

AMENDMENT #1

USDA Forest Service

Administrative Action Memo

Amendment of the Bitterroot, Boise, Challis, Nez Perce, Payette and Salmon National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans and the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness Management Plan

Custer, Idaho, Lemhi and Valley Counties
State of Idaho

I. Administrative Action

This administrative action is to amend the Frank Church--River of No Return (FC--RONR) Wilderness Management Plan and the Bitterroot, Boise, Challis, Nez Perce, Payette and Salmon National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans to be consistent with the FC--RONR Wilderness agreement that is attached as Appendix A. The amendment of the FC--RONR Wilderness Management Plan changes wording in the plan related to reducing the storage of items and removal of plumbing fixtures from the Wilderness. The amendment only modifies the schedule of implementation and does not change the goals, objectives, standards or guidelines of the plan.

This administrative action incorporates into the appropriate National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and the FC--RONR Wilderness Management Plan certain administrative guidance contained in the June 4, 1990, FC--RONR Wilderness Agreement between the Chief of the Forest Service and the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association.

II. Background

The June 4, 1990, FC--RONR Wilderness Agreement is pursuant to the lawsuit settlement for Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association (IOGA) v. U.S., No. N-87-0426. A Task Force was appointed to review the issues litigated by the IOGA concerning decisions in the FC--RONR Wilderness Management Plan to change long-term operating practices by outfitters and guides, and reported to the Chief in December, 1988. On April 20, 1989, the Chief signed an interim direction for the 1989 field season. On January 11, 1990, Regional Foresters of R-1 and R-4 delivered their evaluation and recommendation of the interim direction.

The agreement states that

"the goal is to continue to promote the use of lightweight, portable equipment that can be taken in and out of the wilderness at the beginning and end of each use season in order to achieve the purpose of the Wilderness Acts and protect wilderness resource values."

The agreement includes a schedule for removal of items that provides outfitters with the time needed to replace equipment and adjust operations to achieve the goal.

III. Reasons for Categorically Excluding This Administrative Action

The settlement agreement does not have an important effect on the entire plan or affect land and resource throughout a large portion of the FC--RONR Wilderness. This agreement changes the treatment of outfitters caches with a new schedule for the reduction in storage of items that are obtrusive and visible and the promotion of lightweight, portable equipment. It also changes the removal of underground piping with the implementation of approved methods of water collection and distribution that best protect resource values. Finally it sets a date of 1993 to review and develop a schedule of accomplishment for all unresolved issues.

We have examined the categories of exclusion in FSH 1909.15, ID No. 3, dated Jan. 20, 1990 and have determined this action falls in the category of routine administrative actions (Ch. 26.1b[1]) that may be Categorically Excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement or an Environmental Assessment. The proposal does not have any extraordinary circumstances which might cause the action to have significant effects.

IV. Findings of Consistency With the FC--RONR Wilderness and Forest Plans

The Forest Plan states that management of the FC--RONR Wilderness will be in accordance with the FC--RONR Wilderness Management Plan. The changing of the schedule for removal of equipment and underground piping from the FC--RONR Wilderness does not change the intent of the FC--RONR Wilderness Management Plan, which is to

"manage those commercial and other special uses that are authorized in wilderness in a manner which results in the least possible impact on the wilderness resource." (Plan, p. 56).

Since this amendment provides for implementation of the intent of the Forest Plan, this is not a significant amendment to the Forest Plan.

V. Implementation

The conditions of the agreement were effective at the time the FC--RONR Wilderness Agreement between the Chief of the Forest Service and the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association was signed (June 4, 1990). This administrative action is to implement the agreement by:

Amending the Bitterroot, Boise, Challis, Nez Perce, Payette and Salmon National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans as follows:

Wherever FC--RONR Wilderness Management Plan is cited, the following is added: "as amended, May 8, 1991"
(date)

Amending the FC--RONR Wilderness Management Plan page 60-(2)(g) by changing wording from

"Existing caches will be phased out at the rate of one per year per outfitter beginning at the end of the 1986 season."

to

"100% reduction in 1991 in storage of items that are obtrusive and visible from main and access trails and from main camp area . Progress toward accomplishing the goal of promoting the use of lightweight, portable equipment to protect wilderness resource values will be reviewed in 1993 and a schedule of accomplishment established for any unresolved issues."

And page 61-(2)(i) from

"Issue direction to Wilderness Managers that the permanent piping of water from boxed-in springs is not an allowable improvement permitted in operating plans."

to

"Removal of all in-camp plumbing fixtures connected to water systems and underground piping to tents by 1990. Implementation of approved methods of water collection and distribution for stock needs that best protect the wilderness resource values by 1992."

VI. Appeal Rights

Because these plan amendments are the result of litigation, the Chief of the Forest Service has waived any further administrative review of the amendments pursuant to 36 CFR 217.18 (as stated in August 8, 1990 memo) .

VII. Contact Persons

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APPROVED:

/s/Christopher Risbrudt (for)
JOHN MUNMA
Regional Forester
Northern Region

May 8, 1991
Date

/s/ Gray F. Reynolds
GRAY F. REYNOLDS
Regional Forester
Intermountain Region

May 8, 1991
Date

APPENDIX A

Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Agreement

This agreement is pursuant to the lawsuit settlement for Idaho Outfitter and Guides Association (IOGA) v. U.S. Attorney, No. N-87-0426. A Task Force was appointed to review the issues litigated by the IOGA concerning decisions in the Frank Church--River of No Return (FCRONR) Wilderness Management Plan to change long-term operating practices by outfitters and guides, and reported to the Chief in December, 1988. On April 20, 1989, the Chief signed an interim direction for the 1989 field season. On January 11, 1990, Regional Foresters of R-1 and R-4 delivered their evaluation and recommendation of the interim direction.

The goal is to continue to promote the use of portable equipment that can be taken in and out of the wilderness at the beginning and end of each use season in order to achieve the purpose of the Wilderness Acts and protect wilderness resource values. This agreement will provide the outfitters with the time needed to replace equipment and adjust operations to achieve this, according to the following schedule:

Removal of dumps and boneyards. Schedule: 75 percent by 1990, 100 percent by 1991. (All percent reductions in this agreement establish a minimum reduction, and all dates are the end of that year.)

Removal of all tent structures, with poles stored upright in an unobtrusive manner. One ground log can be left on a case-by-case basis. Schedule: 67 percent by 1990, 100 percent by 1991.

Removal of furniture made with manufactured material (such as boards and plywood). Furniture made with native materials will be disassembled and stored unobtrusively. Schedule: 33 percent by 1990, 67 percent by 1991, 100 percent by 1992.

Reduction in storage of items that are obtrusive or visible from main and access trails and from main camp area. Schedule: 50 percent by 1990, 100 percent by 1991. Continue testing and evaluating lightweight, portable equipment.

Removal of all in-camp plumbing fixtures connected to water systems and underground piping to tents by 1990. Implementation of approved methods of water collection and distribution for stock needs that best protect the wilderness resource values by 1992.

Temporary facilities of native materials are to be dismantled and stored in an unobtrusive manner during periods of non-use of the campsite. Scheduled removal of materials listed above and specifics on location and size of items to be stored in an unobtrusive manner during periods of non-use will be detailed in the annual operating plan developed with each operator and District Ranger. Toilet structures are not an acceptable method of storing unwieldy equipment and will be removed. All opportunities to achieve the mutually-agreed upon goal will be utilized. Progress toward accomplishing the goal of promoting the use of lightweight, portable equipment to protect

wilderness resource values will be reviewed in 1993 and a schedule of accomplishment established for any unresolved items.

Regional Foresters of Regions 1 and 4, through the FCRONR Wilderness Board of Directors and Lead Working Group, will develop an implementation schedule stating which actions are to be completed, by camp and year, to achieve the removals listed above. The President of IOGA will provide input for the schedule for members of IOGA. Action items from the implementation schedule will be incorporated into each recreation service partner's annual operating plan starting in 1990.

Forest Service managers are to work closely with the outfitters as we move towards our long-term objectives governing the management and use of wilderness. Wilderness is a great resource of which we are all proud, and together we can protect wilderness for future generations while providing opportunities to visit and enjoy it.

APPROVED:

/s/George M. Leonard (for)
F. DALE ROBERTSON
Chief
United States Forest Service

June 4, 1990

/s/ Doug Tims
Doug Tims
President
Idaho Outfitters and Guides
Association

May 24, 1990

/s/ Stanley Potts
Stanley Potts
Vice President
Idaho Outfitters and Guides
Association

May 24, 1990

CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST

FOREST PLAN AMENDMENT # 2

January 27, 1992

Forest Plan Amendment # 2 reversed by Intermountain Regional
Forester
on June 22, 1992.

This means that Amendment # 2, which was the 1992 Challis National Forest Travel Plan, will not be implemented. The changes to the Forest Plan from this amendment were reversed, leaving the Forest Plan as it was prior to this Plan Amendment.

Challis National Forest

Forest Plan Amendments 3 - 8

Pages to be inserted into the Forest Plan

SPECIAL USE PERMITS

KIND OF USE	TOTAL CASES	TOTAL USES	TOTAL MILES R/W LENGTH	TOTAL ACRES PERMITTED
Agriculture	21	28	5.9	420.3
Industrial	7	7	0	20.8
Research, Study and Training	1	1	0	0.1
Utilities and Communication	25	27	104.6	402.4
Water Use	54	55	31.6	124.5
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Total Non-Recreation	133	144	212.1	1,166.6
Charge Permits		93		
Non-Charge Permits		51		

Interest exists for installation of additional electronics facilities, both at existing sites and on new sites.

Land line location and boundary marking of approximately 635 miles of exterior and interior boundary is needed to reduce resource conflict and potential trespass. At present, management emphasis is not placed on this activity.

b. Research Natural Areas (RNA's)

Research Natural Areas are relatively small land areas which typify important forest, shrubland, grassland, alpine, aquatic, geologic, and other natural situations that have special or unique characteristics of scientific interest and importance. Activities are limited to research, education, and monitoring changes in natural conditions.

The selection and establishment of RNA's is a component of the continuing Land and Resource Management Planning Process for National Forest System lands. The criterion for management of RNA's is for protection against inappropriate encroachment on and degradation of existing conditions.

The Challis National Forest has eight RNA's: Iron Bog and Meadow Canyon (both established in 1981), and Soldier Lakes; Surprise Valley; Merriam Lake Basin; Middle Canyon; Smiley Mountain; and Mohogany Creek (established in 1992).

Meadow Canyon totals 3,880 acres; 285 on the Challis National Forest and 3,595 on the Targhee National Forest. It was designated to protect a large number of unusual and rare plants, and some of the finest alpine tundra in Idaho.

Iron Bog Research Natural Area totals 434 acres adjacent to Iron Bog Creek. It was designated to protect a rare, dry climate sphagnum bog bordered by sagebrush/grass and Douglas-fir climax forest.

Middle Canyon totals about 2,200 acres in T6 and 7N, R29E. Designed to protect rare plant species, Great Basin vegetation, limestone cliffs, and fossils.

Mahogany Creek totals about 3,500 acres in T10N, R22 and 223E. It was designed to protect mountain mahogany types, forest types of Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, whitebark and limber pines, high mountain grasslands, and alpine grassland.

Merriam Lake Basin totals about 750 acres in T9, R23E. Designed to protect varied alpine, including tundra, vegetation typical of sites 2,400 miles to the north, truly alpine (above timberline) natural lakes, and numerous rare plant species.

Surprise Valley totals about 1,470 acres in T6N, R20 and 21E. It was designed to protect large wet meadows, small lakes, alpine communities in exceptionally good condition.

Smiley Mountain totals about 2,260 acres in T4 and 5N, R22E. Designed to protect large, wet meadows, small lakes, and alpine communities in extremely good condition.

Soldier Lakes totals about 175 acres in T14N, R10E within the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness. It is designed to protect aquatic types in high elevation lakes and subalpine fir forest on granitic rocks at elevations over 9,000 feet.

A team from the Forest and the Idaho Research Natural Areas Committee have identified the following three additional sites as proposed Research Natural Areas:

- 1) Sheep Mountain - Includes land on the Salmon and Targhee National Forests, and 278 acres on the Challis National Forest in T12N, R27E. Contain vegetation growing on a variety of substrata in adjacent sites, at an elevation of about 10,865 feet.
- 2) Cache Creek Lakes - About 2,000 acres in T17N, R15E within the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness. Aquatic and terrestrial systems associated with soils derived from volcanic rock at elevations between 7,800 and 9,880 feet.
- 3) Mystery Lake - About 465 acres in T13N, R14E within the Frank Church--River of Return Wilderness. Subalpine fir habitat types, alpine communities, lakes, and wet meadows on volcanic and granitic rock substratum. Elevation 9,000 to 10,329 feet.

Objective 5 - Firm occupancy conditions and permit termination dates will be determined and implemented by the end of the first decade.

11. Facilities

Goal 1

Manage Forest telecommunication system according to approved Forest Telecommunications Plan.

Goal 2

A road management program will be followed to ensure a safe, economical, functional, and environmentally sound transportation system that serves the resource management needs of the Forest.

Objective 1 - Reconstruct 400 miles of the presently substandard road system, by the end of the third decade in order to ensure safety, provide a maintainable road system and protect water quality.

Objective 2 - Identify roads not needed and close or put to bed.

Objective 3 - Construction of new roads will be to minimum standard necessary to serve identified needs and protect resources with emphasis on water quality.

Objective 4 - Road systems will be maintained to the minimum standard needed to ensure safety, minimal environmental impacts, protection of investment, and to allow for necessary resource activities.

Objective 5 - Enter into advantageous road maintenance agreements as opportunities arise.

Objective 6 - Develop and implement a road management program that considers the needs of all Forest resources.

Goal 3

Develop a management program for the operation and maintenance of administrative sites, buildings, and workcenters for the economic and efficient administration of the Forest.

Objective 1 - Correct health and safety deficiencies.

Objective 2 - Identify facility needs and establish a process for eliminating those not needed, that need replacement, or that require new construction.

Objective 3 - Maintain a Forest-wide Facilities Maintenance Plan.

Objective 4 - Maintain and monitor drinking water systems to ensure compliance with safe drinking water standards.

12. Research Natural Areas

Goal 1

Preserve the natural ecosystems in established and proposed Research Natural Areas.

d. Proposed Wilderness

- 1) Continue existing ORV closures or expand closures where needed to allow adverse impacts from ORV's to heal.
- 2) Maintain trails to the standards established in the District Trail Maintenance Plans.
- 3) Prohibit land-disturbing activities, except legal mineral activity, that would degrade the wilderness characteristics.

e. Special Areas

- 1) Protect the natural integrity of the established and proposed Research Natural Areas.
- 2) Deter structural improvements unless they provide protection of natural ecosystems.
- 3) No timber harvest.
- 4) No vegetation manipulation.

f. Off-Road Vehicles

- 1) Annually inventory high use ORV areas on the Forest, identifying areas of watershed damage.
- 2) Mitigate and/or rehabilitate past and present ORV damaged areas.
- 3) Initiate and enforce ORV restrictions and/or closures within areas where watershed damage is occurring, or where ORV use seriously impacts other resources, i.e., wildlife.
- 4) Sign to clearly indicate whether an area or trail is open, closed, or restricted to ORV use.
- 5) Designate unrestricted ORV use areas, specific ORV travel routes, and promote public awareness and utilization through the Travel Plan.
- 6) Treat, revegetate, and close (including various degrees of obliteration) all roads which are causing, or will cause, serious resource problem(s) and/or extensive user conflicts. Refer to the current Watershed Condition Inventory.
- 7) Program ORV improvement needs as prescribed within the Watershed Condition Inventory.
- 8) Relocate ORV crossings in riparian areas, where damage is occurring to avoid streambank and channel damage.

- 9) Discourage ORV use on wetlands and riparian areas.
- 10) Initiate ORV restrictions at existing/proposed wilderness trailheads.

- d. Establish forage utilization standards at levels which will yield 90% inherent bank stability or trends toward 90% where streams or other water bodies are involved.
- e. Discourage livestock concentrations in riparian areas and within 100 feet of lakes and perennial streams. Restrict livestock grazing in identified problem areas where necessary.
- f. Do not locate developments in floodplains and wetlands without proper protection of investments and prior assessment of all practicable alternative locations.
- g. Livestock driveways and trailing areas will be located away from riparian or streamside areas.
- h. Discourage camping along streams and within 100 feet of lakes in problem areas.
- i. Control recreational stock use in identified problem areas.
- j. Develop suitable silvicultural prescriptions to maintain riparian vegetation in as diverse and vigorous condition as possible. Within 100 feet of lake or wetland perimeters, timber harvest should not be programmed. Prohibit mechanical ground-disturbing activities within 50 feet of streambanks.
- k. Monitor activity effects on soil productivity within riparian areas to further refine riparian Best Management Practices.
- l. Monitor activities in riparian areas to ensure that management objectives are met.
- m. The Forest will develop a riparian classification scheme in cooperation with neighboring Forests and will inventory riparian areas.

12. Research Natural Areas

- a. Management and protection of the research natural areas (RNA's) will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes.
- b. To the extent possible, no activities of humans except the suppression of fires will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes.
- c. Activities such as livestock grazing and timber cutting (including firewood gathering) will not be permitted.

- d. Wildfires that originate within a RNA will be managed using the control strategy of the Appropriate Suppression Response system, while using suppression methods that will cause least disturbance to the RNA as a whole. Wildfires which have started and are burning outside the RNA, but threatening it, should be managed to try to prevent the fire from burning into, or through, the RNA.
- e. RNA's are areas reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for general recreation use. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game will be asked to remove all lakes and streams within RNA's from all stocking programs.
- f. No actions will be taken against insects, diseases, wild plants, or animals unless the Regional Forester and Station Director deem such action necessary to protect the features for which the Research Natural Area was established or to protect adjacent features.
- g. If exotic plants or animals have been, or are, introduced into the RNA, the Station Director and the Regional Forester shall exercise control measures that are in keeping with established management principles and standards to eradicate them, when practical.
- h. Neither livestock grazing nor prescribed burning will be used in RNA's to induce or maintain seral species. Some incidental livestock use may occur within specific RNA's but will be discouraged.
- i. At a minimum, one annual monitoring trip will be taken to the RNA by Forest Service personnel to ensure that only authorized use is occurring.

C. DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION OF THE FOREST

This section describes what the desired condition of the Forest should be resulting from implementation of the Preferred Alternatives direction in the Forest EIS.

1. Recreation

a. Developed Recreation

Existing sites will be hardened to prevent site deterioration.

b. Dispersed Recreation

The demand for dispersed use will not exceed capacity Forest-wide. However, some localized sites will be over-used. As timber roading increases, minor shifts in ROS class from non-motorized to motorized will occur. The anticipated budget will be adequate to provide facilities to reduce conflicts between user groups.

Users will be directed away from over-used areas. Corridors into wilderness will be managed to maintain a natural appearance.

Trails will be upgraded and maintained at levels sufficient to meet safety needs and provide quality recreation experiences. Trails will generally be maintained at Level I. Existing trailheads will be maintained or reconstructed to preserve existing capacity, and new ones will be provided as demands dictate.

The Forest will provide for diversified uses of trails and at the same time, stabilize trail maintenance program through a more even funding level each year.

Recreation special use permit administration will emphasize permit compliance.

c. Special Areas

The: Iron Bog; Meadow Canyon; Soldier Lakes; Surprise Valley; Smiley Mountain; Middle Canyon; Merriam Lake Basin; and Mohogany Creek Research Natural Areas will be protected. It is anticipated that Sheep Mountain, Cache Creek Lakes, and Mystery Lake will be designated as Research Natural Areas. The natural condition of these areas will be protected.

It is anticipated that a Borah Quake National Natural Area or geologic area will be established to protect part of the fault scarp. Interpretive services may be provided at the site. The area will be jointly examined with the BLM and the acres determined during the next few years.

It is recommended that the trail up Corral Creek, a tributary of Morgan Creek to the Big Hat Creek Trail on the Salmon Forest, be nominated as a National Recreation Trail. This coincides with and compliments the proposal by the Salmon National Forest.

Management Area #1

Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness
(Administered by the Challis National Forest)
782,255 Acres

Description

The Challis National Forest administers the southern third of the 2.35 million acre Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness. The western boundary is the ridgeline that separates the Middle Fork drainage from the South Fork of the Salmon River drainage. The southern boundary follows a series of road corridors and exclusions. The eastern boundary follows topographic features that separate the main Salmon River drainage from the Middle Fork drainage. The northern boundary is the Forest boundary with the Boise, Salmon and Payette National Forests.

The area ranges in elevation from 3,800 feet to over 10,000 feet. Topographical features include steep canyon ridges with numerous creeks draining into the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

Vegetation varies from ponderosa pine/bluebunch wheatgrass or Idaho fescue, and Douglas-fir/snowberry, at lower elevations, to subalpine fir types in areas above 6,000 feet.

General access is provided by State Highways 21 and 93. Numerous Forest roads branch from these highways to many of the wilderness trailheads. Several airstrips (both public and private) allow for additional access within the wilderness boundary.

The Middle Fork of the Salmon Wild and Scenic River is included in this management area. During the floating season, this part of the area receives heavy recreation use under both private and commercial permits.

The Soldier Lakes Research Natural Area located within this Management Area, is an area reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for other uses.

Desired Future Condition - Wilderness will remain unchanged and undeveloped.

MANAGEMENT AREA #1 - MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management

The United States Congress recognized that the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness is contained within parts of several national forests, all of which are developing land and resource management plans in compliance with Section 6 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-588). The Central Idaho Wilderness Act directs that the comprehensive management plan for the FC-RONR Wilderness be coordinated with these Forest Plans. This wilderness plan was completed and approved on March 11, 1985 and is hereby incorporated as part of this Forest Plan. The FC-RONR Management Plan provides the basic direction toward preserving the quality and integrity of the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness.

The Falconberry Guard Station is needed on an intermittent basis to meet wilderness management objectives and for administrative use. Due to an oversight, the Falconberry helispot was not included as an approved air access to the wilderness in the Wilderness Management Plan. The operation and maintenance of this helispot meets the requirements of safety and serviceability with minimum impacts on the wilderness resource. The Wilderness Plan will be corrected to include the Falconberry helispot.

The Soldier Lakes Research Natural Area located in this Management Area, is an area reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for other uses.

Recreation

Provide a broad range of opportunities for primitive recreation in a manner that protects and preserves the Wilderness.

Wildlife & Fish

Provide habitat conducive to maintaining the natural distribution and abundance of native species of wildlife and fish by allowing only natural processes to shape habitat and affect interactions among species.

Range

Provide for continued livestock grazing where established prior to designation of Wilderness, as directed by the Wilderness Act and subsequent Forest Service management direction.

Soil & Water

Preserve water bodies and stream courses in their natural state, and ensure that soil formation, alteration, and erosion occur at a rate not noticeably affected by human activity.

Minerals

Administer mining activity to assure the least possible impact on the Wilderness resource without unreasonable impairment of property rights, and provide for the orderly development of mineral resources.

Lands

Meet objectives stated in the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness Management Plan.

SOLDIER LAKES RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management and protection of the Soldier Lakes RNA will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes. To the extent possible, no activities of humans except the suppression of fires will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes. Such activities as livestock grazing and timber cutting will not be permitted. Fire will not be used as a tool to induce or maintain seral species.

Wildfires that originate within the area will be managed using the control strategy of the Appropriate Suppression Response system, while using suppression methods that will cause least disturbance to the RNA as a whole. Wildfires which have started and are burning outside the RNA, but threatening it, should be managed to try to prevent the fire from burning into or through the RNA.

No actions will be taken against insects, diseases, wild plants, or animals unless the Regional Forester and Station Director deem such action necessary to protect the features for which the Research Natural Area was established or to protect adjacent features. If exotic plants or animals have been, or are, introduced into the RNA, the Station Director and the Regional Forester shall exercise control measures that are in keeping with established management principles and standards to eradicate them, when practical.

At a minimum, one annual monitoring trip will be taken to the RNA by Forest Service personnel to ensure that only authorized use is occurring.

Neither livestock grazing nor prescribed burning will be used in the Soldier Lakes RNA to induce or maintain seral species. Some incidental livestock use may occur but will be discouraged within the RNA.

MANAGEMENT AREA #11

Pioneer Mountains

245,972 Acres

The Pioneer Mountains Management Area lies between the Mackay Front Management Area and the Sawtooth National Forest with which it forms a common boundary. Access is provided by the Trail Creek Road in the north, and the Cherry Creek Road from Antelope Creek and Highway 93, in the south. The road through Copper Basin connects the two routes.

The mountainous terrain varies from alpine basins, flats and benches, to rocky walls and mountain peaks. Glacial cirques with vertical relief of 3,000 to 4,000 feet are found at the base of many peaks. The Pioneer Range is the second highest in Idaho with Hyndman Peak exceeding 12,000 feet. There are gently rolling hills in the eastern portion of the area.

Numerous lakes and streams are located in the unit. Vegetation at the lower elevations consists of Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine scattered within a sagebrush and grass community. Spruce and wet sedge meadows occur throughout. At higher elevations, vegetations range from subalpine forests to alpine meadows under the barren mountain summits. The large and varied topographic features support habitat for diverse communities of plants and animals, and is characterized with high quality vegetative diversity. This area is classified as a western spruce/fir forest and sagebrush steppe ecosystem.

Current use includes livestock grazing, timber harvest, mining activity, hunting, fishing, camping, backpacking, horseback riding and snowmobiling.

Elk and mule deer are the most common big game species. Pronghorn antelope, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, mountain lion and black bear also inhabit the unit. Cold water resident lake and stream fisheries are present throughout the area.

The Surprise Valley Research Natural Area, and the Smiley Mountain Research Natural Area, located in this Management Area, are areas reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for other uses.

Desired Future Conditions - The management area will remain essentially unchanged and undeveloped. Dispersed recreation activities and opportunities will dominate the management strategy. Highly productive range lands will be intensively managed. That portion of the area proposed as Wilderness will remain in its natural condition.

MANAGEMENT AREA #11 - MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management in the proposed wilderness areas, Pioneer Mountain (48,000 acres) and White Clouds (8,000 acres), will emphasize protection of the wilderness attributes. The Surprise Valley and the Smiley Mountain Research Natural Areas, located in this Management Area, are areas reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for other uses. Management outside of those areas will emphasize maintenance of water quality, range administration, enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and dispersed recreation opportunities.

<u>Recreation</u>	Emphasize dispersed recreation and provide for developed recreation opportunities. Protect wilderness attributes of proposed wilderness areas. Protect the natural integrity of the two research Natural areas in this management area.
<u>Wildlife & Fish</u>	Emphasize habitat management for elk, moose, and upland game. Improve wildlife and fish habitat quality and maintain current capability levels through improvement projects and coordination with other resources. Emphasize maintaining and improving stream and lake habitat quality.
<u>Range</u>	Manage suitable range to maintain or improve present condition, and manage range to protect wilderness values within proposed wilderness areas.
<u>Timber</u>	Manage suitable lands for timber production. Emphasize management of the most productive and accessible stands.
<u>Soil and Water</u>	Protect or improve soil productivity and water quality.
<u>Lands</u>	Resolve boundary conflicts adjacent to and within National Forest System lands.
<u>Minerals</u>	Recognize highly mineralized character of Wildhorse and Starhope drainages.
<u>Facilities</u>	Construct, maintain and manage facilities to meet the needs of resource management activities.

SURPRISE VALLEY RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management and protection of the Surprise Valley RNA will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes. To the extent possible, no activities of humans except the suppression of fires will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes. Permitted livestock grazing and timber cutting will not be allowed.

Wildfires that originate within the area will be managed using the control strategy of the Appropriate Suppression Response system, while using suppression methods that will cause least disturbance to the RNA as a whole. Wildfires which have started and are burning outside the RNA, but threatening it, should be managed to try to prevent the fire from burning into or through the RNA.

The RNA is an area reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for general recreation use. Recreation use is of concern for this area and will be monitored. If recreation use is found to be causing adverse effects to the natural ecological processes within the RNA, an analysis will be undertaken by the Forest with input from the Station Director on the best method for resolving the situation.

To minimize negative impacts from recreation and trail use, trail locations may be improved to avoid detrimental impacts to the RNA values. Trail improvement may additionally confine and manage recreation traffic. Interpretative signing may be necessary to enhance the preservation of the RNA unique features. Directional signing may be limited to facilitate recreation movement through the RNA and onto further destinations, thereby serving to discourage destination camping within Surprise Valley. Incidental livestock use from recreationists may occur but will be discouraged within the RNA.

It will be recommended to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game that the stocking program be discontinued in the RNA.

No actions will be taken against insects, diseases, wild plants, or animals unless the Regional Forester and Station Director deem such action necessary to protect the features for which the Research Natural Area was established or to protect adjacent features. If exotic plants or animals have been, or are, introduced into the RNA, the Station Director and the Regional Forester shall exercise control measures that are in keeping with established management principles and standards to eradicate them, when practical.

The Regional Forester will request the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw the RNA from mineral entry after its establishment.

At a minimum, one annual monitoring trip will be taken to the RNA by Forest Service personnel to ensure that only authorized use is occurring.

Neither livestock grazing nor prescribed burning will be used in the Surprise Valley RNA to induce or maintain seral species.

SMILEY MOUNTAIN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management and protection of the Smiley Mountain RNA will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes. To the extent possible, no activities of humans except the suppression of fires will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes. Activities such as permitted livestock grazing and timber cutting will not be allowed.

Wildfires that originate within the area will be managed using the control strategy of the Appropriate Suppression Response system, while using suppression methods that will cause least disturbance to the RNA as a whole. Wildfires which have started and are burning outside the RNA, but threatening it, should be managed to try to prevent the fire from burning into or through the RNA.

The RNA is an area reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for general recreation use. It will be recommended to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game that the stocking program be discontinued in Lake # 12 and that no new stocking programs be started within the RNA.

No actions will be taken against insects, diseases, wild plants, or animals unless the Regional Forester and Station Director deem such action necessary to protect the features for which the Research Natural Area was established or to protect adjacent features. If exotic plants or animals have been, or are, introduced into the RNA, the Station Director and the Regional Forester shall exercise control measures that are in keeping with established management principles and standards to eradicate them, when practical.

The Regional Forester will request the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw the RNA from mineral entry after its establishment.

At a minimum, one annual monitoring trip will be taken to the RNA by Forest Service personnel to ensure that only authorized use is occurring.

Neither livestock grazing nor prescribed burning will be used in the Smiley Mountain RNA to induce or maintain seral species. Some incidental livestock use may occur but will be discouraged within the RNA.

MANAGEMENT AREA #16

BORAH PEAK

156,220 Acres

The Borah Peak Management Area comprises the central one-third of the Lost River Mountain Range. Its boundaries can be easily reached by the Double Springs Pass Road, Pass Creek Road, and other roads and trails leading off Highway 93 and Pahsimeroi Valley roads.

This unit is characterized by high peaks, large cirque basins, steep slopes and narrow canyon bottoms below cirque basins, leading to alluvial fans. The area is very rugged, with outstanding geological features due to repeated glaciation. One of the most outstanding features is Borah Peak, the highest mountain in Idaho, reaching 12,662 feet in elevation.

The diversity of vegetation produces a broad spectrum of life zones ranging from semi-arid shrublands to alpine rock/scree. Several vegetation types are present, including sagebrush and grass, mountain mahogany, spruce, subalpine fir, whitebark pine, and Douglas-fir. The steep slopes and high mountain tops and ridges provide a scenic backdrop to the valley ranches and communities. The surrounding valleys include irrigated hayfields and pastures, and riparian willow/cottonwood plant communities.

Current uses include grazing, minerals and gas exploration, timber and firewood harvest, and dispersed recreation including hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain climbing and cross-country skiing.

Major scenic attractions include Mt. Borah, and "Little Switzerland" in the upper reaches of the Pahsimeroi. The back country nature and diversity of vegetation types provide habitat for elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope and a multitude of other game and non-game animal species. Historically, mountain goat occupied the range, but today, none exist. There are several small high mountain lakes, most of which contain fisheries.

The Merriam Lake Basin Research Natural Area and the Mohogany Creek Reasearch Natural Area are located in this Management Area, and are areas reserved for scientific research and education. They will not be promoted for other uses.

Desire Future Conditions - The majority of this area is proposed for inclusion into the National Wilderness System. It will therefore remain in its existing state and its wilderness attributes will be protected. The remaining lands outside of the proposed wilderness will be managed with modest improvements.

MANAGEMENT AREA #16 - MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management of the proposed Borah Peak Wilderness Area (119,000 acres) will emphasize protection of wilderness attributes. Manage the Merriam Lake Basin Research Natural Area (RNA) and the Mahogany Creek RNA in accordance with the Forest-Wide Standards and Guidelines and The Establishment Record for the RNA's. Management of the remainder of this management area will emphasize range administration and enhancement of wildlife habitat.

<u>Recreation</u>	Manage the proposed Wilderness to protect the Wilderness attributes. Provide dispersed recreation opportunities. Protect: a) selected sections of the earthquake scarp, b) cultural and historic sites or features.
<u>Wildlife & Fish</u>	Emphasize management of big game. Protect Peregrine falcon habitat when identified. Improve fish and wildlife habitat productivity through improvement projects and coordination with other resources.
<u>Range</u>	Manage suitable range to maintain or improve present condition, and manage range to protect wilderness values of the proposed wilderness area.
<u>Timber</u>	Manage the most productive and accessible timber lands, outside of the proposed wilderness, for timber production.
<u>Soil and Water</u>	Maintain or improve water quality and soil productivity.
<u>Lands</u>	Ensure access to National Forest lands. Resolve boundary conflicts with adjacent or interior private and State lands.
<u>Minerals</u>	Protect the wilderness values within the proposed wilderness. Oil and gas leases in the proposed wilderness will not be issued until formal Congressional action.
<u>Facilities</u>	Construct, maintain and manage facilities to meet the needs of other resource management activities.

MERRIAM LAKE BASIN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management and protection of the Merriam Lake Basin RNA will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes. To the extent possible, no activities of humans except the suppression of fires will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes. Such activities as livestock grazing and timber cutting will not be permitted.

Wildfires that originate within the area will be managed using the control strategy of the Appropriate Suppression Response system, while using suppression methods that will cause least disturbance to the RNA as a whole. Wildfires which have started and are burning outside the RNA, but threatening it, should be managed to try to prevent the fire from burning into or through the RNA.

Recreational use will be monitored and controlled if it affects natural ecological processes.

No actions will be taken against insects, diseases, wild plants, or animals unless the Regional Forester and Station Director deem such action necessary to protect the features for which the Research Natural Area was established or to protect adjacent features. If exotic plants or animals have been, or are, introduced into the RNA, the Station Director and the Regional Forester shall exercise control measures that are in keeping with established management principles and standards to eradicate them, when practical.

At a minimum, one annual monitoring trip will be taken to the RNA by Forest Service personnel to ensure that only authorized use is occurring.

Neither livestock grazing nor prescribed burning will be used in the Merriam Lake Basin RNA to induce or maintain seral species. Some incidental livestock use may occur but will be discouraged within the RNA.

MAHOGANY CREEK RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management and protection of the Mahogany Creek RNA will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes. To the extent possible, no activities of humans except the suppression of fires will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes. Such activities as livestock grazing and timber cutting will not be permitted.

After establishment, a request will be made to the BLM to withdraw the RNA from mineral entry.

Fire will not be used as a tool to induce or maintain seral species. Wildfires that originate within the area will be managed using the control strategy of the Appropriate Suppression Response system, while using suppression methods that will cause least disturbance to the RNA as a whole. Wildfires which have started and are burning outside the RNA, but threatening it, should be managed to try to prevent the fire from burning into or through the RNA.

Insects, diseases, and animals will not be controlled unless they endanger areas adjacent to the RNA.

Recreational use will be monitored and restricted if it affects natural ecological processes. When the Borah Peak Wilderness is established by Congress, the management direction of the Congressional designation will take precedence.

As a minimum, one annual monitoring trip will be taken to the RNA by Forest Service personnel to ensure that only authorized use is occurring.

Neither livestock grazing nor prescribed burning will be used in the Mahogany Creek RNA to induce or maintain seral species.

MANAGEMENT AREA #14

SOUTH LEMHI

79,981 Acres

The South Lemhi Management Area is located on the west side of the southern end of the Lemhi Mountain Range. The ridgecrest forms a common boundary with the Targhee National Forest. Access into the area is available through several roads originating from Highway 22. The area is sparsely roaded.

The Lemhi Range is a long, narrow range of mountains that are much more typical of the Great Basin Ranges than they are of the Northern Rocky Mountains with which they are associated. Elevation of the area ranges from about 6,000 feet to 12,197 feet at the summit of Diamond Peak. Eastern slopes rise sharply from the Birch Creek Valley, eventually giving away to barren rock and talus slopes. Numerous canyons with steep, rocky slopes dissect the mountain range. The western half drains into the Little Lost River.

The area is sparsely vegetated with a considerable amount of barren rock. The foothills and lower south-facing slopes are covered with mountain mahogany, sagebrush, and patches or stringers of Douglas-fir, and some lodgepole pine. Vegetation is very sparse in the higher elevations. The two major ecosystems in the area are the sagebrush steppe and the western spruce/fir forest.

Current use includes livestock grazing along the foothills and canyon bottoms, big game hunting, prospecting and limited backpack type recreation. There is no extensive use of the area.

The eastern half contains seven allotments (four cattle and three sheep allotments). Some of the sheep allotments are only useable when snow is available as a water source. The western half contains seven allotments (6 cattle and 1 sheep allotments).

Recreation use is light. Primary use is related to horseback riding and hiking with the most use occurring during hunting season.

There are two active mines in the area (Foss Mountain and Camp Creek). The south end of the range is heavily mineralized. Most of the area is under lease for oil and gas, or has lease applications pending.

Until the decline in the past ten years, mule deer were plentiful along this slope. Currently the area supports moderate populations. Pronghorn antelope are now the most numerous of the wild ungulates but they are usually found on the valley floor. A few elk are resident to the area. Bighorn sheep were released in the area, in 1984, in cooperation with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Mountain goats are present.

The Middle Canyon Research Natural Area located in this Management Area, is an area reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for other uses.

Desired Future Conditions - The management area will remain essentially undeveloped.

MANAGEMENT AREA #14 - MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management will emphasize dispersed recreation opportunities and enhancement of wildlife habitat. Manage the Middle Canyon Research Natural Area (RNA) in accordance with the Forest-Wide Standards and Guidelines and The Establishment Record for this RNA.

<u>Recreation</u>	Emphasize dispersed recreation opportunities. Protect and preserve unique, natural, geological, cultural and historic sites or features.
<u>Wildlife & Fish</u>	Improve wildlife habitat productivity through improvement projects and coordination with other resources. Maintain or improve the current fish habitat. Encourage increases in bighorn sheep populations and transplants.
<u>Range</u>	Manage suitable range to maintain or improve present condition. Maintain coordination with BLM.
<u>Timber</u>	Manage suitable Forest lands for timber production. Emphasize management of the most productive and accessible stands.
<u>Soil and Water</u>	Protect or improve soil productivity and water quality.
<u>Lands</u>	Resolve boundary conflicts with private land. Ensure needed access to National Forest System lands.
<u>Minerals</u>	Exploration, location, leasing and development of energy and non-energy minerals will be coordinated with other resources.
<u>Facilities</u>	Construct, maintain and manage facilities to meet the needs of resource management activities.

MIDDLE CANYON RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management and protection of the Middle Canyon RNA will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes. To the extent possible, no activities of humans except the suppression of fires will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes. Such activities as livestock grazing and timber cutting (including Firewood gathering) will not be permitted.

The present road into Middle Canyon will be permanently closed. The trail from the end of the road up Middle Canyon will not be maintained.

Wildfires that originate within the area will be managed using the control strategy of the Appropriate Suppression Response system, while using suppression methods that will cause least disturbance to the RNA as a whole. Wildfires which have started and are burning outside the RNA, but threatening it, should be managed to try to prevent the fire from burning into or through the RNA.

The RNA is an area reserved for scientific research and education, and will not be promoted for general recreation use.

No actions will be taken against insects, diseases, wild plants, or animals unless the Regional Forester and Station Director deem such action necessary to protect the features for which the Research Natural Area was established or to protect adjacent features. If exotic plants or animals have been, or are, introduced into the RNA, the Station Director and the Regional Forester shall exercise control measures that are in keeping with established management principle and standards to eradicate them, when practical.

The Regional Forester will request the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw the RNA from mineral entry after its establishment.

At a minimum, one annual monitoring trip will be taken to the RNA by Forest Service personnel to ensure that only authorized use is occurring.

Neither livestock grazing nor prescribed burning will be used in the Middle Canyon RNA to induce or maintain seral species. Some incidental livestock use may occur but will be discouraged within the RNA.

CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST

FOREST PLAN

AMENDMENT # 9

FOREST TRAVEL PLAN

July 26, 1993

**CHALLIS FOREST PLAN
TRAVEL PLAN AMENDMENT
CHANGES TO THE FOREST PLAN**

The following changes are made to the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Challis National Forest as a result of the decision made on July 26, 1993 to implement Alternative 8 from the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Forest Travel Plan (EA dated April, 1993).

Changes to the Forest Plan are shown below by the Forest Plan page number and the clause number (or letter) where a change is to be made.

1. Page IV-12 Clause d. "Proposed Wilderness"

Reword standard "1)" to the following:

1) Continue existing ORV closures or expand closures where needed to allow adverse impacts from ORV's to heal. May allow ORV use to continue on the following roads and/or trails:

- a. **Toolbox-Herd Peak Trail # 051 - Between the ridgetop at the head of Toolbox Canyon, to Herd Peak - on the two short segments of this trail which dip into the proposed wilderness area; two-wheeled motorized and mechanized vehicles only.**
- b. **Wildhorse Road # 136 - From proposed wilderness boundary (1/4 mile above Wildhorse Campground) to end of current road; no vehicle size restrictions.**
- c. **Long Lost Creek Road # 434 - From proposed wilderness boundary to trailhead for Long Lost Trail # 194; no vehicle size restrictions.**
- d. **Long Lost Trail # 194 - From Long Lost Creek Road # 434 to end of trail; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles only.**
- e. **Swauger Lakes Trail # 091 - From Long Lost Creek Road # 434 to Dry Creek Trail # 240; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles only.**
- f. **Long Lost-Wet Creek Trail # 245 - From Long Lost Trail # 194 to Shadow Lakes; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles only.**

- g. Bear-Wet Creek Trail # 092 - That portion of the trail which is in the Borah Peak proposed wilderness; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles permitted from July 1st to Sept. 30th only.**
- h. Sawmill Gulch Road # 411 - From proposed wilderness boundary to existing mine; no vehicle size restrictions.**

2. Page IV-12 (Revised 6/8/92) Clause f. "Off-Road Vehicles"

Reword standard "4)" to the following:

- 4) Positive signing will be installed to explain what travel opportunities are available and the reasons for, and an explanation of, any closures and/or restrictions. Signing will be intended to provide users with an understanding of resource concerns and compliance with restrictions.**

3. Page IV-12(a) (Revised 6/8/92)

Reword standard "10)" to the following:

- 10) Initiate ORV restrictions at trailheads wherever possible.**

4. Page IV-13

A. Reword standard "12)" to the following:

- 12) All recommended wilderness will be closed to motorized and mechanized use, except as noted under the Forest-wide standards and guidelines for "Proposed Wilderness" (page IV-12).**

(Note: The standard referenced here is the standard shown on page 1 of this Forest Plan amendment.)

B. Add the following two standards to the end of the existing standards on Off-road Vehicles (immediately before the Wildlife and Fish standards).

- 14) **On National Forest lands where travel (motorized and/or mechanized) is restricted to designated routes only, off-route travel is limited to within 300 feet either side the of designated routes and for the purposes of access to camping sites, retrieval of big game carcasses, or for firewood gathering; unless otherwise authorized by a properly executed Forest Service permit.**
- 15) **The Forest Travel Plan will be displayed on a map designed to be easily understood by the public.**

5. Page IV-85

Revise the second "A01" statement to read as follows:

Maintain existing ORV area closures within the proposed Boulder/White Clouds wilderness, except that the Toolbox - Herd Peak trail # 051 will be open to motorized and/or mechanized use.

6. Page IV-107

Revise the third "A01" statement to read as follows:

Maintain existing ORV area closures. Within the proposed Pioneer Mountains wilderness, only the Wildhorse Road # 136 will be open to motorized and/or mechanized use.

7. Page IV-139

Revise the first statement under "A12" to read as follows:

Maintain existing ORV area closures. Within the proposed Borah Peak wilderness, motorized and mechanized use will be allowed to continue on the following routes:

a. Long Lost Creek Road # 434 - From proposed wilderness boundary to trailhead for Long Lost Trail # 194; no vehicle size restrictions.

b. Long Lost Trail # 194 - From Long Lost Creek Road # 434 to end of trail; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles only.

c. Swauger Lakes Trail # 091 - From Long Lost Creek Road # 434 to Dry Creek Trail # 240; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles only.

d. Long Lost-Wet Creek Trail # 245 - From Long Lost Trail # 194 to Shadow Lakes; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles only.

e. Bear-Wet Creek Trail # 092 - That portion of the trail which is in the Borah Peak proposed wilderness; two-wheel, motorized and mechanized vehicles permitted from July 1st to Sept. 30th only.

f. Sawmill Gulch Road # 411 - From proposed wilderness boundary to existing mine; no vehicle size restrictions.

CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST

FOREST PLAN

AMENDMENT # 10

**OUTFITTER AND GUIDE OPERATIONS
IN THE
FRANK CHURCH -- RIVER OF NO RETURN
WILDERNESS
per the
COURT APPROVED REMEDIAL PLAN**

July 20, 1994

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Challis
National
Forest

H/C 63, Box 1671
Challis, ID 83226

Reply to: 1920/2320

Date: September 8, 1994

RE: Amendment Number 10 to the Challis Forest Plan

Dear Forest Management Participant:

Enclosed is a letter from the Regional Forester, Intermountain Region, which amends the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness (FC--RONRW) Management Plan and the Forest Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans) for the Bitterroot, Boise, Salmon, Challis, Payette, and Nez Perce National Forests. This is amendment number 10 for the Challis Forest Plan. The amendment is the result of a March 15 Court Order adopting the Forest Service Remedial Plan (enclosed).

You are being notified because you are on the mailing list for the Challis National Forest - Forest Plan. In the interest of timely notification, not all of the mailing lists for every Forest were reviewed to eliminate duplication. If you receive more than one notification letter, please disregard the additional copies.

The following changes are needed to your plans:

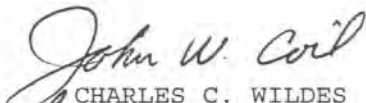
1. Make the following pen and ink changes to your Forest Plans:

Wherever FC--RONRW Management Plan is cited, the following is added:
"as amended, July 1994."

2. Replace existing pages 60 through 62 of the FC--RONRW Management Plan with the enclosed pages 60, 61, 61a, and 62.

If you have any questions regarding this plan amendment, please notify any of the contact persons listed in the enclosed letter.

Sincerely,


CHARLES C. WILDES
for Forest Supervisor
Challis National Forest

Enclosure

CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST

FOREST PLAN

AMENDMENT # 11

**INTERIM STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING
ANADROMOUS FISH-PRODUCING WATERSHEDS
in
EASTERN OREGON AND WASHINGTON, IDAHO,
AND PORTIONS OF CALIFORNIA**

March 9, 1995

FOREST PLAN AMENDMENT NUMBER 11

PACFISH GUIDELINES

This Forest Plan amendment is a result of a decision made on February 24, 1995 by Jack Ward Thomas, Chief of the Forest Service regarding an Environmental Assessment for the Interim Strategies for Managing Anadromous Fish-producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and Portions of California (also known as PACFISH). A part of this decision include amending the Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) for the Challis National Forest. This amendment should be placed in the section of the Forest Plan entitled "Forest-Wide Management Direction, Standards and Guidelines". In order to keep this information together, the entire following amendment should be place as a whole following page IV-33(a) (revised 6/8/92).

13. Anadromous Fish

Goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, and procedures (together referred to as "management direction") are applied to proposed projects and activities, as well as ongoing projects and activities that pose an unacceptable risk.

The adoption of this direction could lead to deferring or suspending some resource management projects and activities within the Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas (RHCAs, described below) or that degrade RHCAs during the interim period. Adoption of these requirements during the interim period would not lead to the permanent removal of any project or activity from the RHCAs. The potential for permanent removal or elimination of any activity from the RHCAs is being examined in the geographically-specific environmental analyses.

RIPARIAN GOALS (GOALS)

The goals establish an expectation of the characteristics of healthy, functioning watersheds, riparian areas, and associated fish habitats. Since the quality of water and fish habitat in aquatic systems is inseparably related to the integrity of upland and riparian areas within the watersheds, this section articulates several goals for watershed, riparian, and stream channel conditions. The goals are to maintain or restore:

- (1) water quality to a degree that provides for stable and productive riparian and aquatic ecosystems;
- (2) stream channel integrity, channel processes, and the sediment regime (including the elements of timing, volume, and character of sediment input and transport) under which the riparian and aquatic ecosystems developed;

- (3) instream flows to support healthy riparian and aquatic habitats, the stability and effective function of stream channels, and the ability to route flood discharges;
- (4) natural timing and variability of the water table elevation in meadows and wetlands;
- (5) diversity and productivity of native and desired non-native plant communities in riparian zones;
- (6) riparian vegetation to:
 - (a) provide an amount and distribution of large woody debris characteristic of natural aquatic and riparian ecosystems;
 - (b) provide adequate summer and winter thermal regulation within the riparian and aquatic zones; and
 - (c) help achieve rates of surface erosion, bank erosion, and channel migration characteristic of those under which the communities developed.
- (7) riparian and aquatic habitats necessary to foster the unique genetic fish stocks that evolved within the specific geo-climatic region; and
- (8) habitat to support populations of well-distributed native and desired non-native plant, vertebrate, and invertebrate populations that contribute to the viability of riparian-dependent communities.

RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES (RMOs)

Landscape-scale interim RMOs describing good habitat for anadromous fish were developed using stream inventory data for pool frequency, large woody debris, bank stability and lower bank angle, and width to depth ratio. Applicable published and non-published scientific literature was used to define favorable water temperatures. All of the described features may not occur in a specific segment of stream within a watershed, but all generally should occur at the watershed scale for stream systems of moderate to large size (3rd to 7th order).

Interim RMOs may be modified to better reflect conditions that are attainable in a specific watershed or stream reach based on local geology, topography, climate, and potential vegetation. Generally, RMO modifications will require completion of watershed analysis to provide the ecological basis for the change. However, RMOs may be modified in the absence of watershed analysis where watershed or stream reach specific data support the change.

In all cases, RMO modifications, the rationale supporting those changes, and the effects of the changes will be documented. Within the range of listed salmon, modification of RMOs will be done in consultation with NMFS. The interim RMOs for stream channel conditions provide the "criteria" against which attainment, or progress toward attainment, of the riparian goals is measured. Interim RMOs provide the target toward which Agency managers will be aiming as they conduct resource management activities across the landscape. However, interim RMOs are not to establish a ceiling for what constitutes good habitat conditions. Actions that reduce habitat quality, whether existing conditions are better or worse than objective values, are inconsistent with the purpose of this interim direction. Without the benchmark provided by measurable RMOs habitat suffers a continual erosion. As indicated parenthetically below, some of the objectives apply to forested ecosystems only, some to non-forested ecosystems, and some to all ecosystems regardless of whether or not they are forested. Objectives for six environmental features have been identified, including one key feature (kf) and five supporting features (sf). These features are good indicators of ecosystem health, are quantifiable, and are subject to accurate, repeatable measurements."

Interim RMOs apply to streams in watersheds with anadromous fish. Each of the interim objectives must be met or exceeded before general habitat conditions would be considered good for anadromous fish. However, application of the interim RMOs requires thorough analysis. That is, if the objective for an important feature such as pool frequency is met or exceeded, there may be some latitude in assessing the importance of the objectives for other features that contribute to good habitat conditions. For example, in headwater steelhead streams with an abundance of pools created by large boulders, fewer pieces of large wood might still constitute good habitat. The goal is to achieve a high level of habitat diversity and complexity, through a combination of habitat features, to meet the life-history requirements of the anadromous fish community inhabiting a watershed.

INTERIM RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

<u>Habitat Feature</u>	<u>Interim Objectives</u>
Pool Frequency (kf) (all systems)	Varies by channel width, see below:
wetted width in feet:	10 20 25 50 75 100 125 150 200
number pools per mile:	96 56 47 26 23 18 14 12 9
Water Temperature (sf)	No measurable increase in maximum water temperature*
	Maximum water temperatures below 64F within migration and rearing habitats and below 60F within spawning habitats.
Large Woody Debris (sf) (forested systems)	Coastal California, Oregon and Washington. >80 pieces per mile; >24 inch diameter; >50 foot length.
	East of Cascade Crest in Oregon, Washington, Idaho. >20 pieces per mile; >12 inch diameter; >35 foot length.
Bank Stability (sf) (non-forested systems)	>80 percent stable
Lower Bank Angle (sf) (non-forested systems)	>75 percent of banks with <90 degree angle (i.e., undercut).
Width/Depth Ratio (sf) (all systems)	<10, mean wetted width divided by mean depth

*7-day moving average of daily maximum temperature measured as the average of the maximum daily temperature of the warmest consecutive 7-day period.

RIPARIAN HABITAT CONSERVATION AREAS (RHCAs)

Interim RHCAs will be delineated in every anadromous watershed on Agency administered lands within the geographic range of the proposed action. RHCAs are portions of watersheds where riparian-dependent resources receive primary emphasis, and management activities are subject to specific standards and guidelines. RHCAs include traditional riparian corridors, wetlands, intermittent streams, and other areas that help maintain the integrity of aquatic ecosystems by (1) influencing the delivery of coarse sediment, organic matter, and woody debris to streams, (2) providing root strength for channel stability, (3) shading the stream, and (4) protecting water quality (Naiman et al. 1992).

Interim RHCA widths adequate to protect streams from non-channelized sediment inputs should be sufficient to provide other riparian functions, including delivery of organic matter and woody debris, stream shading, and bank stability (Brazier and Brown 1973, Gregory et al. 1984, Steinblums et al. 1984, Beschta et al. 1987, McDade et al. 1990, Sedell and Beschta 1991, Belt et al. 1992). The effectiveness of riparian conservation areas in influencing sediment delivery from non-channelized flow is highly variable. A review by Belt et al. (1992) of studies in Idaho (Haupt 1959a and 1959b, Ketcheson and Megehan 1990, Burroughs and King (1985 and 1989) and elsewhere (Trimble and Sartz 1957, Packer 1967, Swift 1986) concluded that non-channelized sediment flow rarely travels more than 300 feet and that 200-300 foot riparian "filter strips" are generally effective at protecting streams from sediment from non-channelized flow.

The interim RHCA widths may be increased where necessary to achieve riparian management goals and objectives, or decreased where interim widths are not needed to attain RMOs or avoid adverse effects to listed salmon. Generally, RHCA modifications will require completion of Watershed Analysis to provide the ecological basis for the change. However, RHCAs may be modified in the absence of Watershed Analysis where stream reach or site-specific data support the change. In all cases, RHCA modifications, the rationale supporting those changes, and the effects of the changes will be documented. Within the range of listed salmon, modification of RHCAs will be done in consultation with NMFS.

STANDARD WIDTHS DEFINING INTERIM RHCAs

Four categories of stream or water body, and the standard widths for each are:

Category 1 - Fish-bearing streams: Interim RHCAs consist of the stream and the area on either side of the stream extending from the edges of the active stream channel to the top of the inner gorge, or to the outer edges of the 100-year flood plain, or to the outer edges of riparian vegetation, or to a distance equal to the height of two site-potential trees, or 300 feet slope distance (600 feet, including both side of the stream channel) < whichever is greatest.

Category 2 - Permanently flowing non-fish-bearing stream: Interim RHCAs consist of the stream and the area on either side of the stream extending from the edges of the active stream channel to the top of the inner gorge, or to the outer edges of the 100-year flood plain, or to the outer edges of riparian vegetation, or to a distance equal to the height of one site-potential tree, or 150 feet slope distance (300 feet, including both sides of the stream channel), whichever is greatest.

Category 3 - Ponds, lakes, reservoirs, and wetlands greater than 1 acre: Interim RHCAs consist of the body of water or wetland and the area to the outer edges of the riparian vegetation, or to the extent of the seasonally saturated soil, or to the extent of moderately and highly unstable areas, or to a distance equal to the height of one site-potential tree, or 150 feet slope distance from the edge of the maximum pool elevation of constructed ponds and reservoirs or from the edge of the wetland, pond or lake, whichever is greatest.

Category 4 - Seasonally flowing or intermittent streams, wetlands less than 1 acre, landslides, and landslide-prone areas: This category includes features with high variability in size and site-specific characteristics. At a minimum the interim RHCAs must include:

- a. the extent of landslides and landslide-prone areas.
- b. the intermittent stream channel and the area to the top of the inner gorge.
- c. the intermittent stream channel or wetland and the area to the outer edges of the riparian vegetation.
- d. for Key Watersheds, the area from the edges of the stream channel, wetland, landslide, or landslide-prone area to a distance equal to the height of one site-potential tree, or 100 feet slope distance, whichever is greatest.
- e. for watersheds not identified as Key Watersheds, the area from the edges of the stream channel, wetland, landslide, or landslide-prone area to a distance equal to the height of one-half site potential tree, or 50 feet slope distance, whichever is greatest.

In non-forested rangeland ecosystems, the interim RHCA width for permanently flowing streams in categories 1 and 2 is the extent of the 100-year flood plain.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Project and site-specific standards and guidelines listed below will apply to all RHCAs and to projects and activities in areas outside RHCAs that would degrade them. The combination of the standards and guidelines for RHCAs specified below with the standards and guidelines of existing forest plans and LUPs will provide a benchmark for management actions that reflects increased sensitivities and a commitment to ecosystem management.

The standards and guidelines listed below would be applied to proposed projects and activities, as well as ongoing projects and activities that pose unacceptable risk to anadromous fish. Due to the short-term duration of this interim direction, provisions for development and implementation of road/transportation management plans and the relocation, elimination, or reconstruction of existing roads, facilities, and other improvements (i.e., RF-2 c, RF-3 a and c, RF-4, RF-5, GM-2, RM-1 and MM-2) will be initiated but are unlikely to be completed during the interim period. Where existing roads, facilities, and other improvements found to be causing an unacceptable risk cannot be relocated, eliminated, or reconstructed, those existing improvements will be explored as part of the long-term strategy being developed in the geographically-specific environmental analyses. Also, due to the short-term duration of this direction, adjustments to management not within the sole discretion of the Agencies (i.e., RF-1, LH-3, RA-1, WR-2, FW-3 and FW-4) will be initiated but are unlikely to be completed during the interim period.

Timber Management

- TM-1. Prohibit timber harvest, including fuelwood cutting, in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas, except as described below. Do not include Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas in the land base used to determine the Allowable Sale Quantity, but any volume harvested can contribute to the timber sale program.
- a. Where catastrophic events such as fire, flooding, volcanic, wind, or insect damage result in degraded riparian conditions, allow salvage and fuelwood cutting in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas only where present and future woody debris needs are met, where cutting would not retard or prevent attainment of other Riparian Management Objectives, and where adverse effects on listed anadromous fish can be avoided. For watersheds with listed salmon or designated critical habitat, complete Watershed Analysis prior to salvage cutting in RHCAs.
 - b. Apply silvicultural practices for Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas to acquire desired vegetation characteristics where needed to attain Riparian Management Objectives. Apply silvicultural practices in a manner that does not retard attainment of Riparian Management Objectives and that avoids adverse effects on listed anadromous fish.

Roads Management

- RF-1. Cooperate with Federal, Tribal, State, and county agencies, and cost-share partners to achieve consistency in road design, operation, and maintenance necessary to attain Riparian Management Objectives.
- RF-2. For each existing or planned road, meet the Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish by:
- a. completing Watershed Analyses prior to construction of new roads or landing in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas.
 - b. minimizing road and landing locations in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas.
 - c. initiating development and implementation of a Road Management Plan or a Transportation Management Plan. At a minimum, address the following items in the plan:
 1. Road design criteria, elements, and standards that govern construction and reconstruction.
 2. Road management objectives for each road.
 3. Criteria that govern road operation, maintenance, and management.
 4. Requirements for pre-, during-, and post-storm inspections and maintenance.
 5. Regulation of traffic during wet periods to minimize erosion and sediment delivery and accomplish other objectives.
 6. Implementation and effectiveness monitoring plans for road stability, drainage, and erosion control.
 7. Mitigation plans for road failures.
 - d. avoiding sediment delivery to streams from the road surface.
 1. Outsloping of the roadway surface is preferred, except in cases where outsloping would increase sediment delivery to streams or where outsloping is unfeasible or unsafe.
 2. Route road drainage away from potentially unstable stream channels, fills, and hillslopes.
 - e. avoiding disruption of natural hydrologic flow paths.

f. avoiding sidecasting of soils or snow. Sidecasting of road material is prohibited on road segments within or abutting RHCAs in watersheds containing designated critical habitat for listed anadromous fish.

RF-3. Determine the influence of each road on the Riparian Management Objectives. Meet Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish by:

a. reconstructing road and drainage features that do not meet design criteria or operation and maintenance standards, or that have been shown to be less effective than designed for controlling sediment delivery, or that retard attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, or do not protect designated critical habitat for listed anadromous fish from increased sedimentation.

b. prioritizing reconstruction based on the current and potential damage to listed anadromous fish and their designated critical habitat, the ecological value of the riparian resources affected, and the feasibility of options such as helicopter logging and road relocation out of Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas.

c. closing and stabilizing or obliterating, and stabilizing roads not needed for future management activities. Prioritize these actions based on the current and potential damage to listed anadromous fish and their designated critical habitat, and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected.

RF-4. Construct new, and improve existing, culverts, bridges, and other stream crossings to accommodate a 100-year flood, including associated bedload and debris, where those improvements would/do pose a substantial risk to riparian conditions. Substantial risk improvements include those that do not meet design and operation maintenance criteria, or that have been shown to be less effective than designed for controlling erosion, or that retard attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, or that do not protect designated critical habitat from increased sedimentation. Base priority for upgrading on risks to listed anadromous fish and their designated critical habitat and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected. Construct and maintain crossings to prevent diversion of streamflow out of the channel and down the road in the event of crossing failure.

RF-5. Provide and maintain fish passage at all road crossings of existing and potential fish-bearing streams.

Grazing Management

- GM-1. Modify grazing practices (e.g., accessibility of riparian areas to livestock, length of grazing season, stocking levels, timing of grazing, etc.) that retard or prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or are likely to adversely affect listed anadromous fish. Suspend grazing if adjusting practices is not effective in meeting Riparian Management Objectives and avoiding adverse effects on listed anadromous fish.
- GM-2. Locate new livestock handling and/or management facilities outside of Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. For existing livestock handling facilities inside the Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas, assure that facilities do not prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish. Relocate or close facilities where these objectives cannot be met.
- GM-3. Limit livestock trailing, bedding, watering, salting, loading, and other handling efforts to those areas and times that will not retard or prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish.
- GM-4. Adjust wild horse and burro management to avoid impacts that prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish.

Recreation Management

- RM-1. Design, construct, and operate recreation facilities, including trails and dispersed sites, in a manner that does not retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives and avoids adverse effects on listed anadromous fish. Complete Watershed Analysis prior to construction of new recreation facilities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. For existing recreation facilities inside Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas, assure that the facilities or use of the facilities will not prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish. Relocate or close recreation facilities where Riparian Management Objectives cannot be met or adverse effects on listed anadromous fish avoided.
- RM-2. Adjust dispersed and developed recreation practices that retard or prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish. Where adjustment measures such as education, use limitations, traffic control devices, increased maintenance, relocation of facilities, and/or specific site closure are not effective in meeting Riparian Management Objectives and avoiding adverse effects on listed anadromous fish, eliminate the practice of occupancy.

- RM-3. Address attainment of Riparian Management Objectives and potential effect on listed anadromous fish and designated critical habitat in Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness, and other Recreation Management plans.

Minerals Management

- MM-1. Avoid adverse effects to listed species and designated critical habitat from mineral operations. If the Notice of Intent indicates a mineral operation would be located in a Riparian Habitat Conservation Area, or could affect attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, or adversely affect listed anadromous fish, require a reclamation plan, approved Plan of Operation (or other such governing document), and reclamation bond. For effects that cannot be avoided, such plans and bonds must address the costs of removing facilities, equipment, and materials; recontouring disturbed areas to near pre-mining topography; isolating and neutralizing or removing toxic or potentially toxic materials; salvage and replacement of topsoil; and seedbed preparation and revegetation to attain Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish. Ensure Reclamation Plans contain measurable attainment and bond release criteria for each reclamation activity.
- MM-2. Locate structures, support facilities, and roads outside Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. Where no alternative to siting facilities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas exists, locate and construct the facilities in ways that avoid impacts to Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas and streams and adverse effects on listed anadromous fish. Where no alternative to road construction exists, keep roads to the minimum necessary for the approved mineral activity. Close, obliterate and revegetate roads no longer required for mineral or land management activities.
- MM-3. Prohibit solid and sanitary waste facilities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. If no alternative to locating mine waste (waste rock, spent ore, tailings) facilities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas exists, and releases can be prevented and stability can be ensured, then:
- a. analyze the waste material using the best conventional sampling methods and analytic techniques to determine its chemical and physical stability characteristics.
 - b. locate and design the waste facilities using the best conventional techniques to ensure mass stability and prevent the release of acid or toxic materials. If the best conventional technology is not sufficient to prevent such releases and ensure stability over the long term, prohibit such facilities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas.

- c. monitor waste and waste facilities to confirm predictions of chemical and physical stability, and make adjustments to operations as needed to avoid adverse effects to listed anadromous fish and to attain Riparian Management Objectives.
 - d. reclaim and monitor waste facilities to assure chemical and physical stability and revegetation to avoid adverse effects to listed anadromous fish, and to attain the Riparian Management Objectives.
 - e. require reclamation bonds adequate to ensure long-term chemical and physical stability and successful revegetation of mine waste facilities.
- MM-4. For leasable minerals, prohibit surface occupancy within Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas for oil, gas, and geothermal exploration and development activities where contracts and leases do not already exist, unless there are no other options for location and Riparian Management Objectives can be attained and adverse effects to listed anadromous fish can be avoided. Adjust the operation plans of existing contracts to (1) eliminate impacts that prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives and (2) avoid adverse effects to listed anadromous fish.
- MM-5. Permit sand and gravel mining and extraction within Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas only if no alternatives exist, if the action(s) will not retard or prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, and adverse effects to listed anadromous fish can be avoided.
- MM-6. Develop inspection, monitoring, and reporting requirements for mineral activities. Evaluate and apply the results of inspection and monitoring to modify mineral plans, leases, or permits as needed to eliminate impacts that prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish.

Fire/Fuels Management

- FM-1. Design fuel treatment and fire suppression strategies, practices, and actions so as not to prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, and to minimize disturbance of riparian ground cover and vegetation. Strategies should recognize the role of fire in ecosystem function and identify those instances where fire suppression or fuel management actions could perpetuate or be damaging to long-term ecosystem function, listed anadromous fish, or designated critical habitat.

- FM-2. Locate incident bases, camps, helibases, staging areas, helispots, and other centers for incident activities outside of Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. If the only suitable location for such activities is within the Riparian Habitat Conservation Area, an exemption may be granted following a review and recommendation by a resource advisor. The advisor will prescribe the location, use conditions, and rehabilitation requirements, with avoidance of adverse effects to listed anadromous fish a primary goal. Use an interdisciplinary team, including a fishery biologist, to predetermine incident base and helibase locations during presuppression planning, with avoidance of potential adverse effects to listed anadromous fish a primary goal.
- FM-3. Avoid delivery of chemical retardant, foam, or additives to surface waters. An exception may be warranted in situations where overriding immediate safety imperatives exist, or, following a review and recommendation by a resource advisor and a fishery biologist, when the action agency determines an escape fire would cause more long-term damage to anadromous fish habitats than chemical delivery to surface waters.
- FM-4. Design prescribed burn projects and prescriptions to contribute to the attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives.
- FM-5. Immediately establish an emergency team to develop a rehabilitation treatment plan to attain Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish whenever Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas are significantly damaged by a wildfire or a prescribed fire burning out of prescription.

Lands

- LH-1. Require instream flows and habitat conditions for hydroelectric and other surface water development proposals that maintain or restore riparian resources, favorable channel conditions, and fish passage, reproduction, and growth. Coordinate this process with the appropriate State agencies. During relicensing of hydroelectric projects, provide written and timely license conditions to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that require fish passage and flows and habitat conditions that maintain/restore riparian resources and channel integrity. Coordinate relicensing projects with the appropriate State agencies.

- LH-2. Locate new hydroelectric ancillary facilities outside Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. For existing ancillary facilities inside the FHCA that are essential to proper management, provide recommendations to FERC to assure that the facilities will not prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives and that adverse effects on listed anadromous fish are avoided. Where these objectives cannot be met, provide recommendations to FERC that such ancillary facilities should be relocated. Locate, operate, and maintain hydroelectric facilities that must be located in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas to avoid effects that would retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish.
- LH-3. Issue leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements to avoid effects that would retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish. Where the authority to do so was retained, adjust existing leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements to eliminate effects that would retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish. If adjustments are not effective, eliminate the activity. Where the authority to adjust was not retained, negotiate to make changes in existing leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements to eliminate effects that would prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect anadromous fish. Priority for modifying existing leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements will be based on the current and potential adverse effects on listed anadromous fish and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected.
- LH-4. Use land acquisition, exchange, and conservation easements to meet Riparian Management Objectives and facilitate restoration of fish stocks and other species at risk of extinction.

General Riparian Area Management

- RA-1. Identify and cooperate with Federal, Tribal, State and local governments to secure instream flows needed to maintain riparian resources, channel conditions, and aquatic habitat.
- RA-2. Trees may be felled in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas when they pose a safety risk. Keep felled trees on site when needed to meet woody debris objectives.
- RA-3. Apply herbicides, pesticides, and other toxicants, and other chemicals in a manner that does not retard or prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives and avoids adverse effects on listed anadromous fish.

- RA-4. Prohibit storage of fuels and other toxicants within Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. Prohibit refueling within Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas unless there are no other alternatives. Refueling sites within a Riparian Habitat Conservation Area must be approved by the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management and have an approved spill containment plan.
- RA-5. Locate water drafting sites to avoid adverse effects to listed anadromous fish and instream flows, and in a manner that does not retard or prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives.

Watershed and Habitat Restoration

- WR-1. Design and implement watershed restoration projects in a manner that promotes the long-term ecological integrity of ecosystems, conserves the genetic integrity of native species, and contributes to attainment of Riparian Management Objectives.
- WR-2. Cooperate with Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies, and private landowners to develop watershed-based Coordinated Resources Management Plans (CRMPs) or other cooperative agreements to meet Riparian Management Objectives.
- WR-3. Do not use planned restoration as a substitute for preventing habitat degradation (i.e., use planned restoration only to mitigate existing problems, not to mitigate the effects of proposed activities).

Fisheries and Wildlife Restoration

- FW-1. Design and implement fish and wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement actions in a manner that contributes to attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives.
- FW-2. Design, construct, and operate fish and wildlife interpretive and other user-enhancement facilities in a manner that does not retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish. For existing fish and wildlife interpretive and other user-enhancement facilities inside Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas, assure that Riparian Management Objectives are met and adverse effects on listed anadromous fish are avoided. Where Riparian Management Objectives cannot be met or adverse effects on listed anadromous fish avoided, relocate or close such facilities.

- FW-3. Cooperate with Federal, Tribal, and State wildlife management agencies to identify and eliminate wild ungulate impacts that prevent attainment of the Riparain Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish.
- FW-4. Cooperate with Federal, Tribal, and State fish management agencies to identify and eliminate adverse effects on native anadromous fish associated with habitat manipulation, fish stocking, fish harvest, and poaching.

KEY WATERSHEDS

Key Watersheds already have been designated in California, Oregon, and Washington within areas implementing the Northern Spotted Owl Record of Decision (ROD). Similar criteria will be considered to designate Key Watersheds in the 15 national forests and 7 BLM districts:

- (1) watersheds with stocks listed pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, or stocks identified in the 1991 American Fisheries Society report as "at risk" or subsequent scientific stock status reviews; or
- (2) watersheds that contain excellent habitat for mixed salmonid assemblages; or
- (3) degraded watersheds with a high restoration potential.

Key Watersheds will be identified through broad scale ecological assessments and addressed in the geographically-specific environmental analyses. During the period of interim direction, all watersheds that contain designated critical habitat for listed anadromous fish will be treated as Key Watersheds. The intent of designating Key Watersheds is to provide a pattern of protection across the landscape where habitat for anadromous fish would receive special attention and treatment. Priority within these watersheds would be to protect or restore habitat for listed stocks, stocks of special interest or concern, or salmonid assemblages of critical value for productivity or biodiversity. Areas in good condition would serve as anchors for the potential recovery of depressed stocks, and also would provide colonists for adjacent areas where habitat had been degraded by land management or natural events. Those areas of lower quality habitat with high potential for restoration would become future sources of good habitat with the implementation of a comprehensive restoration program.

WATERSHED ANALYSIS

Watershed Analysis is a systematic procedure for determining how a watershed functions in relation to its physical and biological components. This is accomplished through consideration of history, processes, landform, and condition. The guidelines and procedural manuals being developed by the Interagency Watershed Analysis Coordination Team and other potentially relevant procedures (e.g., the Cumulative Watershed Effects Process for Idaho, etc.) will be considered and used, where appropriate, in development of a Watershed Analysis protocol. As per consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), during the period of interim direction, the Agencies will complete at least four or five prototype Watershed Analyses within the Snake River Basin.

Watershed Analysis is a prerequisite for determining which processes and parts of the landscape affect fish and riparian habitat, and is essential for defining watershed-specific boundaries for Riparian habitat Conservation Areas and for Riparian Management Objectives. Watershed Analysis forms the basis for evaluating cumulative watershed effects; defining watershed restoration needs, goals and objectives; implementing restoration strategies; and monitoring the effectiveness of watershed protection measures. Watershed Analysis employs the perspectives and tools of multiple disciplines, especially geomorphology, hydrology, geology, aquatic and terrestrial ecology, and soil science. It is the framework for understanding and carrying out land use activities within a geomorphic context, and is a major component of the evolving science of ecosystem analysis. Watershed Analysis is an iterative process which includes monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment to incorporate detected changes.

Watershed Analysis consists of a sequence of activities designed to identify and interpret the processes operating in a specific landscape. The components and intensity of the analysis will vary depending on level of activity and significance of issues involved.

The overall goals of Watershed Analysis are to:

1. Screen current watershed condition:
 - a. Characterize the geomorphic, ecologic, and hydrologic context of a watershed, and identify the uses in the watershed.
 - b. Determine the type, extent, frequency, and intensity of watershed processes, including mass soil movements, fire, peak and low streamflows, surface erosion, and other processes affecting the flow of water, sediment, organic material, and nutrients through a watershed.
 - c. Determine the distribution, abundance, life histories, habitat requirements, and limiting factors for fish and other aquatic and riparian dependent species.

- d. Identify parts of the landscape, including hill slopes and channels, that are either sensitive to specific disturbance processes or are critical to beneficial uses, key anadromous fish stocks or other species.
2. Interpret watershed history, including the effects of previous natural disturbances and land use activities on watershed processes.
3. Provide information necessary to establish ecologically and geomorphically appropriate boundaries of Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas.
4. Provide information necessary to establish ecologically and geomorphically appropriate Riparian Management Objectives.
5. Identify potentially necessary adjustments to resource output projections (e.g., board-feet, animal unit months, and recreation visitor days projected in forest plans, LUPs and other planning documents).
6. Identify appropriate watershed restoration objectives, strategies, and priorities.
7. Provide information necessary to design approaches to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of standards and guidelines for mitigating impacts of current uses and contributing to the attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, and the effectiveness of restoration efforts in correcting past degradation.
8. Monitor and identify appropriate modifications to projects and activities to improve or maintain watershed condition.

To provide accountability, Watershed Analysis includes a process by which the Agencies certify the analysis has been conducted and completed according to the expected scientific standards. The certification process will be addressed in the geographically-specific environmental analyses.

WATERSHED RESTORATION

Watershed restoration comprises actions taken to improve the current conditions of watersheds to restore degraded habitat, and to provide long-term protection to natural resources, including riparian and aquatic resources. An assumption is made that no additional funds will be available for watershed restoration during the interim period, but that some existing funds will be retargeted, as necessary, to establish a watershed restoration management program that includes:

- 1) A regional strategy that looks across landscapes and ownerships within the watershed to identify where restoration efforts are likely to be most effective.
- 2) Use of Watershed Analysis to adapt restoration strategies to specific landscapes, taking into account unique watershed histories, conditions, and resources.
- 3) Use of Watershed Analysis to establish a specific set of habitat objectives for each watershed.
- 4) Restoration/mitigation practices based on the results of Watershed Analysis, which are designed to ameliorate the impacts of human activities within the watershed.
- 5) Monitoring and evaluation to define and refine restoration objectives and track the effectiveness of restoration efforts.

Priority in conducting watershed restoration will be given to Key Watersheds.

MONITORING

Monitoring is an important component of the proposed interim direction. It will be used to verify that the standards and guidelines were applied during the project implementation (i.e., implementation monitoring) and to assess whether those protective measures are adequate to attain Riparian Goals and Management Objectives (i.e., effectiveness monitoring).

Those national forests and BLM districts adopting interim direction will be required to conduct implementation monitoring as outlined in the Section 7 Monitoring Protocol for the Upper Columbia River Basin (USDA Forest Service 1994) for each project. Implementation monitoring will entail onsite verification and written/photographic documentation that standards and guidelines were applied. The format provided in the Section 7 protocol, which serves as a basic outline for implementation monitoring, will be refined and used for monitoring implementation of the interim direction.

Assessing effectiveness is logistically more complex and difficult than implementation monitoring, and in many cases will require a time period greater than that of the interim direction. Individual national forests and/or BLM districts will focus their efforts and combine resources to address the most important effectiveness issues. Stratification based on eco-regions, watershed characteristics, and the presence of listed or at-risk anadromous fish will be used to identify specific monitoring sites and priorities. Study designs with clear objectives, statistically valid sampling techniques, replication, and comparisons with "reference" conditions will direct effectiveness monitoring efforts.

The Section 7 monitoring protocol provides detailed descriptions of how each RMO element is to be monitored. This document is to be used as a guide. Individual monitoring efforts will be coordinated by the Interagency Implementation Team to make every effort to ensure applicable effectiveness issues are addressed. Monitoring results will be summarized annually, with conclusions drawn in regard to how effective standards and guidelines are in contributing to meeting Riparian Goals and Management Objectives. Complex ecological processes and long time frames are inherent in the RMOs, and it is unrealistic to expect that the planned monitoring will generate conclusive results within 18 months. Nevertheless, it is critical to begin monitoring to establish a baseline against which effectiveness can be assessed through time.

A third type of monitoring (i.e., validation monitoring) is intended to ascertain the validity of the assumptions used in developing the interim direction. Because of the short-term nature of the management direction, no specific requirements are included for validation monitoring. The geographically-specific environmental analyses will address longer-term validation monitoring and research needs.

INLAND NATIVE FISH STRATEGY

Environmental Assessment

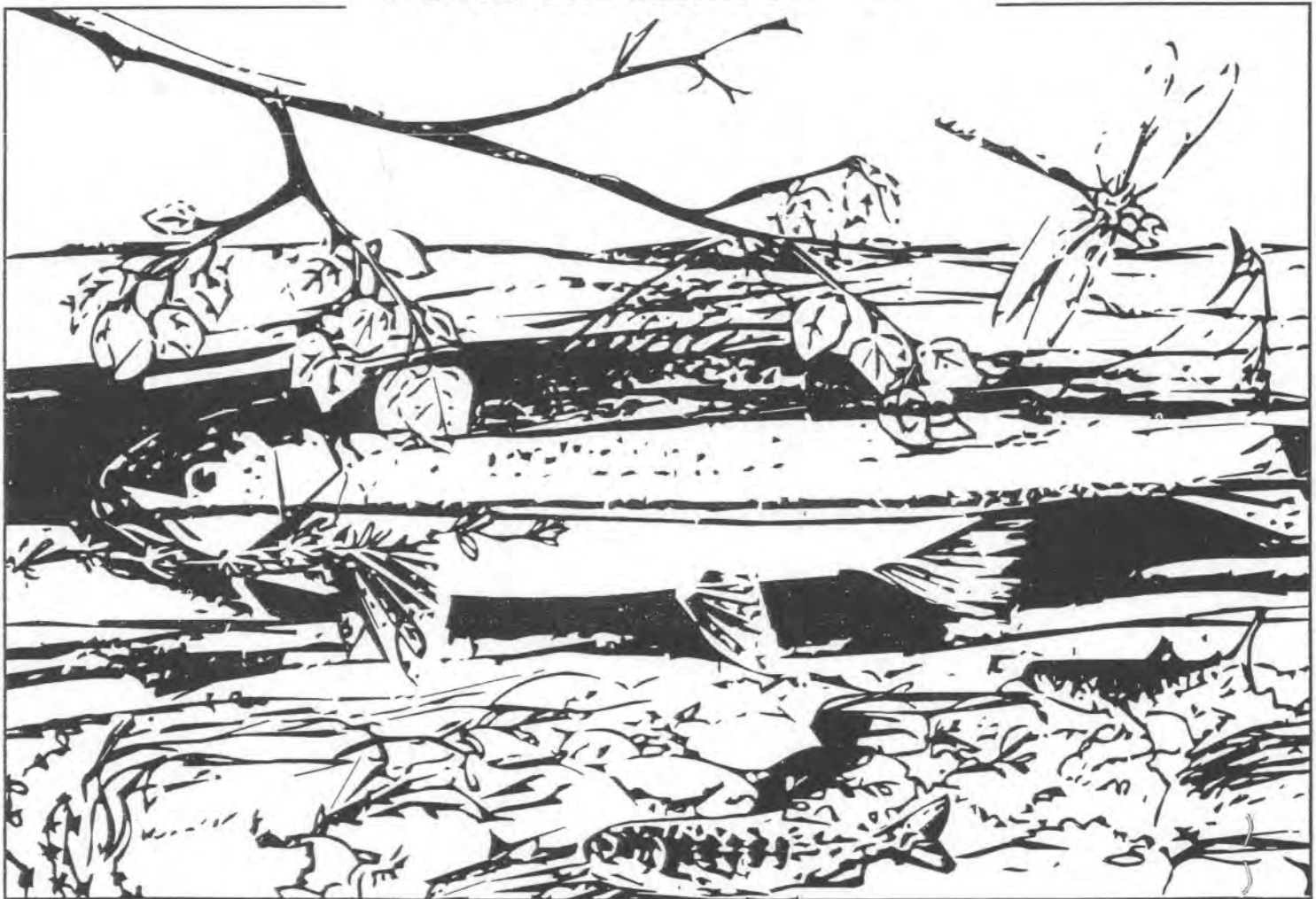
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service



Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact

1995 AMENDMENT 12



Intermountain, Northern, and Pacific Northwest Regions



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Inland Native
Fish Strategy
FAX (208) 765-7307

3815 Schreiber Way
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
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August 21, 1995

On July 28, 1995, the Regional Foresters for the Northern, Intermountain, and Pacific Northwest regions of the Forest Service announced their decision on the Inland Native Fish Strategy. Based on public comment analysis and internal review, they have decided, with the support of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, to select Alternative D as described in the Environmental Assessment for the Inland Native Fish Strategy.

Enclosed is your copy of the Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact, and its correction page. A summary of comments received from individuals and organizations who reviewed the Environmental Assessment and Draft FONSI is also enclosed.

In addition to the Inland Native Fish Strategy effort, the Forest Service is pursuing a cooperative effort with the various states to assure a coordinated multi-agency effort to address inland native fish issues. A proposal was sent to the Governors of Idaho and Montana on June 23, 1995 to develop conservation strategies that could be used to replace this interim management direction with longer term direction. Similar proposals will be made to the Governors of Oregon and Washington. As part of this cooperative effort, we will actively seek participation of local state fish and game personnel in the development of watershed analysis efforts.

Through review of the public comment, we recognize the selection of Alternative D will concern many people who felt this alternative provided either too much or not enough protection. Generally, those who felt too much protection had been provided favored Alternative C, and those desiring more protection favored Alternative E. Both Alternatives C and E have features that are attractive for longer-term reduction of risk to habitat. The Regional Foresters have directed me to develop a strategy to apply the concepts and philosophy of those two alternatives on a limited test basis. Alternative D will be implemented for all of the areas outside the test watersheds. Application of Alternative D will provide the short-term reduction of risk we desire, while this test of Alternatives C and E will allow us to develop the information we need to provide better long-term direction.

This decision notice reflects the final decision of the Forest Service. The decision may be appealed in accordance with the provisions identified in the Decision Notice. The appeal period will begin August 24 and end on October 9, 1995.

Thank you for your continued interest.

DAVID J. WRIGHT
Inland Native Fish Strategy
Team Leader

Enclosure



**DECISION NOTICE CORRECTION
FOR THE
INLAND NATIVE FISH STRATEGY**

**INTERIM STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING FISH-PRODUCING WATERSHEDS
IN EASTERN OREGON AND WASHINGTON, IDAHO,
WESTERN MONTANA AND PORTIONS OF NEVADA**

USDA FOREST SERVICE

REASON FOR CORRECTION

During internal review of the Decision Notice, it appeared that it might not be clear that the selected alternative **does** replace the interim direction established May 20, 1994 by Region 6 Regional Forester John E. Lowe in the Decision Notice for the Continuation of Interim Management Direction Establishing Riparian, Ecosystem, and Wildlife Standards for Timber Sales. This correction is to clarify the intent of the selected alternative.

CORRECTION

In the Decision Notice, page 2, paragraph 3 under **"THE DECISION,"** the first sentence is corrected to read:

"This decision amends Regional Guides for the Forest Service's Northern, Intermountain, and Pacific Northwest Regions, the 22 Forest Plans in the affected National Forests, and replaces the interim riparian standard established May 20, 1994 by Region 6 Regional Forester John E. Lowe in the Decision Notice for the Continuation of Interim Management Direction Establishing Riparian, Ecosystem, and Wildlife Standards for Timber Sales."

On page 4, paragraph 2, under the main heading **"SITE-SPECIFIC PROJECT-LEVEL DECISIONS,"** the second sentence will be replaced by the following two sentences:

"These interim standards and guidelines replace existing conflicting direction described in these 22 Forest Plans, including the interim riparian standard established May 20, 1994 by Region 6 Regional Forester John E. Lowe in the Decision Notice for the Continuation of Interim Management Direction Establishing Riparian, Ecosystem, and Wildlife Standards for Timber Sales. Current Forest Plan direction, except for the replaced Region 6 interim riparian direction, will still apply if it provides more protection for inland native fish habitat (Environmental Assessment, Appendix E)."

* * *

Salmon and Challis National Forests
CHALLIS LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Amendment 13

September 18, 1996

Amend the Challis National Forest Plan to add:

Management Area 13, Chapter IV-121

Communication Site

This amendment formally designates Big Hill as a communication site. The site is located seven miles west of Challis on approximately 1/10 of an acre on Big Hill Mountain in T13N, R18E, Section 7. It is within Resource Management Area 13.

END OF AMENDMENT

DECISION NOTICE

CHALLIS COMMUNITY TV CLUB COMMUNICATION SITE

Custer County Idaho
USDA, Forest Service
Challis Ranger District
Salmon and Challis National Forests

An Environmental Assessment (40 CFR 1508.9) discussing a proposal by the Challis Community TV Club to utilize a site on Big Hill to receive and rebroadcast television signals from Boise, Idaho to Challis and the surrounding area, has been completed and is available for review at the Challis Ranger District Office in Challis, Idaho. This proposal would also amend the Challis National Forest Land Resource Management Plan to designate a communication site at the location.

The proposed Big Hill communication site is located seven miles west of Challis on Big Hill Mountain in T13N, R18E, Section 7. It is within Resource Management Area 13. The Environmental Assessment has not changed since it was sent out for predecisional review on April 25, 1996.

I. Decision

It is my decision to proceed with Alternative II. Under this alternative, a Special Use Permit would be issued to the Challis Community TV Club to place communications improvements on Big Hill in order to receive and rebroadcast Channel 12, KRTM from Boise, Idaho to the Challis and Round Valley area. The total size of the area that may be disturbed is approximately 1/10 of an acre. Improvements would consist of two towers 27'6" tall and one solar array panel for power (8'X16'). The towers would consist of a support structure 11 feet tall and 1/2" pipe poles with antennas. All improvements would be in accordance with the existing developed site plan. A nonsignificant amendment would be made to the Challis Land Resource Management Plan to allow designation of the area as a communication site.

II. Rationale for selecting Alternative II

Alternative II is consistent with overall management direction and desired future condition as stated in the Challis National Forest Land Resource Management Plan for Management Area 13.

This alternative is in accordance with Forest Wide Management Direction (p. IV-26) which states "Give priority to permits needed to "...provide community service...". It also is in conformance with the desire future condition of the Forest (p. IV-43) which states "Issuing of Special Use Permits is anticipated

to increase because of increases in activities in small hydroelectric projects and needs for electronic sites", (emphasis added). Physical impacts of the establishment of the site will be extremely limited and visual consequences will also be minor.

The selected alternative adequately addresses the issues and meets the project objectives.

III. Alternatives Considered

Two alternatives were analyzed and documented in the environmental assessment (EA) including a no action alternative. The alternatives were designed by the interdisciplinary team to address specific issues. Briefly, the alternatives were as follows:

Alternative I - No Action

No improvements would be made at this time. No Special Use Permit would be issued to authorize placement of a repeater on the site and the Forest Plan would not be amended to allow designation of the area as a communication site in accordance with the developed site plan.

Alternative II - Placement of Repeater on Big Hill

A Special Use Permit would be issued to the Challis Community TV Club to place communications improvements on Big Hill in order to receive and rebroadcast Channel 12, KRTM from Boise, Idaho to the Challis and Round Valley area. All improvements would be in accordance with the developed site plan. No road construction is proposed and installation and maintenance will utilize the existing transportation system. In addition the Challis Land Resource Management Plan would be amended to allow designation of the area as a communication site.

IV. Public Involvement

A legal ad soliciting public input regarding the proposal was published in the newspaper of record, The Challis Messenger, on January 13, 1994. No comments were received as a result of the scoping. The secondary mailing list was comprised of the proponent and the County Commissioners. Those parties on this list were sent a copy of the pre-decisional EA on April 25, 1996 and asked to comment by May 28, 1996. In addition, a legal ad was placed in the Challis Messenger and the Salmon Recorder Herald on April 25, 1996 with the same May 28, 1996 response deadline.

V. Finding of No Significant Impact

After review of the information contained within the EA, and the lack of any comments received as a result of public scoping and requests for input, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been prepared. The FONSI is attached to this Decision Notice.

VI. Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

I have determined that this project is consistent with the National Forest Management Act (NFMA). The project is consistent with the goals, objectives, standards and guidelines contained within the approved Challis National Forest Land Resource Management Plan.

Requirements of the Endangered Species Act have been met. Biological Assessments and have been prepared for all Threatened and Endangered species within or adjacent to the project area.

This project is consistent with the requirements of the Clean Water Act.

VII. Implementation

This decision may be implemented immediately upon publication of the notice of the decision.

VIII. Administrative Review

This decision is not subject to appeal pursuant to Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 215.8 (3).

IX. Further Information

For further information, contact Russ Camper, Challis Ranger District, H/C 63, Box 1669, Challis, Idaho 83226; phone (208) 879-4321.

George Matejko
GEORGE MATEJKO
Forest Supervisor
Salmon and Challis National Forests

9/10/96
Date

AMENDMENT NUMBERS 14, 15, 16

**SALMON AND CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST
CHALLIS LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

NOVEMBER 1996

The Challis National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) was approved on June 3, 1987. Changes affecting the Salmon and Challis National Forest since that time have required periodic amendments to the Forest Plans to keep it current. This amendment pertains to Research Natural Areas within the Forest. On November 21, 1996, the Regional Forester designated three additional sites on the Salmon and Challis National Forest.

CHANGE #1

Chapter II, Section E., Subsection 2.b., Research Natural Areas, first sentence of paragraph 3 (page II-38 of Forest Plan as revised 6/8/92): Replace with the following:

"The Challis National Forest has eleven RNAs: Iron Bog and Meadow Canyon (established in 1981); Soldier Lakes, Surprise Valley, Merriam Lake Basin, Middle Canyon, Smiley Mountain, and Mohogany Creek (established in 1992); and Sheep Mountain, Cache Creek Lakes and Mystery Lake (established in 1996)."

CHANGE #2

Chapter II, Section E., Subsection 2.b., Research Natural Areas (page II-39 of Forest Plan as revised 6/8/92):
Delete:

"A team from the Forest and Idaho Research Natural Areas Committee identified the following three sites as proposed Research Natural Areas:"

The following RNAs, along with their descriptions need to be moved to the previous paragraph that lists the established RNA's (omit the numbers):

- 1) Sheep Mountain**
- 2) Cache Creek Lakes**
- 3) Mystery Lake**

Land and Resource Management Plan
Challis National Forest
1987 Plan

Amendment # 17

Page Code

Reference Pages: IV-47 to IV-52 for Management Area 1

Amendment

Page IV-48, first paragraph, sentence 3: Replace "This wilderness plan was completed and approved on March 11, 1985 and is hereby incorporated as part of this Forest Plan" with:

"This wilderness plan was completed and approved in November 2003 and is hereby incorporated as part of this Forest Plan."

Reason for Amendment

Previous direction in the:

1. Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Management as amended, July 1994;
2. Middle Fork of the Salmon River Management Operating Plan (5/20/93); and
3. Salmon Wild & Scenic River Management Plan (3/30/82)

is now consolidated into a single management plan with corrections, changes and amendments.

Lesley W. Thompson
Acting Forest Supervisor
Salmon-Challis National Forest

1/23/04
Date signed:

**Decision Notice
And
Finding of No Significant Impact**

For The

**Proposed Amendments to the Management Indicator Species List for the
Salmon and Challis Land and Resource Management Plans**

And

**Finding of Non-Significant Amendment of the Land and Resource Management Plan for
the Salmon National Forest And Finding of Non-Significant Amendment of the Land and
Resource Management Plan for the Challis National Forest**

USDA Forest Service
Salmon-Challis National Forest
Idaho

Background

The Forest Supervisor for the Salmon-Challis National Forest (S-C NF) has determined the need to reevaluate and refine the Management Indicator Species list for the Salmon and Challis Land and Resource Management Plans. In ways that improve its reliability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness in meeting information needs for the biological effects of active management.

Management Indicator Species (MIS) are defined as “plant and animal species, communities, or special habitats selected for emphasis in planning, and which are monitored during forest plan implementation in order to assess the effects of management activities on their populations and the populations of other species with similar habitat needs which they may represent” (FSM 2620.5). The role of management indicator species in National Forest planning is described in the 1982 implementing regulations for the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976:

“In order to estimate the effects of each [Forest Plan] alternative on fish and wildlife populations, certain vertebrate and/or invertebrate species present in the area shall be identified and selected as management indicator species and the reasons for their selection will be stated. These species shall be selected because their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management activities. In the selection of management indicator species, the following categories shall be represented where appropriate: Endangered and threatened plant and animal species identified on State and Federal lists for the planning area; species with special needs that may be influenced significantly by planned management programs; species commonly hunted, fished or trapped; non-game species of special interest; and additional plant or animal species selected because their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management activities on other species of selected major biological communities or on water quality (36 CF 219.12(a)(1)).”

These regulations require the use of MIS populations to reflect the effects of management activities on habitats and population trends. Since adoption of the Forest Plans, Biologists have learned that some of the original MIS occur too infrequently to be reliable indicators for the purposes or habitat types they were selected to represent. Some have proven impractical to monitor economically or efficiently, while others have turned out to be poor indicators due to many different factors affecting populations. Biologists have also found there are species not listed as MIS that appear to be good substitutes for some of those species that now seem inadequate.

Decision and Reasons For the Decision

Based upon my review of the Environmental Assessment and supporting documents, I have decided to implement **Alternative 3: Amphibian Alternative**. This alternative replaces the existing list of Management Indicator Species for both the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Salmon National Forest (Table 1) and the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Challis National Forest (Table 2), and clarifies monitoring and evaluation procedures associated with each of the selected species. The species selected in Alternative 3 include, (1) Pileated Woodpecker as MIS for the coniferous community/habitat type; (2) Greater Sage-Grouse for the sagebrush community/habitat type; (3) Columbia Spotted Frog for the riparian habitat/community type; and (4) Bull Trout for the aquatic habitat/community type. This would

bring both Forest Plans in line with new information and current interpretations of agency regulations and policies concerning MIS, and make the lists consistent for both Forests.

Table 1. Management Indicator Species in the Salmon Land and Resource Management Plan

Common Name	Scientific Name
Rocky Mountain Elk	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>
Mule Deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>
Bighorn Sheep	<i>Ovis canadensis</i>
Mountain Goat	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>
Pine Marten	<i>Martes americana</i>
Pileated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>
Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>
Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
Great Grey Owl	<i>Strix nebulosa</i>
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus nuchalis</i>
Pygmy Nuthatch	<i>Sitta pygmaea</i>
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>
Mountain Bluebird	<i>Sialia currocoides</i>
Anadromous Fish (salmon and steelhead)	<i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha, O. mykiss, O. nerka</i>
Trout (all species combined)	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss, O. clarki, Salvelinus confluentus</i>
Aquatic Macroinvertebrates***	

***Specific genus and species to be identified at the project level

Table 2. Management Indicator Species in the Challis Land and Resource Management Plan

Common Name	Scientific Name
Rocky Mountain Elk	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>
Mule Deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>
Bighorn Sheep	<i>Ovis canadensis</i>
Mountain Goat	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>
Red Squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>
Big Sagebrush and Sub-species	<i>Artemisia tridentata, vaseyana, wyomingensis</i>
Bitterbrush	<i>Purshia tridentata</i>
Bluebunch Wheatgrass	<i>Agropyron spicatum</i>
Idaho Fescue	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>
Western Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Canadian Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Rainbow Trout	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>
Cutthroat Trout	<i>Oncorhynchus clarki</i>
Bull Trout	<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>
Steelhead	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>
Chinook	<i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i>
Mayfly	<i>Rhithrogena spp.</i>
Mayfly	<i>Epeorus spp.</i>
Mayfly	<i>Ephemerella doddsi</i>
Stonefly	<i>Zapada spp.</i>
Mayfly	<i>Ephemerella inermis</i>
True Fly	<i>Chironomidae spp.</i>

Alternative 3 also keeps the habitat requirement information in both existing plans for species that were MIS.

When compared to other alternatives, Alternative 3 best achieves the purpose and need of meeting requirements for monitoring wildlife habitat and the use of MIS (36 CFR 219 subsection 19).

Population data for the pileated woodpecker is currently available or protocols exist for collection of scientifically credible data. Pileated woodpeckers are detected by the annual Breeding Bird Surveys that are conducted on this forest each year, in conjunction with a large-scale national monitoring effort for birds. This bird is a loud, vociferous species that is easily detected by "point count transects", several of which have been conducted on at least one Ranger District. The relationship of this species with mixed conifer forests communities containing large diameter live trees, standing dead and down logs, particularly in multi-storied stands, is fairly well understood, as is the effect of timber management activities on the characteristics of such stands. Pileated woodpeckers commonly occur in the ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir and mixed pine and fir stands where most forested vegetative management occurs on this forest, and are affected by changes in habitats they provide.

Population data for the greater sage-grouse is currently available or protocols exist for collection of scientifically credible data. Greater sage-grouse have been monitored, primarily via lek counts, for several decades on this forest and adjacent public and private lands. The protocol for this monitoring effort is well established and used throughout the range of this species. These efforts are conducted by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), in conjunction with Forest Service (FS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) personnel and population data collected are housed by them but readily available to interested parties. This species occurs in the heart of western grazing lands and much research has been conducted concerning the relationship of this species to sagebrush communities and the effects of vegetative manipulation on source habitats.

Population data is currently available for the Columbia spotted frog and protocols exist for collection of scientifically credible data. As a Forest Service Sensitive Species in Region 4 and on the S-C NF, the Columbia spotted frog has been the subject of considerable inventory and monitoring effort for the past decade. This species is known to occupy slow-moving cool water streams, beaver ponds and marshy edges of lakes across the forest and have been found to use adjacent upland habitats as well. Survey and monitoring protocols for amphibians, including this species, are well established and long-term monitoring sites have been selected and surveyed across the forest. In addition, species occurrence data has been collected concurrently with stream inventory efforts for fish species. The Columbia spotted frog occurs in a variety of forest and non-forest communities that are subjected to many different resource management activities ranging from grazing to timber harvest and are known to be sensitive to changes in habitat parameters such as riparian vegetation, water temperatures and quality.

Population data for the bull trout is currently available or protocols exist for collection of scientifically credible data. Bull trout have, since being listed as a "Threatened" species, been intensively monitored through a cooperative monitoring program with FS, IDFG, Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries and other agencies. Protocols for electro-fishing, snorkeling and redd counts are well established and much data has been accumulated. Bull trout occur in streams within virtually all coniferous forest communities, which are subject to resource management activities,

including timber and grazing. They are known to be sensitive to stream habitat and watershed alterations.

Other Alternatives Considered

Fourteen other species, identified through public comment, were evaluated as possible MIS species which included, pronghorn, snowshoe hare, white-tailed jackrabbit, ruffed grouse, willow flycatcher, Clark's nutcracker, aspen, willow, black cottonwood, whitebark pine, mountain mahogany, spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, and cryptogamic soils. These species were dismissed because population monitoring is lacking, relationships between population trends and habitat management activities are lacking, or the species are not associated with management areas where habitat manipulation is occurring or allowed.

The Evaluation Assessment focused on the selected Alternative 3, the Proposed Action – Alternative 2, and the No Action Alternative – Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 - No Action would keep each existing species and the monitoring and evaluation criteria associated with each species in both Forest Plans. It was found that many of the species did not meet the criteria for MIS because population monitoring is lacking, relationships between population trends and habitat management activities are lacking, or the species are not associated with management areas where habitat manipulation is occurring or allowed.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action would replace the existing list of Management Indicator Species for both the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Salmon National Forest and the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Challis National Forest, and would clarify monitoring and evaluation procedures associated with each of the selected species. This alternative is very similar to the selected alternative, but includes the beaver instead of the Columbia spotted frog to represent the riparian habitat/community type.

Protocols exist for collection of scientifically credible data for the Beaver, but population data does not exist. Beaver populations are also affected by hunting which make cause-effect relationships between populations trends and management activity effects on habitat difficult without the implementation of plan components outlined in the formerly proposed interagency beaver management agreement for the Salmon–Challis National Forest public lands. (These components call for the determination of existing habitat and activity conditions, potentials and preferences for watersheds across the forest, followed by the determination of watershed-specific beaver management goals and objectives). The task of initiating population data collecting and implementing the interagency beaver management agreement would require time and resources that are already scarce.

Public Involvement

A scoping letter was mailed September 19, 2003 to the 114 addresses on the Forest Mailing list. The proposed action was enclosed with a cover letter inviting comments by October 20, 2003. Four public letters, three internal comments, one public phone call with comments, and one public phone call requesting a copy of the Environmental Assessment were received.

Finding of No Significant Impact

After considering the effects described in the Environmental Assessment, I have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment considering the context and intensity of impacts (40 CFR 1508.27). Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. I base my finding on the following:

The disclosure of effects in the EA found the actions limited in context.

1. There are no adverse environmental impacts or beneficial environmental impacts although the changes in MIS will provide for improved understanding of relationships between management actions and specific habitats.
2. This action has no bearing on public health or safety since it is simply a change in what species will be monitored for the purpose of correlating wildlife population trends with effects of management activities on habitat.
3. This action has no effect on unique characteristics of the geographic area (historic cultural resource, park land, prime farm lands, wetlands, or wild and scenic rivers) because which species is monitored to meet MIS requirements will not result in any impacts to these resources.
4. The effects of this action on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial because there is no effect on the human environment. The effect is one of improving the use of wildlife population monitoring to understand effects of management activities on habitats.
5. The effects of this action are not highly uncertain nor do they involve unique or unknown risks because monitoring of the selected species has been conducted successfully for a number of years. Monitoring of these species has no effect on the species themselves or the resource they occupy.
6. The action is not likely to establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects because the action is to choose a species for monitoring that is well-suited to the purposes stated for Management Indicator Species. The effects of this monitoring are expected to be a better understanding of effects of management activities on habitat and population trends and no precedent for future actions with significant effects is established.
7. This action is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts because this change in MIS will result in improved compliance with 36 CFR 219 but will have no environmental effects.
8. The action will have no significant adverse effect on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, because the focus of the decision is to replace the monitoring requirements in both the Salmon Forest Plan and the Challis Forest Plan Management Indicator Species with an updated list that will improve the use of wildlife population monitoring to understand effects of management activities on habitats. The action will not cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resource because it is

about which species to monitor for evaluating effects of management activities on habitats and populations and results in no environmental effects.

9. The action will not adversely affect any endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has not been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 because there is no effect other than the potential for improved understanding of effects of management activities on habitats and populations.
10. The action will not violate Federal, State, and local laws or requirements for the protection of the environment. This action amends the Salmon National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and the Challis National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

The National Forest Management Act regulations at 36 CFR 219.10(f) state: "Based on and analysis of the objectives, guidelines, and other contents of the forest plan, the Forest Supervisor shall determine whether a proposed amendment would result in a significant change in the Plan." The Forest Service Handbook (FSH 1909.12) provides a framework for consideration, and section 5.32 lists four factors to be considered when determining whether a proposed change to a Forest Plan is significant or non significant: (a) timing; (b) location and size; (c) goals, objectives, and outputs; and (d) management prescriptions. I have evaluated the proposed amendments and concluded they do not constitute a significant amendment for either the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Salmon National Forest or the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Challis National Forest.

(a) Timing: The timing factor examines at what point, over the course of the forest plan period, the Plan is amended. The Challis and Salmon Land and Resource Management Plans were completed in 1987 and 1988. Revision of these plans is scheduled to begin in 2005, however, the revised forest plans may not be in effect for up to five years. The need for a revised MIS list is appropriate because that list will be needed until the revision is complete, however the changed monitoring is unlikely to lead to significant change in the management actions on the Salmon or Challis National Forests compared to the level of actions that have already occurred in the last 15 years. The timing factors imply that these amendments are non-significant.

(b) Location and size: The key to location and size is context, or "the relationship of the affected area to the overall planning area." The change in MIS has no direct effect on any specific area of the Forest, however this amendment is designed to focus MIS monitoring on areas where management activities are most likely to occur. Active resource management at this time is limited primarily to those areas that are not currently designated as Wilderness or roadless. This is approximately 854,000 acres or 20% of the Salmon-Challis National Forest. In terms of location and size, the action of monitoring and evaluating MIS related to these amendments does not result in a significant change in the plans.

(c) Goals, objectives, and outputs: This factor involves the determination of "whether the change alters the long-term relationship between the level of goods and services in the overall planning area". This amendment will not result in any change to levels of goods and services in the overall planning area. It replaces the list of Management Indicator Species for both

Forest Plans and clarifies monitoring and evaluation procedures associated with each of the selected species. No changes to level of goods and services imply that these amendments do not result in a significant change in the plans.

(d) Management prescriptions: This factor involves the determination of (1) "whether the change in a management prescription is only for a specific situation or whether it would apply to future decisions throughout the planning area" and (2), "whether or not the change alters the desired future condition of the land and resources or the anticipated goods and services to be produced." These amendments do not change any management prescription, nor do they change desired future conditions or anticipated goods and services. With regard to these factors it can also be determined to be non-significant amendments.

Based on review of the Environmental Assessment and supporting documents and considering the above guidance and findings, it is my determination that these amendments do not result in a significant change to the Forest Plans and is therefore are non-significant amendments.

Implementation Date

This project will be implemented 7 working days after the decision has been published.

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 217.3. A written appeal must be postmarked or received in duplicate by the Appeal Reviewing Officer within 45 days (time period begins the day after the notice is published) of the date of publication on the legal notice regarding this decision in the Recorder Herald, Salmon Idaho and The Challis Messenger, Challis, Idaho. Appeals must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 217.9 and be mailed to:

Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service
324 25th Street
Ogden, Utah 84401

Contact

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact Karryl Krieger, Planning Team Leader, Salmon-Challis National Forest, 50 Highway 93 South, Salmon, Idaho 83467, (208) 756 5102.

/s/ Lesley W. Thompson

February 2, 2004

LESLEY W. THOMPSON
Acting Forest Supervisor

Date

Amendment #19



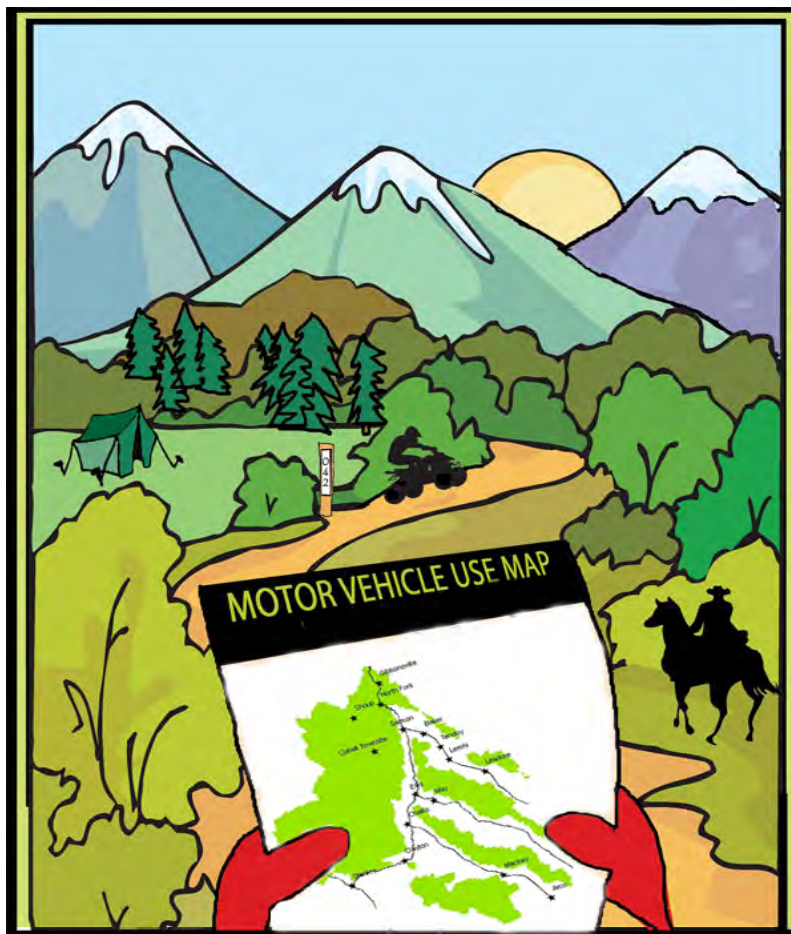
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Record of Decision Travel Planning and OHV Route Designation Salmon-Challis National Forest Lemhi, Custer, and Butte Counties of Idaho



Forest
Service

September 2009



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INTRODUCTION

This Record of Decision (ROD) documents my selection of designated roads, motor vehicle trails and areas for public motor vehicle use on the Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF) to comply with the Travel Management Rule (36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, and 295 “*Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use*”, Federal Register 2005: 70 FR 68264). The management options selected in this decision replace two existing Travel Plans, one for the Salmon National Forest (1988) and one for the Challis National Forest (1994), which are not consistent with the requirements of these regulations. My decision does not include over-snow travel, and existing management direction for winter use is retained.

The area affected by this proposal is the entire SCNF excluding the portion of the Forest within the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness Area, which is congressionally designated as non-motorized. Six ranger districts are within the project area, which is slightly more than 3.1 million acres. The SCNF is in central, Idaho, in Butte, Custer and Lemhi counties.

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was issued for public review in August of 2008. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), a summary of the FEIS, and this ROD are being released concurrently. Copies of these documents are available at the Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor’s Office, 1206 South Challis Street, Salmon, ID 83467, (telephone: 208-756-5100) and at all ranger district offices on the SCNF. These documents are also posted on the Forest website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sc/recreation/Travel%20Plan/index.shtml>.

This ROD provides information about the project area, the purpose and need for the project, public involvement, issues analyzed, and the alternatives considered. Most important, it is a summary of the management options I have selected and the factors I considered in making my decision. Also documented are findings required by laws, regulations, and policies, as well as information about the appeal process and implementation of this decision.

BACKGROUND

In 2005, the Secretary of Agriculture completed a national rule through a public rule-making process that provides a mechanism for every National Forest across the United States to complete a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) that designates a system of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use.

Designations for roads and motor vehicle trails are made by class of vehicle and, if appropriate, by time of year and are displayed on the MVUM. Agency direction prescribes standards for preparation of the MVUM, and these maps are to be used in conjunction with Forest Visitor Maps that contain further information about streams, geographic features, and land ownership.

With minor exceptions, the Travel Management Rule prohibits motor vehicle use off the designated system, as well as use of motor vehicles on routes and in areas inconsistent with the designation. The MVUM, scheduled for publication by the end of 2009, will be the primary tool to determine compliance with, and enforcement of, motorized vehicle use designations on the SCNF. Roads, trails and areas not designated as open on the MVUM will be legally closed to motor vehicle use.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose and need for this action is to designate a system of roads, trails, and areas open for public motor vehicle use on the SCNF that complies with the Travel Management Rule and addresses current

and anticipated recreation needs, provides a variety of recreation access opportunities, considers management concerns (such as public safety, maintenance costs, and consistency with adjoining public lands), reduces impacts to forest resources, recognizes reserved or outstanding rights, and reduces conflicts between recreational uses.

Prior regulations for allowing, restricting, or prohibiting motor vehicle travel were made when off-highway vehicles (OHVs) were less widely available, less powerful, and less capable of cross-country travel than today's models. The growing popularity and capabilities of OHVs necessitated these new regulations so the Forest Service could continue to provide motorized recreation opportunities while sustaining the health of National Forest System lands and resources. The magnitude and intensity of motor vehicle use have increased to the point that the intent of the prior regulations (Executive Orders 11644 and 11989) could not be met while still allowing unrestricted cross-country travel, therefore a designated and managed system of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use is needed.

SCNF specialists and the public identified a variety of issues and resource concerns during the travel planning process including impacts to Recommended Wilderness Areas and Roadless Areas from motorized uses, conflicts between recreation uses, impacts to fish, wildlife, soils, water quality, cultural resources, and the spread of noxious weeds from cross-country motorized travel and unauthorized use of roads and trails. Nearly a million acres were open to cross-country motorized travel under previous SCNF travel plans and about 2,700 miles of *known* unauthorized routes have been inventoried on the Forest.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CONSIDERED

Issues developed through scoping reflect respondents' concerns about the environmental, cultural, economic, and social impacts that may result from travel planning and OHV designation on the SCNF. Combining public and agency responses with Forest Service knowledge of the resources within the project area, the following issues related to travel management planning generated the alternatives, project design features and monitoring described in Chapter 1 of the FEIS along with the indicators used to measure effects (FEIS pp. 1.17-1.20). Chapter 3 provides an in-depth analysis of each issue by resource.

Recreation (FEIS pp. 3.1-3.16)

- Concern about motorized recreation opportunities.
- Concern about non-motorized recreation opportunities.

Cultural Resources (FEIS pp. 3.92-3.107)

- Concern about protection of archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties and practices.

Recommended Wilderness Areas and Idaho Roadless Areas (FEIS pp 3.16-3.26)

- Concern about impacts of motorized uses to wilderness attributes and roadless characteristics.

Fisheries (FEIS pp. 3.64-3.85) **and Water Resources** (FEIS pp. 3.26-3.48)

- Concern about impacts to streams, fisheries and water quality from motorized uses.

The following issue categories were analyzed in depth in the FEIS but did not shape the formulation of alternatives or there were no significant effects associated with the proposals or both. These issue categories are analyzed in depth in Chapter 3 of the FEIS.

- Soil Resources (FEIS pp. 3.48-3.63)
- Noxious Weeds (FEIS pp. 3.85-3.91)
- Sensitive Plants (FEIS pp. 3.139-3.156)
- Social and Economic Resources (FEIS pp. 3.156-3.177)
- Wildlife (FEIS pp. 3.107-3.138)
- Road Maintenance and Sustainability of Use (FEIS pp. 3.177-3.184)

CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES AND PUBLIC COMMENT

During the travel planning process I gained an increased understanding and appreciation for the complexities and controversy surrounding travel management on the SCNF. I knew the preparation of this plan would be contentious due to competing and polarized public opinions and because of the significant change from current use required by the Travel Management Rule.

The transition to a designated system of open routes has been particularly controversial in local communities where the focus has been on change from current travel plans which provide few route designations and allow cross country travel on nearly one million of the 3.1 million acres of Forest analyzed in the FEIS. While the change in the way this new travel plan is structured is significant, the terrain and vegetation of the Forest greatly limits the physical ability to travel cross-country within much of the million acres and most travel follows known routes. I encouraged concerned individuals to become involved in the process by providing specific input on routes they wanted designated within these areas rather than lament the change.

This is a National Forest and all citizens, organizations and agencies have an equal opportunity to provide comments. I greatly appreciate those people and entities who took the time to understand the process and provide comments on the DEIS. Public comments clearly expressed the deeply divided opinions of individuals and groups interested in the Forest's proposal. Many comments expressed a strong desire to "leave things the way they are" and not change current management out of concern for the loss of cross-country travel. On the other end of the spectrum, many comments requested the designation of fewer motorized routes to provide greater natural and cultural resource protection and to maintain wilderness characteristics in Recommended Wilderness Areas and Roadless Areas on the Forest. With no consensus among those who commented, I looked for substantive comments and recommendations on specific environmental and social issues.

I considered all public comments and resource and social issues identified during the planning process and strived to achieve a balance between the various motorized and non-motorized uses on the SCNF. I focused on finding a mix of motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities to respond to these diverse interests while minimizing impacts to natural and cultural resources.

In making my decision, I considered the purpose and need, environmental and social issues, consistency with the Forest Plan and the requirements of other laws, regulations and policies. I carefully evaluated the environmental impacts of the alternatives, focusing on the issues to balance trade-offs between beneficial and adverse effects and the preferences of diverse publics.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DECISION AND RATIONALE

After thorough review of Tribal, cooperator, agency and public comments and analysis in the SCNF Travel Planning and OHV Route Designation FEIS, I have decided to implement Alternative 5 as described in the FEIS with specific modifications. Throughout the remainder of this Record of Decision, Alternative 5 with the modifications described is referred to as the Selected Alternative. The specific route modifications described below are in Appendix A of this Record of Decision

SELECTED ALTERNATIVE

The Selected Alternative is displayed by Ranger District on maps accompanying this document. Errors were identified on the Middle Fork Map after it was printed; therefore an errata map displaying the spur routes for accessing designated dispersed campsites off the Beaver Creek Road (FSR 40008), Swamp Creek Road (40195), Lola Creek Road (40083) and Stanley Landmark Road (40579) are also included. All routes designated in the Selected Alternative, the mileage of each route, the vehicle type allowed on each route and the seasonal open period are displayed by Ranger District in Appendix B of this Record of Decision. There are six seasonal open periods for use of roads and trails in the Selected Alternative described in Appendix B.

Roads and Motorized Trails: The Selected Alternative designates 2,665 miles of roads and 866 miles of motorized trails for a total of 3,531 miles of motorized routes Forest-wide. The result of the modifications is a decrease of 4.67 miles of roads and an increase of 1.49 miles motorized trails compared to Alternative 5.

Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping: Limited motor vehicle use for dispersed camping would be allowed to access dispersed campsites via routes that terminate in dispersed campsites as well as within 300 feet of either side of most designated system roads and motorized trails *where slope, topography, vegetation type, and resource conditions would permit such use without causing unacceptable levels of damage*. Unacceptable levels of damage may include but would not be limited to excessive soil compaction and displacement; damage to wet meadows, seeps, springs, bogs and streams; crushed and uprooted vegetation; damage to cultural and archaeological resources; and disturbance or harassment to fish or wildlife. No motorized access for dispersed camping would be allowed within 30 feet of a stream, pond, or lake to provide streambank and water quality protection. Some designated Forest routes occur within 30 feet of a stream, lake, or pond. Traveling on these routes is acceptable; however, traveling off these routes for the purpose of accessing dispersed campsites is not acceptable.

I have decided to reduce the distance for motor vehicle use for dispersed camping on most motorized trails designated for vehicles 50" wide or less (ATV's and motorcycles) from 300 feet, as analyzed in Alternative 5, to 100 feet. I reduced the distance to 100 feet on either side of most motor vehicle trails with the belief that trail vehicles, being smaller, lighter, and having correspondingly smaller, lighter loads, do not necessarily need to drive as far to access dispersed camping sites.

As a result of modifying the distance from 300 feet to 100 feet in the designation of motor vehicle trails for vehicles 50" wide or less, the acres of motorized access for dispersed camping will decrease from 116,748 acres proposed in Alternative 5 to 106,641 acres in this decision. Dispersed camping off all roads and trails, when accessed by foot, horse, or other non-motorized travel is not restricted or designated. Dispersed camping is allowed on most areas of the Forest, except for the areas listed below, as long as cultural and natural resources are not damaged. My decision does not reduce dispersed camping; it designates distances off roads and motorized trails where vehicle use is allowed to access dispersed camping. Any changes to dispersed camping allowances will be apparent in annual updates of the MVUM.

Designated Dispersed Campsites: Alternative 5 considered eight high-use areas where motorized access for dispersed camping off designated routes is a concern. These areas were field-reviewed in the fall of 2008 and summer of 2009, after the release of the DEIS. A proliferation of unauthorized routes off Forest system roads and trails has adversely impacted cultural and natural resources in these high-use areas. These areas are Sawmill Canyon, Antelope, Wildhorse, Pass Creek, and the North Fork Big Lost River areas of the Lost River Ranger District, and the Thatcher Creek, Beaver Creek, and Cape Horn areas of the Middle Fork Ranger District. Designated dispersed camping areas will be displayed on the MVUM and signed on the ground.

As the Forest begins to implement travel planning, monitoring of dispersed campsites will occur along designated open roads and motor vehicle trails. Restrictions to areas open to dispersed camping use may occur if damage to resources from unexpected natural events or by motorized vehicle access occurs. Over time the Forest could designate more specific dispersed camping sites and restrict access within the 300-foot and 100-foot distances along designated routes

Routes in a Research Natural Area: During analysis the IDT identified a route composed of four segments in Alternative 5 that would encroach into the Sheep Mountain Research Natural Area on the Lost River Ranger District. As a result, routes 40450, U80-27, U55-01A and U55-01D are not designated for public motor vehicle use and therefore are not part of this decision.

Routes Connecting with Adjacent Public Lands: Two routes not proposed for designation in Alternative 5 are included in my decision. Route 40263 (0.23 mile) and 40265 (0.38 mile) analyzed as roads in Alternative 2 (the Revised Proposed Action) in the DEIS will be designated as motorized trails for ATV and motorcycle use in this decision. These two routes are on the Challis-Yankee Fork Ranger District located between the Keystone Road and the Forest Service/BLM boundary and provide an important connection to the Land of the Yankee Fork Interpretive Center.

Staged Opening after Further Analysis: The analysis for designation of the entire road and motorized trail system for the SCNF incorporates the best available information for each route from inventories, resource specialist knowledge, and the public. Some previously unauthorized routes selected for designation in this decision have not been fully evaluated on the ground for potential safety, resource, and/or cultural concerns. Recognizing this, my decision to designate previously unauthorized routes (identified with the letter "U", such as U252211A) is contingent on successful completion of safety, resource, and cultural surveys. Until surveys are complete, these routes will not be designated for public motor vehicle use on the MVUM. Some routes may not be designated if identified concerns cannot be mitigated through monitoring or avoidance. As a result of surveys and analysis complete at this time, 16 routes totaling 3.69 miles that were included in Alternative 5, will not be designated on the MVUM. Also, 18 routes that allow limited motor vehicle use for dispersed camping in Alternative 5 will not be designated in my decision to mitigate resource concerns. A list of all routes designated in my decision is included in Appendix B of this document.

Corrections and Unnecessary Designations: Continued review of the route data to create the MVUM identified some routes that do not require designation or that were incorrectly proposed for designation. Examples are proposed designation of camping spurs within a campground which is not necessary; designation of a single campground road when multiple roads (loops) should be designated; designating a trailhead (transition of a road to a trail) at the wrong point; designating routes that only provide access to private land; and minor corrections of route length. These corrections and unnecessary designations are displayed in Appendix A of this Record of Decision.

Alternative 5 also proposed to designate 29 short route segments on the Lost River Ranger District for the purpose of dispersed camping. These routes are within 300 feet of designated roads where limited

motor vehicle use for dispersed camping is already part of the designation; therefore these routes are not part of my decision.

OTHER FACTORS CONSIDERED IN THE DECISION:

The analysis leading to this decision has drawn specific attention to components of Alternative 5 that have not been modified and are part of the Selected Alternative that I want to emphasize.

Game Retrieval: My decision does not allow motorized travel off designated routes for the purpose of game retrieval. Motor vehicles must stay on designated routes when game is retrieved.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), which has legal responsibility for management and regulation of big game on NFS lands, commented on the proposed SCNF Travel Plan and encouraged the prohibition of cross-country motorized travel and the prohibition of motorized travel off designated routes for game retrieval.

According to IDFG 2009 Big Game rules,

“Motor vehicles, from pickups and SUVs to motorcycles and ATVs, have changed hunting, and some of these changes have created challenges for hunters, land managers and wildlife.”

The IDFG rules provide information and rationale in support of their recommendation. The publication states:

“Wisely managing roads, trails and motor vehicles will yield more old bucks and bulls, permit more hunting opportunity, allow longer seasons, decrease erosion, reduce conflicts, reduce damage to habitat and the spread of noxious weeds, and best of all it will make hunting better.”

The rules also state:

“Cross-country travel with motor vehicles can create a network of new travel ways that cause erosion, spread noxious weeds, and damage fish and wildlife habitats. Much of this cross-country travel occurs during the hunting season. To reduce these impacts, Idaho’s land and wildlife managers ask all hunters using motorized vehicles to stay on roads and trails and use designated routes where they are established. Do not travel cross-country with a motor vehicle.”

While the decision related to motorized big game retrieval rests with me, I recognize IDFG rules share many objectives of the Travel Rule, and both complement each other to protect and enhance resource values. I agree with the IDFG recommendation and have incorporated the prohibition on motorized game retrieval into my decision.

Parking: Parking is allowed as part of the designations of all motorized routes where it is safe to do so, where it does not cause resource damage, and where all parts of the vehicle are within one vehicle length of the road edge (proposed Washington Office Directive FSM 7716.1). Parking is also allowed in attendant facilities such as trail heads, short dead-end road segments leading to gates, pull-offs, turn-outs, and other terminal facilities. Parking is not acceptable on steep cut and fill slopes, within 30 feet of a stream, pond or lake, in wet meadows, and in other locations that may be signed prohibiting parking (FEIS p. 2.27).

Salmon River Road: Management options for the Salmon River Road are not changed from Alternative 5 for the Selected Alternative.

As part of route designation, this alternative allows limited use of motor vehicles within 300-feet of either side of the Salmon River Road and six intersecting access routes for the purpose of dispersed camping, where slope, topography, vegetation and resource conditions are suitable.

Designated routes off the Salmon River Road where limited use of motor vehicles for dispersed camping may occur are the Newland Picnic Area Road, the Dump Creek gated dispersed area road, Cadagan Road, Cove Creek Helispot Road, Cove Creek Boating Site Road, Cache Bar launch area and campsites road. No motorized access for dispersed camping is available at the Newland Administrative Site, the Newland Dumpsite, and Indianola.

Limited use of motor vehicles within 300-feet on either side of the Salmon River Road, from North Fork to mile 28.7 are designated for dispersed camping only, where such use does not cause unacceptable resource damage. No motorized access for dispersed camping is allowed from mile 28.7 to mile 32.9 (bottom end of the Clam Hole). Limited use of motor vehicles within 300-feet on either side of the Salmon River Road from mile 32.9 to Corn Creek (at the campground entrance) is designated for dispersed camping only, where such use does not cause unacceptable resource damage. No motorized access for dispersed camping or vehicle parking for dispersed camping are allowed within 30 feet of the Salmon River or its tributaries to provide streambank and water quality protection. In some locations, the Salmon River Road is within 30 feet of the Salmon River. In these locations, no motorized off-road travel for the purpose of dispersed camping is allowed.

An approximate 5-acre open area at the Cadagan dispersed campsite is also designated for motorized access for the purpose of dispersed camping. The area is a large open field between the Salmon River and the Salmon River Road. Campers may drive their motor vehicles within the designated area for the purpose of dispersed camping, but cannot drive their vehicles for any other purpose.

Parking is allowed as part of the designation of the Salmon River Road and the same stipulations discussed for other routes described above apply.

Roadless Area Boundary Corrections in accordance with the Idaho Roadless Rule: Analysis of the effects of Alternative 5 to Idaho Roadless Areas identified specific errors in the mapped boundaries of several Roadless Areas. The SCNF is pursuing boundary changes to 11 of 54 Idaho Roadless Areas (IRAs) following the Administrative Correction process defined in the Idaho Roadless Rule [(Federal Register 2008 73 FR 61492 subpart 294.22(c)]. The administrative correction process requires 30-day public notice and opportunity to comment that is separate from this decision. I anticipate the proposed correction will be announced in the Federal Register this fall. The analysis for this decision considered the effects on IRAs using current IRA boundaries. My decision does not designate any new system roads within IRAs and does not require the administrative correction in order to be implemented. The anticipated result of the administrative correction is that some current system roads and routes I am designating as OHV routes will no longer be in IRAs.

Recommended Wilderness: Wilderness advocates desire all motorized use to be eliminated in areas that have been recommended for Wilderness designation. The 1993 Challis Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Amendment 9 allows motorized use in certain areas and that motorized use is well established. Alternative 5 analyzed and my decision causes all of the previously authorized routes to be either the same mileage or less than is actually allowed in the Challis NF FLRMP amendment. The routes included in Amendment 9 are listed in Chapter 1 of the FEIS (p. 1.11) and the mileages designated in this decision are included in Appendix B of this Record of Decision.

Continental Divide National Scenic Trail: My decision allows for continued motorized use of some segments of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) which were open to motorized use at the time the CDNST was designated. This is consistent with the National Parks and Recreation Act of

1978 (P.L. 95-625) which designated the CDNST, the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan of 1985 and the Chief's letter of memorandum of July 3, 1997.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Treaty Rights: The Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868 retains for the Shoshone – Bannock Tribes off-reservation hunting and fishing rights on all public domain lands reserved for NFS purposes now administered by the SCNF. My decision will not interfere with Tribal members in exercising those rights. In my formal government to government consultation meeting with the Tribal Business Council on June 4, 2009, I committed to work with the Council to develop a mechanism for the Tribes to continue to exercise these off-Reservation Treaty rights in pursuit of traditional activities. During a July 27, 2009, staff-to-staff consultation, a mechanism was identified: When exercising off-reservation Treaty Rights, Tribal members must carry and present a valid Tribal identification card upon request by an authorized official.

Salmon Forest Plan Modifications: The Salmon National Forest LRMP allows editorial and other minor modifications without amending or revising the plan. Direction in the plan states: "Editorial and other minor modifications to [these] management requirements which do not alter their intent may be made without amending or revising the Forest Plan" (LRMP IV-4). Management requirements in the LRMP are presented as: Management Activities, General Direction Statements, and Standards and Guidelines (Salmon LRMP IV-4). Language in Section IV, Forest Management Direction Part B. Forest-wide Direction for Dispersed Recreation Management (page IV-17) stating "a. Display off-road vehicle restrictions in the Forest Travel Plan" is deleted. In accordance with the Travel Rule, the MVUM will be published yearly and will display where off-road vehicle use is allowed. This in effect, will show where off-road vehicle use is restricted and does not alter the intent of the Salmon National Forest LRMP.

Language in Section IV, Forest Management Direction Part B. Forest-wide Direction for Transportation System Management (page IV-62) stating "a. Specify off road vehicle restrictions based on OHV use management and display in the Forest Travel Plan" is deleted using the same rationale stated above. This same statement is also deleted from Management Area Direction on pages IV-99, 102, 105, 111, 114, 120, and 159.

Challis Forest Plan Amendment: The Challis National Forest LRMP does not include language allowing modifications to the plan that do not alter the intent therefore; the Challis LRMP would be amended to comply with the Travel Rule. I have determined that the amendment to change language in the plan is not significant and complies with agency directives (Forest Service Manual 1922.52 and Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 Section 5.32 under the 1982 Planning Rule) for determining significance of a plan amendment.

Changing language in the Challis Forest Plan does not significantly alter the multiple use goals and objectives for long-term management at the Forest level. There are no adjustments of management area boundaries or management area prescriptions associated with the project. Language to comply with the Travel Management Rule makes minor changes in Forest plan standards and guidelines and provides opportunities to maintain and improve off-road vehicle use on the Challis National Forest.

Determination of Significance: The following factors were considered to determine if the language changes to amend the Challis Forest Plan are significant or non-significant, based NFMA Planning requirements.

Timing - the later in the planning period, the less likely the amendment is to be significant. This amendment is occurring 15 years after the signing of the Forest Plan, so it is far into the current planning cycle and is therefore not considered a significant change.

Location and Size – the language changes will apply to the entire Challis National Forest, however the changes on the ground will be small in size. For example, current direction states: “Sign to clearly indicate whether an area or trail is open, closed or restricted to ORV use.” The language change will state: “Sign, to the extent possible to indicate if an area or trail is open to ORV use.” This is not a significant change to the Forest Plan language. The Motor Vehicle Use Map required by the Travel Management Rule will display the designated roads, motor vehicle trails and areas open for public recreation use and will be the primary tool to determine compliance with and enforcement of the Travel Plan.

Goals, Objectives, and Outputs – language changes to comply with the Travel Management Rule will not change the goals, objectives or outputs described in the Forest Plan.

Management Prescription – language changes to comply with the Travel Management Rule will not change the intent of relevant management direction described in the plan and in some cases will strengthen direction. For example, current language in the plan states: “Discourage ORV use on wetlands and riparian areas.” Amended language will state: “Prohibit ORV use on wetlands and riparian areas.”

Based on the review of these criteria, I have determined that this Forest Plan amendment is not significant.

The following Forest-wide Management Direction, and Standards and Guidelines described on pages IV-11 and IV-12 of the Challis LRMP are amended. Following is the current language from the Challis Forest Plan and the language to amend the plan as part of this decision.

Forest-wide Direction (Challis NF LRMP, page IV-11):

1. Recreation

Current Direction

b. Dispersed Sites

4) ORV closures should be adequately signed.

f. Off-Road Vehicles (Challis NF LRMP page IV-12)

1) Annually inventory high use ORV areas on the Forest, identifying areas of watershed damage.

4) Sign to clearly indicate if whether an area or trail is open, closed or restricted to ORV use.

5) Designate unrestricted ORV use areas, specific ORV travel routes, and promote public awareness and utilization through the Travel Plan.

9) Discourage ORV use on wetlands and riparian areas.

(The following two standards are added to the Forest Direction by Amendment 9)

14) On National Forest System lands where travel (motorized and/or mechanized) is restricted to designated routes only, off-route travel is limited to within 300 feet on either side of the designated routes and for the purposes of access to camping sites, retrieval of big game carcasses, or for fuelwood gathering; unless otherwise authorized by a properly executed Forest Service permit.

15) The Forest Travel Plan will be displayed on a map designed to be easily understood by the public.

Amended Direction

b. Dispersed Sites

4) Open trails will be signed, to the extent possible, to supplement the MVUM.

f. Off-Road Vehicles

1) Annually inventory high use areas where motorized access for dispersed camping is allowed to identify resource damage.

4) Sign, to the extent possible to indicate if an area or trail is open to ORV use.

5) Designated motorized routes (roads and trails) will be displayed annually on the Forest MVUM.

9) Prohibit ORV use on wetlands and riparian areas.

14) On National Forest System lands, off-route travel is limited to within 300 feet on either side of designated roads and within 100 feet of designated motor vehicle trails where access to dispersed camping is allowed and displayed on the MVUM; and where such use is practicable depending on slope and topography, for the purposes of access to dispersed camping sites unless otherwise authorized by a properly executed Forest Service permit. No motorized access for the retrieval of big game carcasses will be allowed.

Other Components of the Decision

My decision incorporates:

- Previous travel management decisions made through other National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses.
- All definitions, summer use regulations, and standards and maintenance described in the FEIS (pp. 2.4-2.6).
- All project design features described in the FEIS (pp. 2.7-2.9), and included in Appendix D of this Record of Decision.
- All monitoring and evaluation described in the FEIS (pp.2.9-2.11) as well as the Reasonable and Prudent Measures and Terms and Conditions identified in the Biological Opinion for threatened and/or endangered species and included in Appendix D of this Record of Decision.
- Any new forest orders necessary for implementation of this decision will be issued. Any existing forest orders that are not consistent with this decision will be rescinded.

I am fully satisfied that all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the Selected Alternative have been adopted through the implementation of route designation criteria and project design features. Monitoring will be conducted to ensure that project implementation is consistent with established standards and guides as well as design features of this project.

The analysis and decision process for this project considered the best available scientific information, a consideration of responsible opposing views and the acknowledgement of incomplete or unavailable information.

SUMMARY

All action alternatives analyzed in the FEIS meet the purpose and need for action, but the Selected Alternative best meets the purpose and need because it provides a modest increase of motorized routes

to address current and anticipated recreation needs when compared to the existing designated system, but reduces the miles of routes (primarily unauthorized routes) when compared to the No Action Alternative. The Selected Alternative balances the desires of competing interests, offers a variety of recreation opportunities, and is most consistent with routes on adjoining public lands of all action alternatives.

The Selected Alternative best addresses the environmental and social issues identified in Chapter 2 (FEIS pp. 2.29-2.50) because while this alternative provides slightly more routes than the current designated system (which should be viewed favorably by those desiring more motorized opportunities), the Selected Alternative also reduces the miles of routes in Recommended Wilderness areas compared to the No Action Alternative and increases protection in Idaho Roadless Areas by restricting vehicle types that can travel on motorized trails in those areas. This should be viewed favorably by those requesting greater Recommended Wilderness and Roadless Area protection. Some routes or segments of routes, including a portion of the Salmon River Road will not include access for dispersed camping as part of their designation to provide necessary cultural and natural resource protection. No motorized access for dispersed camping would be allowed within 30 feet of a stream, pond or lake to provide to protect streambanks, water quality, and fisheries.

I evaluated all alternatives and compared them to Forest Plan goals, objectives and resource standards. I have determined that to implement the Selected Alternative, the modifications to the Salmon Forest Plan described on page 2.3 of the FEIS and the non-significant amendment to the Challis Forest Plan described on pages 2.3-2.4 of the FEIS are necessary. The modifications to Salmon NF Forest Plan and the non-significant amendment to the Challis Forest Plan are needed to change Forest Plan language to comply with the Travel Management Rule. The modifications and non-significant amendment are included in Appendix C of the Record of Decision.

The Selected Alternative is consistent with all pertinent laws, regulations, and agency policy.

Consistency with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Clean Water Act (CWA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Idaho Roadless Area Rule, the Fort Bridger Treaty, and the Nez Perce Treaty, in addition to consistency with the Travel Management Rule were all specifically referenced during public comment. A complete summary of the pertinent laws, regulations and policies is provided on pages 19-25 of this Record of Decision.

I recognize my decision will not meet 100 percent of the public interests and desires. I know some of the public will find closed roads they believe should be open and some will find some open roads they believe should be closed. The competing desires truly come from deep appreciation of National Forest System lands and the particular activities people enjoy. I am confident this decision is a more reasoned and balanced decision because of public involvement during the planning process.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement for this project began in May 2006 when public meetings and field trips were held in Salmon, Challis, Mackay, North Fork, Leadore and other locations in surrounding communities and across southern Idaho. A Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register on August 3, 2007. Public comment was taken for 95 days through November 14, 2007. Fifty comment letters, 201 public comment forms, and 9,069 e-mails were received. Scoping letters were sent to 651 individuals, groups, agencies and Tribes. The project first appeared in the Forest's Schedule of Proposed Actions in July 2007.

Though there were several form letter campaigns aimed at bolstering numbers of comments with a particular opinion, decisions on National Forests are not made by counting numbers of people or groups

for or against a proposal. What was important to me was the underlying issue and opinion contained in the form letters and not the sheer number of identical comments.

The Forest completed content analysis of 316 unique responses received from hundreds of individuals and 16 organizations during the pre-NEPA period May 2006 to March 2007 and during the NEPA scoping period that began August 3, 2007. Most comments were from Idaho residents, but comments were also received from people in 10 other states. Content analysis was used by the Forest Leadership Team and the IDT to identify issues which generated alternatives and project design features.

The Counties of Lemhi, Custer, and Butte were invited to be Cooperating Agencies. All three Counties accepted and designated a representative to be involved. Our purpose was to explain the intent of the Travel Rule and of the planning process, what the process would entail, and provide the Counties with the opportunity to participate with preparation of the plan.

Many public requests for better quality and more accurate Proposed Action maps were received in response to the information posted on the SCNF website in August 2007. During the fall and winter of 2007-2008, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and associated databases were upgraded and refined to improve the quality and accuracy of the maps and information needed for detailed analysis. As a result, errors in the mileages of roads and motorized trails described in the proposed action and inconsistencies with direction in the Forest Plans were discovered.

A revised Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement was published in the Federal Register on May 30, 2008, and initiated the final phase of the scoping process. The Forest Service requested any new scoping comments related to the Revised Proposed Action and its potential effects on the quality of the human environment. To be most useful, comments were requested by June 13, 2008. All comments received were retained and considered as potentially relevant to the Revised Proposed Action. Persons and organizations commenting during the initial scoping were mailed a letter on May 29, 2008, informing them of the revised NOI and directing them to the SCNF website to view new maps and data tables.

In response to the Revised Proposed Action, the Forest received 32 comment letters. Six letters sought clarification, better maps, copies of GIS layers, or offered additional corrections to the maps and data tables. One letter supported the Revised Proposed Action and another letter requested the Forest to include over-the-snow travel analysis in the DEIS. Ten letters expressed support for a specific type of motor vehicle use (single-track opportunities), and the remaining letters voiced concerns about losing access to public lands.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the DEIS was published in the Federal Register on Friday, September 26, 2008, starting a 60-day legal comment period. The DEIS and maps were sent to 556 individuals, three Tribal governments, three cooperating agencies, 19 federal, state and local government agencies, and 32 organizations and special interest groups. Seven public meetings were held in Salmon, Challis, North Fork, Leadore, Mackay, Idaho Falls, and Pocatello, Idaho, in October and November 2008. Over 375 public responses were received in the form of letters, e-mails, faxes, maps, and verbal remarks during the legal comment period. Twenty-two responses were received after the close of the comment period. These comments were analyzed and used to refine issues and improve alternatives. A thorough discussion of the entire public participation process, as well as responses to public comments is included in Chapter 4 of the FEIS.

My decision relates only to motorized *recreational* use on the National Forest. Some aspects of motorized use that came up in public discussions and comments but are separate from this decision are:

- Access to private land by property owners and to mining claims by claimants will not be affected by this decision though such access may not be afforded to the general public.
- Emergency access for purposes of Emergency Medical Technicians, firefighters, and search and rescue purposes will not be affected by this decision.
- Grazing permittee access will not be affected by this decision. Appropriate authorization for motorized use for this purpose is included in the grazing permittee's annual operating instructions.
- Elderly and disabled individuals will have the same access privileges as anyone else, consistent with federal law.
- Firewood cutting, including access, is authorized under a firewood permit. Firewood permits may at times include opportunities to drive on road systems beyond the Travel Plan for purposes of cutting firewood for those holding valid firewood permits.
- The Plan will not affect opportunities for resource management including timber sales and fuels treatment. Such commercial activities are evaluated in separate analyses, and formal decisions are made to authorize contracts which also may include road use authorization for both open and closed roads.
- The Travel Management Rule will not increase the agency's budget or the number of law enforcement officers. However, the final rule will enhance enforcement by substituting a regulatory prohibition for closure orders and providing for a motor vehicle use map supplemented by signage. Education and cooperative relationships with users support enforcement efforts by promoting voluntary compliance.

ALTERNATIVES

In response to agency and public issues, four action alternatives were developed and analyzed in the FEIS along with the No Action Alternative. A summary description of each of the alternatives is provided below. Detailed descriptions of each alternative are provided in Chapter 2 of the FEIS. Maps displaying each alternative are included in an FEIS map package.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN DETAIL

Alternative 0 – No Action Alternative (FEIS pp. 2.12-2.14)

The No Action Alternative is the current, authorized management displayed on existing Travel Plan maps, travel management decisions made through other NEPA analyses since the existing Travel Plans were developed and existing closure orders. The No Action Alternative is required by NEPA and serves as the baseline for analyzing effects. This alternative would maintain current management direction and would not implement the Travel Management Rule.

Roads and Motorized Trails: There are 2,920 miles of roads and 1,119 miles of motorized trails on the current system of motorized routes forest-wide. All NFS trails in open areas displayed on the current Salmon National Forest and Challis National Forest Travel Plan maps (whether actually used for motorized recreation) are interpreted as motorized trails in the calculation of mileages because no official designations allowing or prohibiting motor vehicle use on these trails are currently in effect. This has caused the miles of motorized trails to be an artificially high number. There are 1,108 miles of known unauthorized routes (non-system routes) in areas open to cross-country motorized travel.

Additionally, there are 980,423 acres currently open to motorized cross-county travel displayed on existing Travel Plan maps. About 720,000 acres are on the Salmon portion of the Forest and 260,000 acres on the Challis portion. Although nearly a million acres are shown on the maps, only a fraction of that acreage can actually be traveled because of steep topography, dense forest vegetation, rocky slopes and cliffs, wet areas, streams, rivers and lakes.

Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping and Game Retrieval: The current Salmon National Forest Travel Plan allows direct ingress and egress for temporary campsites within 300 feet of open designated routes, provided that no vegetation is damaged or destroyed and no streams or wet meadows are crossed. Motorized access to dispersed camping is also allowed in open areas of the Forest except where restrictions are shown on the map or signed on the ground. The current Salmon Forest Travel Plan map does not indicate if game retrieval is allowed or prohibited. Idaho Fish and Game management unit boundaries are illustrated on the map to aid sportsmen in locating boundaries. Fish and Game vehicle restrictions specific to management units apply.

The current Challis National Forest Travel Plan map allows motorized travel to campsites, for game retrieval, and fuelwood cutting within 300 feet of designated roads and to campsites and for game retrieval within 300 feet of designated trails. Areas identified on the map as “A” areas are generally open to all motorized vehicles, but some restrictions apply. Operators are responsible for resource damage and the use of existing roads and trails is encouraged.

Salmon River Road: The No Action Alternative allows motorized access for dispersed camping within 300 feet on either side of the Salmon River Road (FR #60030), where topography allows, provided no streams are crossed and no wet meadows are damaged.

Alternative 1 – Designated System Routes (FEIS pp 2.14-2.16)

This alternative would designate existing system roads and motorized trails displayed on current Travel Plan maps and travel management decisions made through other NEPA analyses. This alternative would use the best available information to assign vehicle types and seasonal open periods on trails in areas open to cross-country travel on current Travel Plan maps. Some trails that were previously used for motorized travel may not be designated based on information in the Forest trail inventory.

Roads and Motorized Trails: Alternative 1 proposes to designate 2,612 miles of roads and 812 miles of motorized trails totaling 3,424 miles of motorized system routes. These are the routes displayed on current Travel Plan maps and routes designated through previous NEPA decisions.

Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping and Game Retrieval: This alternative would allow limited motor vehicle use to dispersed campsites via routes that terminate in dispersed camp sites as well as anywhere within 300 feet of current designated system roads and motorized trails (but does not include motorized access to dispersed camping on currently unauthorized routes proposed for designation) *where slope, vegetation type, and resource conditions would permit such use without causing unacceptable levels of damage.* Unacceptable levels of damage may include but would not be limited to excessive soil compaction and displacement; damage to wet meadows, seeps, springs, bogs and streams; crushed and uprooted vegetation; damage to cultural and archaeological resources; and disturbance or harassment to fish or wildlife.

Acres available for limited motor vehicle use to dispersed camping were calculated using slopes less than 30 percent. Approximately 120,251 acres of limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be available under this alternative. No motorized access for game retrieval would be allowed.

Forest Plan Modifications and Amendment: The same modifications and amendment described for the Selected Alternative would also apply to this alternative.

Alternative 2 –The Revised Proposed Action (FEIS pp. 2.17)

The Revised Proposed Action is not carried forward into the FEIS, but was used as a starting point for the Preferred Alternative. The Revised Proposed Action planned to designate 2,670 miles of roads and 838 miles of motorized trails. Motorized access to and from dispersed campsites was proposed for 300 feet on either side of designated routes except the Salmon River Road (FR #60030). Camping with the use of a motor vehicle (e.g. car, motor-home, truck and camp trailer, camper, off-highway vehicle, or motorcycle) was proposed in designated dispersed camping areas and designated pull-outs along the Salmon River Road. The Revised Proposed Action identified 54 pull-outs and areas available for dispersed camping. No motorized access for game retrieval was proposed under this alternative. Nine seasonal open periods were proposed for roads and motorized trails. Forest Plan Amendments would be required to implement this alternative.

Alternative 3 - Recommended Wilderness Area/Roadless Area Values Emphasis (FEIS pp. 2.17-2.21)

This alternative responds to issues regarding effects to Recommended Wilderness Areas and Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) from motor vehicle use. No motor vehicle travel within Recommended Wilderness Areas and no designation of new roads within IRAs would be allowed under this alternative.

Roads and Motorized Trails: This alternative would designate 2,424 miles of roads and 482 miles of motorized trails for a total of 2,905 miles of motorized routes. This alternative is more restrictive than other alternatives in that it offers fewer yearlong opportunities on roads, and is more restrictive of vehicle types on motorized trails. There are nine seasonal open periods proposed for roads and trails in this alternative.

Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping and Game Retrieval: This alternative would allow motorized access to dispersed campsites via routes that terminate in dispersed campsites as well as within 300 feet of most designated system roads and motorized trails (but does not include motorized access to dispersed camping on currently unauthorized routes proposed for designation on the Salmon River Road FR #60030) *where slope, vegetation type, and resource conditions would permit such use without causing unacceptable levels of damage*. Unacceptable levels of damage may include but would not be limited to excessive soil compaction and displacement; damage to wet meadows, seeps, springs, bogs and streams; crushed and uprooted vegetation; damage to cultural and archaeological resources; and disturbance or harassment to fish or wildlife. Additionally, no motorized access for dispersed camping would be allowed off designated routes in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas (RHCA).

Acres available for motorized access to dispersed camping were calculated using slopes less than 30 percent. Approximately 67,881 acres of motorized access for dispersed camping would be available under this alternative. No motorized access for game retrieval would be allowed.

Salmon River Road: Camping with the use of a motor vehicle (e.g. car, motor-home, truck and camp trailer, camper, off-highway vehicle, or motorcycle) would be allowed in designated dispersed camping areas and designated pull-outs along the Salmon River Road (FR #60030). This alternative identifies 52 pull-outs and areas available for dispersed camping. Day-use parking would be allowed along the Salmon River Road. Mileposts would be installed along the Salmon River Road to assist the public in locating pull-outs and dispersed camping areas on the ground.

Forest Plan Modifications and Amendment: The same modifications and amendment described for the Selected Alternative would also apply to this alternative.

Alternative 4 – Maximum Motorized Emphasis Alternative (FEIS pp.2.21-2.25)

This alternative responds to issues that the designation of specific motorized routes to comply with the Travel Management Rule will affect motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities by altering the amount, type, and seasonal open periods of motorized routes. Many public comments requested the designation of as many motorized routes as possible and suggested that the Travel Management Rule would cause fewer motorized routes to be designated. The public expressed concern that this would cause a concentration of motor vehicles onto fewer designated routes.

This alternative also responds to the issue that designating motorized access to specific dispersed campsites along the Salmon River Road (using the mileage below North Fork as a location guide) would be difficult for the public to understand and for the agency to implement because there are no mileposts along the road.

Roads and Motorized Trails: This alternative would designate 3,021 miles of roads and 1,330 miles of motorized trails for a total of 4,351 miles of motorized routes. This alternative offers the least restrictive opportunities for motorized recreation.

Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping and Game Retrieval: This alternative would allow motorized access to dispersed campsites via routes that terminate in dispersed camp sites as well as anywhere within 300 feet of designated roads and motorized trails (both system routes and previously unauthorized routes proposed for designation) *where slope, vegetation type, and resource conditions would permit such use without causing unacceptable levels of damage*. Unacceptable levels of damage may include but would not be limited to excessive soil compaction and displacement; damage to wet meadows, seeps, springs, bogs and streams; crushed and uprooted vegetation; damage to cultural and archaeological resources; and disturbance or harassment to fish or wildlife.

Acres available for motorized access to dispersed camping were calculated using slopes less than 30 percent. Approximately 150,512 acres of motorized access for dispersed camping would be available under this alternative. No motorized access for game retrieval would be allowed under this alternative.

Salmon River Road: This alternative proposes to designate six access routes along the Salmon River Road as well as 300-foot corridors along the Salmon River Road where motorized access to dispersed campsites would be allowed.

Designated routes off the Salmon River Road include the Newland Picnic Area Road, the Dump Creek gated dispersed area road, Cadagan Road, Cove Creek Helispot Road, Cove Creek Boating Site Road, Cache Bar launch area and campsites road. There would be no motorized access to dispersed camping at the Newland Administrative Site, the Newland Dumpsite, and Indianola.

A 300-foot corridor on either side of the Salmon River Road, where topography and vegetation permit, from North Fork to mile 28.7 would be designated for motorized access to dispersed campsites only. No motorized access for dispersed camping would be available from mile 28.7 to mile 32.9 (bottom end of the Clam Hole). Another 300-foot corridor on either side of the Salmon River Road where topography and vegetation permit would be designated for motorized access to dispersed camping from mile 32.9 to Corn Creek (at the campground entrance). No motorized access would be allowed within 30 feet of the Salmon River or its tributaries to provide streambank and water quality protection. An approximate 5-acre open area at the Cadagan dispersed campsite would also be designated for motorized access for dispersed camping.

Forest Plan Amendments: In addition to the modifications and amendment described for the Selected Alternative another amendment to the Challis Forest Plan would be necessary to implement this alternative. The amendment would eliminate two-wheeled motor vehicle use on a portion of the Long

Lost Trail #194 which is currently allowed under Amendment 9 of the Challis Forest Plan. The plan would also be amended to allow motorized travel on a portion of the Swauger Lakes Trail #091 to motorized and mechanized vehicles 50 inches or less in width only. Currently motorized travel is restricted to two-wheeled motorized and mechanized vehicles only.

Alternative 5 – Preferred Alternative (FEIS pp.2.25-2.29)

The Preferred Alternative is a new alternative not previously analyzed. It blends some components from action alternatives analyzed in the DEIS and incorporates new features to more specifically address the Travel Management Rule and public comments to the DEIS. The Revised Proposed Action was used as a starting point for this alternative and strives to balance competing public interests regarding motorized and non-motorized uses on the SCNF. The development of the Preferred Alternative is described in detail in Chapter 1.

Roads and Motorized Trails: The Preferred Alternative would designate 2,670 miles of roads and 864 miles of motorized trails for a total of 3,536 miles of motorized routes Forest-wide. Tables of designated roads and motorized trails displaying the route number, route name, vehicle use type, season of use and mileage are displayed by ranger district in Appendix H. There are six seasonal open periods for roads and trails in this alternative.

Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping and Game Retrieval: Limited motor vehicle use for dispersed camping would be allowed to access dispersed campsites via routes that terminate in dispersed campsites as well as within 300 feet of either side of most designated system roads and motorized trails *where slope, topography, vegetation type, and resource conditions would permit such use without causing unacceptable levels of damage*. Unacceptable levels of damage may include but would not be limited to excessive soil compaction and displacement; damage to wet meadows, seeps, springs, bogs and streams; crushed and uprooted vegetation; damage to cultural and archaeological resources; and disturbance or harassment to fish or wildlife. No motorized access for dispersed camping would be allowed within 30 feet of a stream, pond, or lake to provide streambank and water quality protection. Some designated Forest routes occur within 30 feet of a stream, lake, or pond. Traveling on these routes is acceptable; however, traveling off these routes for the purpose of accessing dispersed campsites would not be acceptable.

Eight high-use areas where motorized access for dispersed camping off designated routes is a concern were field-reviewed in the fall of 2008 and summer of 2009, after the release of the DEIS. In this alternative, these areas would be closed to any motorized travel off designated routes including dispersed camping due to sensitive resource protection needs. Areas with sensitive resources where motorized off-route travel would not be allowed are Sawmill Canyon, Antelope, Wildhorse, Pass Creek, and North Fork Big Lost River areas of the Lost River Ranger District, and the Thatcher Creek, Beaver Creek, and Cape Horn areas of the Middle Fork Ranger District.

In these areas, all dispersed camping would be restricted to designated sites which would be displayed on the MVUM and signed on the ground. A proliferation of unauthorized routes off Forest system roads and trails has adversely impacted cultural and natural resources in these high-use areas.

Salmon River Road: As part of route designation, this alternative proposes to allow limited use of motor vehicles within 300-feet of either side of the Salmon River Road and six intersecting access routes for the purpose of dispersed camping, where slope, topography, vegetation and resource conditions are suitable.

Designated routes off the Salmon River Road where limited use of motor vehicles for dispersed camping may occur are the Newland Picnic Area Road, the Dump Creek gated dispersed area road, Cadagan

Road, Cove Creek Helispot Road, Cove Creek Boating Site Road, Cache Bar launch area and campsites road. There would be no motorized access for dispersed camping at the Newland Administrative Site, the Newland Dumpsite, and Indianola.

Limited use of motor vehicles within 300-feet on either side of the Salmon River Road, from North Fork to mile 28.7 would be designated for dispersed camping only, where such use would not cause unacceptable resource damage. No motorized access for dispersed camping would be allowed from mile 28.7 to mile 32.9 (bottom end of the Clam Hole). Limited use of motor vehicles within 300-feet on either side of the Salmon River Road from mile 32.9 to Corn Creek (at the campground entrance) would be designated for dispersed camping only, where such use would not cause unacceptable resource damage. No motorized access for dispersed camping or vehicle parking for dispersed camping would be allowed within 30 feet of the Salmon River or its tributaries to provide streambank and water quality protection. In some locations, the Salmon River Road is within 30 feet of the Salmon River. In those locations, no motorized off-road travel for the purpose of dispersed camping would be allowed.

An approximate 5-acre open area at the Cadagan dispersed campsite is also designated for motorized access for the purpose of dispersed camping. The area is a large open field between the Salmon River and the Salmon River Road. Campers may drive their motor vehicles within the designated area for the purpose of dispersed camping, but cannot drive their vehicles for any other purpose.

Parking would be allowed as part of the designation of the Salmon River Road and the same stipulations discussed for other routes described above would apply.

As part of route designation, this alternative would allow limited motor vehicle use for dispersed camping which was calculated using slopes less than 30 percent. Limited motor vehicle use for dispersed camping would be allowed on approximately 116,748 acres. No motorized access for game retrieval would be allowed under this alternative.

Forest Plan Modifications and Amendments: The same modifications and amendment described for Alternative 1 and Alternative 3 would also apply to this alternative.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA requires the Record of Decision specify “the alternative or alternatives which were considered to be environmentally preferable” (40 CFR 1505.2(b)). The environmentally preferable alternative is not necessarily the alternative that will be implemented, and it does not have to meet the underlying need for the project. It does, however, have to cause the least damage to the biological and physical environment and best protect, preserve, and enhance historical, cultural, and natural resources.

The Salmon-Challis Travel Planning and OHV Designation Project focuses specifically the designation of roads, motorized trails and areas for public motor vehicle use on the Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF) to comply with the Travel Management Rule.

Alternative 3 is the environmentally preferred alternative since it would designate the fewest miles of motorized routes and access for dispersed camping and therefore would have the least impacts from motorized uses. I believe, however, that the Selected Alternative provides the best balance of meeting competing public desires for motorized and non-motorized uses on the SCNF while providing cultural and natural resource protection.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

Four alternatives were considered but dismissed from detailed analysis. Two alternatives were dismissed in the DEIS and two alternatives were dismissed in the FEIS. These were the original Proposed Action and an alternative that would designate all known routes on the SCNF. The original Proposed Action was not carried forward into the FEIS because of errors in calculating the miles of routes and because inconsistencies with direction in the Forest plans was discovered when Geographic Information Systems (GIS) databases were updated and improved during the fall and winter of 2007-2008. The Revised Proposed Action was developed from the original Proposed Action. The alternative that would designate all known routes was dismissed from detailed analysis because it would not be feasible or desirable from a resource, monetary or management standpoint to consider designating all routes on the landscape.

An alternative that would eliminate all motorized travel in Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) was considered but was dismissed from detailed analysis in the FEIS. About 73 percent of the project area is within IRAs and/or Forest Plan Recommended Wilderness Areas and eliminating all motorized travel within these areas would fragment the existing transportation system. Neither the 2001 Roadless Rule nor the recently promulgated Idaho Roadless Rule precludes motorized travel on existing system routes in IRAs. Alternative 3, however, did analyze the effects of eliminating motorized travel within Forest Plan Recommended Wilderness Areas.

A proposal specific to management on the Salmon portion of the Forest was submitted by two local residents and a member of a conservation organization. The proposal delineated broad geographic areas of the Salmon National Forest where proponents thought motorized travel should be emphasized as described in Alternative 4 of the DEIS and other areas proponents thought should be non-motorized. Some geographic areas align with general route designations in Alternative 4, while others do not. For example, the proposal delineated an area north of the Salmon River, in the vicinity of Owl Creek for motorized emphasis. Motor vehicle use is currently restricted in this area on the existing Travel Plan to provide erosion control and big game security. The purpose for these restrictions is still valid; therefore, this particular component of the proposal was considered but dismissed from detailed study.

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS

Numerous laws, regulations, and agency directives require that my decision be consistent with their provisions. I have determined that my decision is consistent with all laws, regulations, and agency policy. The following summarizes findings required by major environmental laws.

Consistency with the Salmon Land and Resource Management Plan and the Challis Land and Resource Management Plan: My decision is consistent with Salmon Forest Plan and Challis Forest Plan with the modifications and amendment authorized with this decision. No Forest Plan amendments would be required to close the Forest to cross-country travel. The Travel Management Rule provides the legal mechanism of closure to cross-country travel once a Motor Vehicle Use Map is created and distributed to the public.

Travel Management Rule (36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, and 295): The Travel Management Rule requires designation of those roads, trails, and areas that are open to motor vehicle use. Designations made in this decision have been made by class of vehicle and by time of year. The Travel Management Rule prohibits the use of motor vehicles off the designated system, as well as use of motor vehicles on routes and in areas that is not consistent with the designations.

General Route Designation Criteria: The Travel Management Rule requires consideration of the effects of designating roads, trails and areas on specific resources and components of travel management. The Rule states, “In designating National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on the National Forest System lands for motor vehicle use, the responsible official shall consider effects on National Forest System natural and cultural resources, public safety, provision of recreation opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses of National Forest System lands, the need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that would arise if the uses under consideration are designated; and the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration.” (36 CFR 212.55 (a)).

I have determined that the Forest Service has considered the effects of road and motorized trail designation on the resources identified in the 2005 Travel Management Rule based on the analysis and information contained in the FEIS and the project record.

Motorized Trail Designation Criteria: The Rule also contains specific criteria related to designating motorized trails. It states, “In addition to the criteria listed in paragraph [a] of this section, in designating National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands, the responsible official shall consider effects on the following, with the objective of minimizing: (1) Damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources; (2) Harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats; (3) Conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreation uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands; and (4) Conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands. In addition, the responsible official shall consider: (5) Compatibility of motor vehicle use with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account sound, emissions, and others factors.” (36 CFR 212.55 (b)).

The objective of the Selected Alternative was to provide a mix of recreational opportunity settings while minimizing effects on resources and uses listed above. These resources were considered, as evidenced by the FEIS and project record, and specific measures were taken to minimize the effects of route designation where issues were identified. Specific measures included avoiding designation of routes to reduce the potential for impacts to cultural resources and providing a range of recreation opportunities on the SCNF to minimize user conflicts. General outcomes of the Selected Alternative include reducing adverse impacts on soils, water quality, fisheries and aquatics, wildlife, vegetation, and the spread of noxious weeds.

Minimum Road System (36 CFR 212.5[B][1])

This travel management planning process has resulted in identification of the minimum road system necessary to meet the utilization (including recreation), protection, and administration needs of the SCNF. Consistent with 36 CFR 212.5(b)(1), this process has involved the “science-based roads analysis” and “broad spectrum of interested and affected citizens, other state and federal agencies, and Tribal governments” necessary for determining the minimum road system needed (see Chapters 2 and 3 of the FEIS). In addition, the process has revealed that the Selected Alternative is the minimum “road system determined to be needed to meet resource and other management objectives adopted in the relevant land and resource management plan (36 CFR part 219), to meet applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, to reflect long-term funding expectations, to ensure that the identified system minimizes adverse environmental impacts....” Chapters 1 and 3 of the FEIS identify consistency with the Forest’s land management plan and other statutory and regulatory requirements. A Travel Analysis was conducted in spring 2008 and is part of the project record. The Travel Analysis was included as Appendix A with the DEIS but is not reprinted with the FEIS. Section 20.2 of the Forest Service

Travel Planning Handbook (FSH 7709.55) identifies the objectives of travel analysis to inform decisions related to identification of the minimum road system per 36 CFR 212.5(b)(1); designation of roads trails and areas for motor vehicle use per 36 CFR 212.51.

Consideration of Roads Analysis The Forest Scale Roads Analysis for the Salmon-Challis National Forest (see Project Record) was completed in January, 2003. The report highlighted potential impacts of roads and/or motorized access on wildlife, water quality, cultural resources; right-of-way issues; and potential changes to road management objectives. This analysis helped inform me about potential resource issues associated with system roads.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (P.L. 91-190): The purposes of this Act are “To declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment, to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality” (42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321). NEPA establishes the format and content requirements for environmental analyses and documentation. The entire process of preparing this FEIS was undertaken to comply with NEPA.

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 (P.L. 4-588): This Act guides development and revision of National Forest Land Management Plans and contains regulations that prescribe how land and resource management planning is to be conducted on NFS lands to protect National Forest resources. My decision complies with NFMA.

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended: The purposes of this Act are to provide for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and their habitats. The Forest is required by the ESA to ensure that any actions it approves will not jeopardize the continued existence of threatened and endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.

The Forest Service prepared a biological assessment (BA) to comply with the ESA. A BA analyzes potential effects on threatened and endangered species that may be present in the project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) decide if implementation of the selected alternative would jeopardize the continued existence of any species listed or proposed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. This determination is issued as a Biological Opinion (BO) by the regulatory agency. The BO includes terms and conditions that must be complied with in order to be exempt from the prohibitions of Article 9 of that Act. The BO may include conservation recommendations, which are suggestions regarding discretionary activities to minimize or avoid adverse effects of the agency’s proposal to listed species or critical habitat.

A Biological Opinion was received from the United States Department of Interior, Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office on July 14, 2009. The Service finds that the potential adverse effects from the Forest’s proposal are not likely to jeopardize the United States coterminous population of bull trout.

A Biological Opinion was received from the United States Department of Commerce, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service on August 12, 2009. The Service finds that the action, as proposed, is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon and Snake River Basin steelhead, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat for Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon and Snake River Basin steelhead. The Service also concludes that the actions, as proposed, are not likely to adversely affect Snake River sockeye salmon.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918: The purpose of this Act is to establish an international framework for the protection and conservation of migratory birds. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) implements various treaties and conventions between the U.S. and Canada, Japan, Mexico, and the former Soviet Union for the protection of migratory birds. Under the Act, taking, killing, or possessing migratory birds, including nests and eggs, is unlawful. A list of neotropical migratory birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act is provided in 50 CFR 10.13. Additional information on the Migratory Bird Treaty Act can be found in the Wildlife Resources section, Chapter 3. My decision complies with Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Executive Order 13186 (Migratory Bird Treaty Act): In January 2001, the President signed an executive order outlining responsibilities of federal agencies to protect migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). As a complementary measure to the Executive Order, the Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) the purpose of which is to strengthen migratory bird conservation through enhanced collaboration between the agencies, in coordination with state, tribal, and local governments. My decision is consistent with the Executive Order and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Executive Order 11644 (February 8, 1972) Use of Off-Road Vehicles on the Public Lands, as amended by E.O. 11989 (May 24, 1977): National direction for travel planning, specifically off-road use of motor vehicles on Federal lands, is provided by E.O. 11644 as amended. Section 3(a) of E.O. 11644 directs the Forest Service to promulgate regulations that provide for designation of trails and areas for off-road motor vehicle use. The regulations require that designation of these trails and areas be based upon protection of NFS resources, promotion of public safety, and minimization of conflicts among uses of NFS lands. Section 9(b) was added to E.O. 11644 when it was amended by E.O. 11989. Section 9(b) specifically authorizes the Forest Service to adopt the policy to designate those areas or trails that are suitable for motor vehicle use and to close all other areas and trails to that use. My decision complies with the Executive Orders.

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (PL 92-500) as amended in 1977 (PL 95-217) and 1987 (PL 100-4), also known as the federal Clean Water Act: The primary objective of this Act is to restore and maintain the integrity of the nation's waters by: 1) Eliminating the discharge of pollutants into the nation's waters; and 2) Achieving water quality levels that are fishable and swimmable. This Act establishes a non-degradation policy for all federally proposed projects to be accomplished through planning, application, and monitoring of Best Management Practices (BMPs). Identification of BMPs is mandated by Section 319 of the Water Quality Act of 1987 (also referred to as the Clean Water Act), which states, "It is national policy that programs for the control of nonpoint sources of pollution be developed and implemented." My decision complies with the Clean Water Act.

Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974: This Act provides for the control and management of non-indigenous weeds that injure or have the potential to injure the interests of agriculture and commerce, wildlife resources, or the public health. The Act requires that each federal agency develop a management program to control undesirable plants on federal lands under the agency's jurisdiction; establish and adequately fund the program; implement cooperative agreements with state agencies to coordinate management of undesirable plants on federal lands; establish integrated management systems to control undesirable plants targeted under cooperative agreements. The alternatives analyzed in the FEIS comply with the Federal Noxious Weed Act. Under separate planning activities, the agency has developed a management program to control undesirable plants on the SCNF. My decision considered and analyzed the risk of spreading noxious weeds and complies with SCNF programs to control noxious weeds.

The Preservation of American Antiquities Act of 1906: This Act makes it illegal to “...appropriate, excavate, injure, or destroy any historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity, situated on lands owned by the Government of the United States...” Cultural resource surveys would be completed for all proposed additions to the current designated travel system and any cultural resources identified would be protected as required through consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended: This Act requires federal agencies to consult with state and local groups before nonrenewable cultural resources, such as archaeological sites and historic structures are damaged or destroyed. Section 106 of this Act requires federal agencies to review the effects that project proposals may have on the cultural resources in the project area. It requires agencies to consider the effects of undertakings on properties eligible to or listed in the National Register of Historic Places by following the regulatory process specified in 36 CFR 800.

Actions permitted, approved, or initiated by the Forest Service and that may affect cultural resources must comply with provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, and as implemented by federal guidelines 36 CFR 800. Section 106 of the NHPA requires a federal agency to take into account the effects of the agency's undertaking on properties listed on, or eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Before any federal undertaking begins, cultural resources eligible for listing on the NRHP must be identified and documented. Cultural resources recorded in the project area are evaluated in consultation with the SHPO or the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979: ARPA prohibits the excavation, removal, damage, or destruction of archaeological resources located on public lands, and specifies civil and criminal penalties for persons found guilty of violations under the act. Authorized excavation and removal of archaeological resources requires a permit issued by the federal agency. ARPA, as referenced in the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552[b]), protects the confidentiality of archaeological sites from public disclosure. Other provisions of the law promote communication and cooperation between federal agencies, Indian tribes, professional archaeologists, and private individuals for the protection of archaeological resources on public lands. The procedures for implementing ARPA are outlined in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR Part 296).

Federal statutes covering theft and destruction of government property also prohibit the removal of, and damage or destruction of, archaeological resources on public lands (see 18 U.S.C. 641 and 18 U.S.C. 1361, respectively).

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: River segments and their corridors that are eligible, suitable, or designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers are managed to retain their free-flowing status, classification, and outstandingly remarkable values for recreation, scenery, wildlife, cultural, fish, geology, hydrology, and ecological/ botanical resources. Opportunities are provided so the public can understand the uniqueness of eligible, suitable, and designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. The Selected Alternative makes changes to routes within eligible and designated Wild and Scenic River corridors; however, their status is not affected.

Consumers, Civil Rights, Minorities, and Women: The need to conduct an analysis of this potential impact is required by Forest Service Manual and Forest Service Handbook direction. The civil rights of individuals or groups, including minorities, people with disabilities, and women, are not differentially affected by the Selected Alternative because access is afforded to all groups equally in the SCNF Travel Management Plan.

Executive Order 12898: E.O. 12898 directs each federal agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. An associated memorandum emphasizes the need to consider these types of effects during NEPA analysis. The Selected Alternative would not disproportionately adversely affect minority or low-income populations (including American Indian Tribal members) because access is afforded to these groups equally in the SCNF Travel Management Plan.

Executive Order 13443: The purpose of Executive Order 13443, signed in 2007, is to direct federal land management agencies to facilitate expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the management of game species and their habitats. The E.O. directs agencies to evaluate the effect of agency actions on trends in hunting participation and, where appropriate to address declining trends, implement actions that expand and enhance hunting opportunities for the public; consider the economic and recreational values of hunting in agency actions, as appropriate; manage wildlife and wildlife habitats on public lands in a manner that expands and enhances hunting opportunities, including through the use of hunting in wildlife management planning; work collaboratively with State governments to manage and conserve game species and their habitats in a manner that respects private property rights and state management authority over wildlife resources; establish short and long term goals, in cooperation with state and tribal governments, and consistent with agency missions, to foster healthy and productive populations of game species and appropriate opportunities for the public to hunt those species; ensure that agency plans and actions consider programs and recommendations of comprehensive planning efforts such as state Wildlife Action Plans, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and other range-wide management plans for big game and upland game birds; seek the advice of state and tribal fish and wildlife agencies, and, as appropriate, consult with the Sporting Conservation Council and other organizations, with respect to the foregoing federal activities.

The Selected Alternative provides ample hunting opportunities and provides a range of motorized and non-motorized hunting opportunities taking into account the various methods of hunting.

Idaho Roadless Rule: The U.S. Department of Agriculture adopted a state-specific, final rule establishing management direction for designated roadless areas in the State of Idaho, on October 16, 2008. The final rule designates 250 Idaho Roadless Areas (IRAs) and establishes five management themes that provide prohibitions with exceptions or conditioned permissions governing road construction, timber cutting, and discretionary mineral development. This final rule supersedes the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule) for National Forest System (NFS) lands in the State of Idaho.

Travel management decisions are not affected by this rule as noted in section 294.26(a). Adjustments to NFS road inventories are made pursuant to the Travel Management rule (70 FR 68264). Section 294.26(a) of the Idaho Roadless Rule identify that decisions concerning the future management and/or status of existing roads or trails in IRAs under this rule will be made during the applicable travel management processes. Forest Service responsible officials are already directed to coordinate with counties when engaged in travel management decision-making regarding designation or revision of NFS roads, trails, and areas on NFS land as directed in 36 CFR 212.53 Of the Travel Management Rule.

The designations of roads, trails and areas for motor vehicle use within Idaho Roadless Areas in my decision are consistent with Idaho Roadless Area management themes. No new road or motorized trail construction would occur under any alternative.

Salmon-Challis National Forest Responsibilities to Federally Recognized Tribes: American Indian Tribes are afforded special rights under various federal statutes including: the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended); the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (P.L.4588); the

Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, and implementing regulations 43 CFR Part 7; the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990, and implementing regulations 43 CFR Part 10; the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (P.L. 103141); and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) of 1978. Federal guidelines direct federal agencies to consult with American Indian Tribal representatives who may have concerns about federal actions that may affect religious practices, other traditional cultural uses, as well as cultural resource sites and remains associated with American Indian ancestors. Any Tribe whose aboriginal territory occurs within a project area is afforded the opportunity to voice concerns for issues governed by NHPA, NAGPRA, or AIRFA.

Federal responsibilities to consult with Indian Tribes are included in the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 4-588), Interior Secretarial Order 3175 of 1993 and Executive Orders 12875, 13007, 12866, and 13084: E.O. 12875 calls for regular consultation with tribal governments; and E.O. 13007 requires consultation with Indian Tribes and religious representatives on the access, use, and protection of Indian sacred sites. E.O. 12866 requires that federal agencies seek views of tribal officials before imposing regulatory requirements that might affect them; and E.O. 13084 provides direction regarding consultation and coordination with American Indian Tribes relative to fee waivers. E.O. 12898 directs federal agencies to focus on the human health and environmental conditions in minority and low-income communities, especially in instances where decisions may adversely impact these populations (see the “Environmental Justice” above). The 40 CFR 1500-1508 regulations of the NEPA invite American Indian tribes to participate in forest management projects and activities that may affect them.

The Fort Bridger Treaty of July 3, 1868, retained hunting and fishing rights to Shoshone–Bannock tribal members on “all unoccupied lands of the United States.” This right applies to all public domain lands that were reserved for National Forest System purposes that are presently administered by the Salmon-Challis National Forest. These rights are still in effect, and management actions recognize these rights. The reserved rights include hunting, fishing, and gathering. While the Treaty itself only specifies hunting, the lawsuit “State of Idaho vs. Tinno” established that any rights not specifically given up in the Treaty were, in fact, reserved by the Tribes.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Treaty Rights The Fort Bridger Treaty of 1886 retains for the Shoshone – Bannock tribes off-reservation hunting and fishing rights on all public domain lands reserved for NFS purposes now administered by the SCNF. My decision will not interfere with Tribal members in exercising those rights. In my formal government to government consultation meeting with the Tribal Business Council on June 4, 2009, I committed to work with the Council to develop a mechanism for the Tribes to continue to exercise these off-Reservation Treaty rights in pursuit of traditional activities. During a July 27, 2009, staff-to-staff consultation, a mechanism was identified: When exercising off-reservation Treaty Rights, Tribal members must carry and present a valid Tribal identification Card upon request by an authorized official. (Details of the consultation process are described in the FEIS p.1.28-1.29 and in Chapter 3 Cultural resources analysis).

The Nez Perce Treaty of 1855, Article 3, between the United States of America and the Nez Perce Tribe mutually agreed that the Nez Perce retain the right of “... taking fish at all usual and accustomed places in common with citizens of the Territory [of Idaho]; and of creating temporary buildings for curing, together with the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries, and pasturing horses and cattle...” These rights apply to all public domain lands that were reserved for NFS purposes that are presently administered by the SCNF. These rights are still in effect, and management actions recognize these rights.

The relationship of the U.S. Government with American Indian Tribes is based on legal agreements between sovereign nations. Portions of the SCNF are located within ceded lands of the Nez Perce Tribe.

Ceded lands are federal lands on which the federal government recognizes that a tribe has certain inherent rights conferred by treaty.

APPEAL PROVISIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.11 by individual or organizations meeting the requirements of 36 CFR 215.13. Any appeal must meet the requirements at 36 CFR 215.14.

A written appeal must be submitted within 45 days following the publication date of the legal notice of this decision in the *Recorder-Herald* Salmon, Idaho. It is the responsibility of the appellant to ensure their appeal is received in a timely manner. The publication date of the legal notice of the decision in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal. Appellants should not rely on date or timeframe information provided by any other source.

The appeal must be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer in writing. It is the appellant's responsibility to provide sufficient project or activity-specific evidence and rationale, focusing on the decision, to show why the decision should be reversed. At a minimum, the appeal must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14, and include the following information:

- The appellant's name and address, with a telephone number if available;
- A signature, or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the appeal);
- When multiple names are listed on an appeal, identification of the lead appellant and verification of the identity of the lead appellant upon request;
- The name of the project or activity for which the decision was made, the name and title of the Responsible Official, and the date of the decision;
- The regulation under which the appeal is being filed, when there is an option to appeal under either 36 CFR 215;
- Any specific change(s) in the decision that the appellant seeks and rationale for those changes;
- Any portion(s) of the decision with which the appellant disagrees, and explanation for the disagreement;
- Why the appellant believes the Responsible Official's decision failed to consider the substantive comments; and

How the appellant believes the decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy.

Contact Person: For more information about this project, contact:

Karen Gallogly
Salmon-Challis National Forest Headquarters,
1206 South Challis Street, Salmon, Idaho 83467
Telephone: 208.756.5103
e-mail address: kgallogly@fs.fed.us

Written appeals must be submitted to:

For Postal Delivery:

USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region
ATTN: Harv Forsgren, Appeals Deciding Officer
324 25th Street
Ogden, Utah 84401

For Hand Delivery:

USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region
ATTN: Harv Forsgren, Appeals Deciding Officer
Federal Building,
324 25th Street
Ogden, Utah

Business Hours: 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM MST,
Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Appeals may be FAXed to (801) 625-5277.

Electronic appeals must be submitted in a rich text format (.rtf) or Microsoft Word (.doc) format as an email message to: appeals-intermtn-regional-office@fs.fed.us. The e-mail subject line should contain the name of the project being appealed. An automated response should confirm your electronic appeal has been received. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

If no appeal is received, implementation of this decision may occur on, but not before 5 business days from the close of the appeal filing period. If an appeal is received, implementation may not occur for 15 days following the date of appeal disposition.

The FEIS and supporting documentation are available for public review at the Salmon-Challis National Forest, 1206 South Challis Street, Salmon, ID 8346; phone (208) 756-5100.



WILLIAM A WOOD, FOREST SUPERVISOR
SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST



Date