



# Preliminary Proposals

## A Work in Progress

In the spirit of collaboration, the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests are taking this opportunity to share preliminary thoughts regarding several key forest plan revision issues.

This information represents a snapshot in time. Since the actual forest plan content is constantly evolving, **readers should expect changes between now and the time proposed forest plans are released in the fall of 2006.**

## Motorized Use

**1987 Plans** – Motorized use is allowed across the majority of lands and roads. Cross-country travel is generally permitted.

**Proposed Action** – Review and modify access management direction to better manage motorized recreation.

**Comments** – Many individuals submitted formal comments regarding motorized use. Some wanted motorized access strictly limited, with many roads and trails closed. Others requested more opportunities and fewer restrictions.

**Draft Proposals** - Allow motorized travel on designated routes during the non-winter season. Cross-country travel is generally not permitted.

Allow motorized vehicles on designated routes and designated play areas during the winter season.

These proposals are consistent with direction included in the final rule for recreational motor vehicle use that was issued by the agency November 2, 2005.

It is important to note travel management decisions will be made through site-specific analyses or travel management planning.



## Fisheries Habitat and Watershed Condition

**1987 Plans** – Forest plans were amended with interim direction to protect streams and streamside areas.

**Proposed Action** – Make interim direction permanent with minor modifications.

**Comments** – Individuals generally agreed about the need to protect water quality and fish. Some believed the interim direction was too restrictive. Others argued for stronger protection.

**Draft Proposals** - Emphasize the maintenance and restoration of aquatic resources. Update protection measures included in the amended 1987 plans.

## Ecosystem Maintenance and Restoration

**1987 Plans** – Timber production is a management emphasis. It is not directly tied to ecosystem management concepts.

**Proposed Action** – Emphasize management for healthy, vibrant ecosystems. Use timber harvest, prescribed fire and invasive weed treatment to achieve this goal.

**Comments** – Most commenters agreed with the emphasis on “ecosystem health.” They differed sharply in their opinions about the tools that should be used to maintain and restore ecosystems. Some favored timber harvest. Others preferred fire. Some suggested a mix of treatments.

**Draft Proposals** –Emphasize ecosystem maintenance and restoration. Use a variety of management tools, including fire, timber harvest and invasive weed treatment, to maintain and restore vegetation and create diverse wildlife habitat.

## Timber Suitability

Forest plans identify where a variety of uses, including timber harvest, can occur. This is referred to as *suitability*.

### 1987 Plans -

Acres Suitable for Timber Harvest or Production

Clearwater	Nez Perce
987,700	911,700

**Proposed Action** – Suitability was not directly addressed.

**Comments** – Individuals who commented about timber suitability generally wanted the forests to maintain the maximum number of suitable acres.

### Draft Proposals

Acres Generally Suitable for Timber Harvest or Production

	Clearwater	Nez Perce
Initial Proposal	524,250	621,750
Revised Proposal	932,900	864,900

When the initial proposal was drafted, forests did not consider riparian areas or most roadless lands as generally suitable. Clarified agency direction led to the revised proposal which considers all lands as generally suitable unless there are compelling social, economic, heritage or resource reasons they should not be generally suitable for timber harvest.

## Elk Habitat Management

**1987 Plans** – Recognize elk as a “management indicator species.”

**Proposed Action** – Emphasize management for healthy ecosystems. Healthy ecosystems provide quality habitat for a variety of species, including elk.

**Comments** – Comments generally favored the need to protect and improve habitat. There was disagreement about the best tools for the job: timber harvest, fire or a combination thereof.

**Draft Proposals** – Emphasize the maintenance and restoration of ecosystems. Manage vegetation and access to meet wildlife habitat and security needs. Classify elk as a “species of interest.”

For additional maps and information regarding draft proposed forest plans, visit the revision website:  
[www.fs.fed.us/cnpz](http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz).

## Inventoried Roadless Areas

Inventoried roadless areas are those lands relatively free from roads. Most are 5,000 acres or larger.

### 1987 Plans –

Acres of Inventoried Roadless Areas

	Clearwater	Nez Perce
1987 Plans	988,200	502,000

Road construction was allowed in 531,000 acres of the roadless lands on the Clearwater and 375,000 acres of the Nez Perce.

**Proposed Action** – Update roadless area inventory and management direction.

**Comments** – People had very different ideas about how roadless lands should be managed. Some wanted little-to-no access and development. Others argued these areas are not wilderness and should be available for road building and timber harvest.

### Draft Proposals –

Acres of Inventoried Roadless Areas

	Clearwater	Nez Perce
Initial Proposal	973,100	492,900
Revised Proposal	984,300	497,200

(Decreases in acres between 1987 plans and current proposals are associated with better mapping; road building and timber harvest; and land acquisitions and exchanges.)

In general, the forests do not propose to build new roads in roadless areas.

## Wilderness Recommendations

During revision forests are required to evaluate roadless lands for potential wilderness recommendations.

**1987 Plans** – No new wilderness is recommended for the Nez Perce Forest. The Clearwater recommends 198,200 acres.

**Proposed Action** – Bring forward 1987 wilderness recommendations.

**Comments** – Some commenters believed wilderness designation was an economic advantage; others viewed it as a liability. Some offered site-specific wilderness recommendations while others insisted on no further wilderness.

### Draft Proposals – Nez Perce – 0 acres

Clearwater Wilderness Recommendations	
Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness	19,800
Mallard-Larkins Roadless Area	68,200
Hoodoo Roadless Area (Great Burn)	148,500
Total Acres	236,500