarding Idaho's petition to protect roadless areas. It is also believed to be consistent with the intent of an alternative petition being drafted by the Nez Perce Tribe.

⁶ This includes both existing restrictions and those authorized in separate public National Environmental Policy Act planning processes following Land Management Plan approval.

2.6.5 Timber

Additional information regarding timber suitability can be found in Supporting Documentation (http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/sup_docs/index_timber_nez.shtml).

Map 2.6.5 Timber Suitability

Table 2.6.5 Suitability of Areas for Timber

Suitable Use Category	Acres	Acres	Acres
Lands Generally Not Suitable for Timber Harvest (62.1) ⁷	1,060,800		
Lands Generally Suitable for Timber Harvest (62.2)	1,050,700		
Timber Production Compatible with Desired Conditions & Objectives (62.21)		951,000	
Timber Production Incompatible with Desired Conditions & Objectives (62.22)		99,700	
Total National Forest Lands	2,111,500		
Lands Not Suitable for Timber Production (62.3)			1,626,100

Laws and policies require the Forest Service to display more details pertaining to timber suitability than suitability for other resources.)

The timber suitability map displays areas that are considered generally suitable for timber harvest or timber production on the Forest (Map 2.6.5). These are broad, forest-scale estimates that should be refined during project analyses.

Lands generally not suitable for timber harvest are those where harvest is prohibited by law or those that have been administratively withdrawn from harvest; those lands where soil or watershed conditions will be irreversibly damaged by timber harvest; those that cannot be adequately restocked within five years after harvest; or those lands that cannot support trees. Lands generally not suitable for harvest on the Nez Perce National Forest include wildernesses, research natural areas, wild river corridors, active landslides, non-forest lands, and a few landtypes that have reforestation limitations.

Lands generally suitable for timber harvest for multiple-use objectives include landslide prone areas, riparian conservation areas, scenic and recreation river corridors, most inventoried roadless lands, and municipal watersheds.

Lands not in one of the previous two categories are generally suitable for timber production.

The Forest has about 1,050,700 acres that are considered suitable for timber harvest. That represents about 50% of the Nez Perce National Forest (2,111,500 acres, Table 2.6). Timber suitability will be reviewed and final determinations made at the site-specific (project) scale. This will provide a more accurate determination.

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

⁷ The number is a reference to a section in Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, Land Management Planning.

2.6.6 Livestock Management

Map 2.6.6 Domestic Livestock Grazing Suitability

Livestock grazing is generally suitable outside of: (1) municipal watersheds; (2) administrative sites; (3) developed recreation sites; (4) areas with high risk of disease transmission from domestic sheep to goats and to bighorn sheep; (5) research natural areas; and (6) designated wilderness.

Recreational livestock grazing and permitted grazing associated with outfitter and guide use is generally suitable across most of the Forest. Permitted livestock grazing is generally suitable within existing allotments. Grazing within the Gospel-Hump and Selway-Bitterroot Wildernesses is generally suitable in accordance with existing wilderness legislation and current wilderness management plans.

2.6.7 Minerals

Location of locatable minerals claims is generally suitable throughout the Forest outside of: (1) withdrawn areas where valid existing minerals rights do not exist, (2) designated wild and scenic rivers, (3) developed recreation sites and (4) designated wilderness.

2.6.8 Utility Corridors

The location of utility lines, such as electric power lines and telephone lines, is generally suitable on Nez Perce National Forest lands outside of: (1) research natural areas, (2) designated wilderness, (3) inventoried roadless areas, and (4) developed recreation sites.

2.7 Geographic Areas

Map 2.7 Nez Perce National Forest Geographic Areas

Prior to this section guidance described in this Proposed Land management Plan applied to the entire Forest. This section describes guidance at a smaller “geographic-area” scale. Geographic areas are land units that were defined using a combination of physical land features and social identification with an area. Each write-up regarding a geographic area lists unique features, describes management emphases and displays suitable uses at a smaller scale.

Unique features are distinctive cultural, ecological or designated areas. Specific management emphasis for a unique feature may be described if needed. Examples include research natural areas and wild and scenic river segments. **It should be noted that the unique features and management emphases described for geographic areas are not plan components.**

A suitable uses table and maps are displayed for each geographic area. These tables and maps display suitable uses at a finer spatial scale than is shown in the forest-wide summary. Only primary land uses are displayed.

Table 2.7 Geographic Areas and Acreages (Map 2.7)

Geographic Areas	National Forest Acres	Non-National Forest Acres
Coolwater	54,400 ⁸	600
Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness	110,200	100
Gospel-Hump Wilderness	205,700	100
Lower Salmon East	193,800	3,100
Lower Salmon West	72,600	700
Mallard-Jersey	121,400	1,400
Meadow Creek	201,900	0
Middle Fork Clearwater	56,500	400
Pilot Knob	21,000	0
Red River	250,500	29,200
Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness	561,000 ¹	200
Selway Front	75,500	600
South Fork Clearwater	187,000	5,400

⁸ These geographic areas are shared by the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests. Acres in this table represent only those acres on the Nez Perce National Forest.

2.7.1 Coolwater Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.1\)](#)

Acres 54,400	Moose Creek Ranger District	Nearest Communities Lowell, Syringa and Kooskia
Location National forest lands outside the wilderness north of the Selway River from Packer Creek; and south of the Lochsa River from Old Man Creek. This geographic area is shared with the Clearwater National Forest. The Moose Creek District manages the southern portion of the geographic area.		
Landmarks and Unique Features		
Fenn Ranger Station		Coolwater Lookout
Coastal disjunct forest		Selway and Lochsa Wild and Scenic Rivers
Cedar Flats Civilian Conservation Corps Camp and Fog Mountain Road		West Fork Gedney Creek eligible Wild and Scenic River

General Description

The forest is characterized by grassy balds on ridgetops and upper south aspects. Lower elevations are forested with ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, grand fir and western redcedar. Landscape patterns reflect frequent, mixed-severity disturbances (primarily fire).

The Selway River provides rafting, native fish habitat and other wild and scenic river values. The area is almost entirely without roads. It is remote with primitive roads providing access from the river to Coolwater Lookout, Fog Mountain and the western edge of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

Management Emphasis

Whitebark pine stands should be restored near Coolwater Lookout. Fire hazards adjacent to private lands and national forest developed sites should be reduced.

Mechanical treatment, wildland fire use and prescribed fire should be the preferred management methods for achieving vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest is compatible with desired conditions.

Table 2.7.1 Generally Suitable Uses: Coolwater Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.1a)	38,700	71%
Timber Production	1,200	2%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	37,400	69%
Domestic Livestock Grazing	0	0%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Map 2.7.1b) (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	54,400	100%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.2 Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.2\)](#)

Acres 110,200	Red River Ranger District	Nearest Communities Elk City and Dixie
Location National forest lands within the wilderness boundary north of the Salmon River from Mackay Bar upstream to Bargamin Creek		
Landmarks and Unique Features Sheep Hill Lookout Bargamin Creek eligible Wild and Scenic River		
Salmon Wild and Scenic River		

General Description

Dry ponderosa pine forests are found along the Salmon River breaklands, along with dry grasslands. Upper slopes have a mix of Douglas-fir, western larch, grand fir and lodgepole pine. Current patterns of vegetation appear as a mosaic of different size classes of tree species as influenced by wildland fire.

Management Emphasis

The management emphasis should be the protection and management of wilderness resources according to current wilderness management plans.

Table 2.7.2 Generally Suitable Uses: Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest	0	0%
Timber Production	0	0%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	0	0%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.2a)	400	0%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	0	0%
Non-motorized Uses	110,200	100%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.3 Gospel-Hump Wilderness Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.3\)](#)

Acres 205,700	Red River and Salmon River Ranger Districts	Nearest Communities Orogrande, Elk City, Dixie and Grangeville
Location National forest lands within the wilderness boundary		
Landmarks and Unique Features		
Elk Creek Research Natural Area		Salmon Wild and Scenic River
Square Mountain Research Natural Area		Johns, Lake and Slate eligible Wild and Scenic River segments
Fish Lake Research Natural Area		

General Description

Forest habitats include dry ponderosa pine forests at lower elevations, grand fir and Douglas-fir at mid-elevations, with lodgepole pine and subalpine forests at higher elevations. The highest ridges have whitebark pine. Current patterns of vegetation appear as a mosaic of different age and size classes of tree species as influenced by wildland fire. Calcareous gneiss and schist rocks are present, providing a unique substrate for plants and wildlife.

Management Emphasis

The management emphasis should be the protection and management of wilderness resources according to current wilderness management plans.

Table 2.7.3 Generally Suitable Uses: Gospel-Hump Wilderness Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest	0	0%
Timber Production	0	0%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	0	0%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.3a)	34,400	17%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	0	0%
Non-motorized Uses	205,700	100%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.4 Lower Salmon East Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.4\)](#)

Acres 193,800	Clearwater and Salmon River Ranger Districts	Nearest Communities White Bird, Lucile, Riggins and Grangeville
Location National forest lands in the lower Salmon River drainage west of Gospel-Hump Wilderness and east of the Salmon River. Major streams include Slate, White Bird and Skookumchuck Creeks.		
Landmarks and Unique Features Fish Creek Recreation Area Idaho Centennial Trail Slate Creek Ranger Station		Historic Milner Trail No Business Creek Research Natural Area Slate Creek, White Bird Creek and Salmon River eligible Wild and Scenic River segments

General Description

The area is characterized by dry forest habitats with mixed conifer stands and lodgepole pine. Lower elevations have mountain mahogany stands and open grassland communities. High elevations have whitebark pine sites. Past management activities include timber harvest and mining with an extensive road network accessing the area. Limestone/calcareous parent materials provide unique conditions for plants and animals.

Management Emphasis

Mountain mahogany shrub communities should be sustained and whitebark pine restored. Timber harvest, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire can be used to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest should be the preferred method on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest is an appropriate tool on other lands.

Table 2.7.4 Generally Suitable Uses: Lower Salmon East Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.4a)	156,300	81%
Timber Production	101,400	52%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	54,900	28%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.4b)	123,100	63%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	193,800	100%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.5 Lower Salmon West Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.5\)](#)

Acres 72,600	Salmon River Ranger District	Nearest Communities White Bird, Lucile, Riggins and Grangeville
Location National forest lands in the lower Salmon River drainage west of the Salmon River west to Hells Canyon Wilderness and Hells Canyon National Recreation Area. Major streams include Rapid River, Cow and Johnson Creeks.		
Landmarks and Unique Features Boise Trail Rapid River Wild and Scenic River		
Rapid River Fish Hatchery		

General Description

Forest habitats range from dry upland ponderosa pine to high elevation habitats with subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce and whitebark pine. Dry grasslands and shrublands are common at all elevations, and are most extensive on southerly aspects. Caves exist where the underlying geology is limestone. Management activities include timber harvest, livestock grazing, and frequent fires on the dry ponderosa pine sites. Limestone/calcareous parent materials provide unique conditions for plants and animals.

Management Emphasis

Rapid River, a designated wild and scenic river, should be managed according to the existing management plan and to protect outstandingly remarkable values.

Caves should be managed to maintain unique geology and habitats.

Whitebark pine should be restored.

Timber harvest, wildland fire use and prescribed fire can be used to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest should be the preferred method on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest is an appropriate tool **except** in the Rapid River drainage, where timber harvest is not compatible with desired conditions.

Table 2.7.5 Generally Suitable Uses: Lower Salmon West Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.5a)	50,200	69%
Timber Production	25,600	35%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	14,000	19%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.5b)	65,900	91%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	72,600	100%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.6 Mallard-Jersey Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.6\)](#)

Acres 121,400	Red River Ranger District	Nearest Communities Dixie and Elk City
Location National forest lands in the Middle Salmon River, Big Mallard and Crooked Creek watersheds		
Landmarks and Unique Features Dixie historic mining district Salmon River Wild and Scenic River		
Multi-Resource Development Area Moose Meadows Research Natural Area		

General Description

Forests are dry ponderosa pine along the Salmon River with mixed Douglas-fir, grand fir, Engelmann spruce, western larch and lodgepole pine at higher elevations. Management activities include timber harvest, livestock grazing and frequent fires on the dry ponderosa pine sites. This area includes important bighorn sheep winter range.

Management Emphasis

Prescribed fire and timber harvest should be used to reduce fire risk around private residences.

Timber harvest, wildland fire use and prescribed fire can be used to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest should be the preferred method on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest is an appropriate tool on other lands.

Table 2.7.6 Generally Suitable Uses: Mallard-Jersey Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.6a)	106,200	87%
Timber Production	29,200	24%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	77,000	63%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.6b)	28,600	24%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	121,400	100%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.7 Meadow Creek Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.7\)](#)

Acres 201,900	Moose Creek Ranger District	Nearest Communities Lowell, Syringa, Elk City and Kooskia
Location National forest lands in the Meadow Creek watershed and in the upper segments of Running and Bargamin Creeks.		
Landmarks and Unique Features		
Horse Creek administrative study site		Meadow, Running and Bargamin Creeks eligible
Steelhead trout stronghold		Wild and Scenic River segments
Warm Springs Research Natural Area		Meadow Creek Guard Station

General Description

The area is characterized by moist forest habitats with mixed conifer stands of Douglas-fir, grand fir and western redcedar. South and west aspects are drier ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir types. Whitebark pine is found at high elevations along the wilderness boundary. The area provides abundant opportunities for primitive recreation with little development.

Meadow Creek is a stronghold for aquatic species due to high water quality and high quality fish habitat

Management Emphasis

Fire use and prescribed fire should be the preferred management methods for achieving vegetation desired conditions. Management for aquatic resources should be a high priority.

West Meadow Inventoried Roadless Area: Roads and vegetation should be managed to support the research design within the Horse Creek administrative study site. Timber harvest is compatible with desired conditions **except** in the **East Meadow Inventoried Roadless Area** where timber harvest is not compatible with desired conditions because of the area's unique combination of scenery, wildlife and fisheries values.

Table 2.7.7 Generally Suitable Uses: Meadow Creek Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.7a)	170,800	85%
Timber Production	0	0%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	92,700	46%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.7b)	6,000	3%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Map 2.7.7c) (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	145,900	72%
Non-motorized Uses	56,000	28%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.8 Middle Fork Clearwater Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.8\)](#)

Acres 56,500	Clearwater Ranger District	Nearest Communities Lowell, Syringa and Kooskia
Location National forest lands south of the Middle Fork Clearwater River from the confluence of the Lochsa and Selway River to the western forest boundary. Clear Creek is the major stream drainage.		
Landmarks and Unique Features Isolated coastal vegetation type Lookout Butte		Corral Hill Lookout Middle Fork Clearwater Recreation River Tahoe Ridge

General Description

Moist forests are most common here. They are typically made up of grand fir, Douglas-fir and western redcedar. Unique vegetation includes large, old western redcedar groves, the Idaho state record Pacific yew tree and plant communities usually found only on the Pacific coast. The area provides a mix of undeveloped lands with abundant opportunities for primitive recreation.

Management Emphasis

Timber harvest, wildland fire use and prescribed fire can all be used to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest should be the preferred method on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest is an appropriate tool on other lands.

Recreation opportunities and scenery should be an important emphasis in the scenic byway and designated recreation river corridor.

Table 2.7.8 Generally Suitable Uses: Middle Fork Clearwater Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.8a)	52,800	93%
Timber Production	36,400	64%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	16,300	29%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.8b)	48,600	86%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	56,500	100%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.9 Pilot Knob Geographic Area ([Map 2.7.9](#))

Acres 21,000	Clearwater and Red River Ranger Districts	Nearest Communities Elk City, Clearwater, Harpster and Grangeville
Location National forest lands at the headwaters of Silver Creek. Main streams are the headwaters of Silver, Leggett, West Fork Newsome, and Pilot Creeks		
Landmarks and Unique Features Pilot Knob Pilot Rock		

General Description

Cool, high elevation forests are most common. They are made up of subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce and lodgepole pine. Grand fir is also present. Pacific yew and menziesia form dense understories in places. Whitebark pine is found around Pilot Knob and Pilot Rock.

Pilot Knob is a culturally significant area.

Management Emphasis

Access should be managed to minimize disruption to tribal uses and activities and to protect cultural properties and communication facilities.

In general, a natural setting (native trees and shrubs altered by natural disturbances) should be maintained to provide a satisfactory cultural experience. Whitebark pine should exist at historic levels.

Fire use and prescribed fire should be the preferred management methods to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest is compatible with desired conditions **except** on 11,000 acres with unique cultural values.

Table 2.7.9 Generally Suitable Uses: Pilot Knob Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.9a)	19,200	91%
Timber Production	0	0%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	8,400	40%
Domestic Livestock Grazing	21,000	100%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	0	0%
Non-motorized Uses	21,000	100%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.10 Red River Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.10\)](#)

Acres 250,500	Red River Ranger District	Nearest Communities Elk City, Dixie and Orogrande
Location National forest lands surrounding Elk City. Main streams are American River, Red River, Newsome Creek, and Crooked River		
Landmarks and Unique Features		
Elk City Wagon Road		Magruder Road corridor
Red River Hot Springs		Mining history
Upper Newsome Research Natural Area		Elk City municipal watershed
South Fork Clearwater eligible Recreation River		Gospel-Hump Multi-Resource Development Area

General Description

The area is characterized by dry and mesic forest habitats with ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir along the river breaks; grand fir and Douglas-fir in the uplands and subalpine forests; and lodgepole pine at higher elevations and in cold basins. Past management activities include timber harvest and mining with an extensive road network.

There is evidence of historic mining activities including tailing piles and abandoned buildings and equipment. Current mining claims are present.

Management Emphasis

Fire risk and fuels should be actively managed in the Elk City wildland-urban interface.

Fire and timber harvest should be used to encourage a range of ages in lodgepole pine. Young, dense lodgepole pine stands should be maintained to reduce fire risk around private residences.

Timber harvest, wildland fire use and prescribed fire can be used to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest should be the preferred method on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest is an appropriate tool on other lands.

Table 2.7.10 Generally Suitable Uses: Red River Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.10a)	227,100	91%
Timber Production	150,600	60%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	76,400	31%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.10b)	78,200	31%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes (Map 2.7.10c)	219,100	87%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	31,400	13%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.11 Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.11\)](#)

Acres 561,000	Moose Creek Ranger District	Nearest Communities Lowell, Kooskia and Hamilton (Montana)
Location National forest lands within wilderness boundary in the Lochsa and Selway subbasins		
Landmarks and Unique Features Selway Wild and Scenic River Moose Creek Ranger Station		
Bear Creek, Moose Creek and Three Links Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers		

General Description

South and west aspects along the Selway River are characteristically dry ponderosa pine forest with dry grasslands. North and east aspects have western redcedar, grand fir, and Douglas-fir. Uplands are typically grand fir and Douglas-fir, with higher elevations forested with subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce and lodgepole pine. Whitebark pine is found at the highest elevations. Current patterns of vegetation appear as a mosaic of different size classes of tree species as influenced by wildland fire.

Management Emphasis

The management emphasis should be the protection and management of wilderness resources according to current wilderness management plans.

Table 2.7.11 Generally Suitable Uses: Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest	0	0%
Timber Production	0	0%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	0	0%
Domestic Livestock Grazing	0	0%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	0	0%
Non-motorized Uses	561,000	100%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.12 Selway Front Geographic Area [\(Map 2.7.12\)](#)

Acres 75,500	Moose Creek Ranger District	Nearest Communities Lowell, Syringa and Kooskia
Location National forest lands in the Selway River drainage south of the river downstream from Meadow Creek. Major streams include O'Hara and Goddard Creeks.		
Landmarks and Unique Features Lookout Butte O'Hara Creek Research Natural Area		
Fenn Ranger Station Selway Wild and Scenic River		

General Description

The area is characterized by moist species such as western redcedar and grand fir, as well as ponderosa pine, western white pine, Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine. Landscape patterns reflect infrequent, mixed-severity disturbances (primarily fire).

The landscape provides a natural-appearing background for the Selway Wild and Scenic River. High water quality supports steelhead trout and Chinook salmon runs and bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout populations. Scenic landscapes, rafting and kayaking, native fish habitat and other wild and scenic river values are common in the Selway River corridor. Management activities include timber harvest and maintaining the road network accessing the uplands.

Management Emphasis

Timber harvest, wildland fire use and prescribed fire can be used to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest should be the preferred method on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest is an appropriate tool on other lands.

Table 2.7.12 Generally Suitable Uses: Selway Front Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.12a)	61,800	82%
Timber Production	32,100	42%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	29,700	39%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.12b)	25,600	34%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	75,500	100%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.

2.7.13 South Fork Clearwater Geographic Area ([Map 2.7.13](#))

Acres 187,000	Clearwater and Red River Ranger Districts	Nearest Communities Elk City, Clearwater, Harpster and Grangeville
Location National forest lands that drain into the South Fork Clearwater River below the mouth of Crooked River. Main streams are Johns, Meadow, Newsome, Leggett, Silver, Peasley and Cougar Creeks.		
Landmarks and Unique Features		
Clearwater municipal watershed		McComas Meadows
Elk City Wagon Road		Adam’s Camp
South Fork Clearwater Recreation River and Johns Creek eligible Wild River segments		Gilmore Ranch Gospel-Hump Multi-Resource Development Area

General Description

The area is characterized by grand fir forests on the uplands, with dry ponderosa pine forests on southerly aspects. Whitebark pine is found around Twentymile Butte and Sawyer Ridge.

The area has roads that open it to extensive recreational opportunities. It displays the effects of past large-scale fires, extensive timber harvest, mining and livestock grazing.

Management Emphasis

Prescribed fire and timber harvest can be used as management tools to reduce fire risk around private residence developments along the South Fork Clearwater River and the town of Clearwater.

The Gospel-Hump Multi-Resource Development Area should provide opportunities for timber harvest as well as motorized and non-motorized recreation.

Timber harvest, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire can be used to achieve vegetation desired conditions. Timber harvest should be the preferred method on lands suitable for timber production. Timber harvest is an appropriate tool on other lands.

Table 2.7.13 Generally Suitable Uses: South Fork Clearwater Geographic Area

Suitable Use Category	Acres Generally Suitable	Percent of Geographic Area
Timber Harvest (Map 2.7.13a)	166,500	89%
Timber Production	108,900	58%
Timber Harvest for Multiple Resource Objectives (Harvest is Appropriate Tool to Achieve Desired Conditions)	57,500	31%
Domestic Livestock Grazing (Map 2.7.13b)	126,500	68%
Motorized Travel on Designated Routes	0	0%
Multiple Recreation Access Opportunities (Mix of Motorized and Non-Motorized Uses)	187,000	100%
Non-motorized Uses	0	0%

The actual suitability for a particular use will not be determined until site-specific analysis is completed and a project or activity is authorized.