WILD AND SCENIC SNAKE RIVER OUTFITTER DECISION NOTICE AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

with

Decision Notice and FONSI (6/9/1996)

Appendix C – Revised Outfitter and Guide Operating Guidelines

Appendix D –Public Comments and Forest Service Responses

USDA- Forest Service

Hells Canyon National Recreation Area

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

June 1996

Forest Plan Amendment 20

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Wallowa-Whitman National Forest | P. O Box 907 Baker City, OR 97814

Date: September 11, 1996

Reply to: 1950/2230

To Parties Interested in the Wild and Scenic Snake River Management Plan:

I plan to implement Alternative C, with modifications, from the Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter Environmental Assessment for the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area. Enclosed are:

1. Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact
2. Appendix C, the modified Outfitter and Guide Operating Guidelines
3. Appendix D, Public Comments and Forest Service Responses
4. July 31, 1996 letter from Jack Ward Thomas, Chief, to Regional Forester, R-6, regarding a request for waiver on the Snake Wild and Scenic River Outfitter/Guide Environmental Analysis

This decision responds, in part, to the Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on the appeal of the record of decision (ROD) for the Wild and Scenic Snake River Recreation Management Plan and its accompanying final environmental impact statement (FEIS). My decision maintains a variety of commercial recreational services for visitors, defines primary season areas of operation for powerboat outfitters, establishes primary season use levels for powerboat and floatboat outfitters, retains a non-motorized period on a portion of the wild river in the primary season, authorizes temporary one-day float permits, and limits party size and number of floatboats per party.

This decision is specific to commercial boating. Private boating issues were addressed in the FEIS/ROD and confirmed by the Regional Forester in 1995. The decision is scheduled for implementation beginning with the 1997 primary season.

This decision is appealable pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 215. The legal notice initiating the appeal filing period will be published in the Baker City Herald on September 12, 1996. Any appeal of this decision must be submitted to the Appeal Deciding Officer and postmarked within 45 days of the publication of the legal notice.

Thank you for your interest in Hells Canyon National Recreation Area.

Sincerely,

R M Richmond

R. M. RICHMOND
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

DECISION NOTICE

and

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter Environmental Assessment

USDA - Forest Service
Hells Canyon National Recreation Area
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
Baker City, Oregon

Forest Plan Amendment 20

This decision notice and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) documents a decision by the Wallowa-Whitman Forest Supervisor to proceed with implementation of proposed outfitter-guide use allocations and operational limitations in the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA). An environmental assessment (EA) has been conducted to analyze proposed alternatives for implementing the activity.

This decision responds to a portion the the Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on the appeal of the record of decision (ROD) for the Wild and Scenic Snake River Recreation Management Plan (Snake River Plan) and its accompanying final environmental impact statement (FEIS). In that decision, the Regional Forester directed the Forest Supervisor to further analyze the specific economic effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual commercial river permits. This decision is implementable within the lands and waters of the HCNRA in Oregon and Idaho which are administered by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. The selected alternative described below amends the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and will result in modifications to the permits held by river outfitter-guides.

The decisions contained in this document will be used in conjunction with the management decisions approved by the Regional Forester in July 1995 to manage recreation use on the Wild and Scenic Snake River. This decision does not address access to private lands because that issue is handled through separate and subsequent processes.

Preferred Alternative C, with modifications, has been selected to allocate outfitter-guide use and operational limits within the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor. Components of Alternative C, and Alternative C as modified, are displayed in tables I and II. The decision components are described under **I. DECISION** and the underlying reason for choosing each of the components is explained under **II. DECISION RATIONALE.**

The EA supporting this decision is available for public review at the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, 1550 Dewey, Baker City, Oregon; or the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, at 88401 Highway 82, Enterprise, Oregon or 2535 Riverside Drive, Clarkston, Washington.

Table I

Note: This table is a summary intended to assist the reader in forming a general impression of how Alternative C has been modified by the decision notice. Readers are urged to refer to the decision notice narrative for detailed information.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVE C AND MODIFIED C
Commercial Powerboat Use

Management Element	Alternative C	Modified C
Area of Operations	Limited to historical areas (primary season)	Same as C.
Launch Point Locations	Limited to primary historical entry point (year-round).	Same as C.
Minimum/Maximum Number of Permits	Hells Canyon Creek 2 minimum/2 maximum Pittsburg Landing 3 minimum/4 maximum Cache Creek 6 minimum/14 maximum (year-round).	Same as C.
Allocation of Use	Allocate 1,381 boat days to 18 outfitters from Friday before Memorial Day to September 10 (primary season).	Same total allocation and individual outfitter allocation as C. Boat days from Kirkwood to Wild Sheep Rapid modified for each outfitter to reflect their historical pattern of use from 1988-1995.
Temporary Use Permit	Permit not reauthorized (year-round).	Same as C.
Supply Trips	Allow additional boat days for cargo trips to Copper Creek Resort (16) and Sheep Creek Cabin (4), can only use on weekdays except during non-motorized days (primary season).	Same as C, except allow cargo trips on any day of the week except non-motorized days.
Sheep Creek Cabin	Convert maximum of 25 boat days to wild for Sheep Creek Cabin permittee within their total wild boat day allocation to access site in primary season. Only applies for duration of permit at the site.	No conversion of boat days for this permit.
Timing and Duration of Non-motorized Period	3 day blocks (M,T,W) starting first Monday of June, every other week, through end of August. If 4th of July is on M, T, W, continue non-motorized period on following week instead. No powerboats allowed from upper landing at Kirkwood Historic Ranch to top of Wild Sheep Rapid. Average of 19 days non-motorized annually.	Same as C, except no provision to allow for skipping the 4th of July week in the seven non-motorized periods. Maximum of 21 days non-motorized.
Launch Schedule	Total boat days for each outfitter allocated on monthly basis for 11 outfitters, and on seasonal basis for remaining 7 outfitters (primary season).	Same as C, except total boat days allocated on seasonal, bi-weekly, and monthly basis, depending on size.
Party Size	Allow maximum of 24 people (including guides) on overnight trips on the river. Continues limits on day use based on Coast Guard certifications for boat capacity.	Same as C.

Table I (cont.)
COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVE C AND MODIFIED C
Commercial Powerboat Use

Management Element	Alternative C	Modified C
Trip Duration	Allow 11 outfitters day use only, and 7 outfitters day use and overnight use at campsites on the river. All outfitters may continue to use private lodges for overnight use.	Same as C.
Campsite Management	No overnight camping allowed on the river from Cache Creek to confluence with the Salmon River, from Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood, inclusive, and from Wild Sheep to Hells Canyon Creek.	Same as C.
Powerboat Length	Allow powerboats up to maximum of 42 feet in length. Boats longer than 42 feet at the time of this decision may operate until replaced.	Same as C.
Launching of Inflatable Watercraft from a Powerboat	Allowed from commercial powerboats in conjunction with a valid float permit (year-round). Using a commercial powerboat counts against primary season boat day allocation for that outfitter.	Same as C.

Table II

Note: This table is a summary intended to assist the reader in forming a general impression of how Alternative C has been modified by the decision notice. Readers are urged to refer to the decision notice narrative for detailed information.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVE C AND MODIFIED C

Commercial Floatboat Use

Management Element	Alternative C	Modified C
Area of Operations	Launch reservations required in wild river between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing during the primary season.	Same as C.
Launch Point Locations	Can launch anywhere upstream from Pittsburg Landing (primary season); no restriction on launch point location in secondary season.	Same as C.
Minimum/Maximum Number of Permits	10 priority use permits minimum, 14 priority use permits maximum.	Same as C.
Allocation of Use	Allocates 224 launches total to 14 priority use outfitters, 2 launches per day (primary season).	Same as C.
Commercial Pool Launches	Convert 8 launches from commercial pool (14) to private use. Maintain 6 commercial pool launches.	Maintain all 14 commercial pool launches within commercial launch schedule.
Temporary Use Permits	Allow the two temporary one-day float permits to operate from Hells Canyon Creek to Pittsburg until excess capacity in float launches is used. Reissue permits on yearly basis only to existing permit holders. Must obtain launches from cancelled or unused launches within five launches per day for commercial and private users. Allow maximum of one temporary launch per day. May obtain 50% of historical launches after March 16. Additional launches can be obtained 30 days prior to launch date after waiting lists for private and priority commercial users have been exhausted. Allow maximum of two boats per launch, and no use on non-motorized days. Temporary use permits valid only in the primary season.	Same as C, except no allowance for obtaining 50% of use after March 16. All launches obtained 30 days prior to launch date after waiting lists have been exhausted.
Party Size	Allow maximum of 24 people (including guides) on all trips (year-round).	Same as C.
Number of Float Craft	Allow maximum of 8 craft per party (year-round).	Same as C.
Use of Kickers (Outboard Motors)	Use is prohibited in wild river (year-round).	Same as C.
Scenic River and Lower Salmon River Users	Allow maximum party size to 24 people (including guides) as users enter the Snake River (year-round). Groups with more than 24 people may camp between confluence of Salmon River and Snake River to Salmon Bar. Limit number of craft per trip to 8 as users enter the Snake River (year-round).	Same as C.

I. DECISION

I decided to select the preferred alternative (Alternative C) from the EA, with changes as noted in this decision notice, for the allocation of outfitter-guide use and associated operational limitations within the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor. This notice documents my selection of that alternative and my rationale for the decision.

My decision includes the following changes to the Snake River Plan to further clarify the management of the commercial uses of the Snake River:

Commercial Powerboat Use

Changes in Business Status From the EA

Anderson River Adventures has been sold to Two A "T" Outfitters (Turnidge) since the EA was done. Cougar Country Lodge has changed to Hells Canyon Lodge (no change in ownership).

Area of Operations

During the primary season (up to 112 days from the Friday before Memorial Day through September 10), commercial operations for each powerboat outfitter permit will be managed within their area of operation as follows in order to maintain acceptable social encounters with other competing river uses.

Area of Operations	Outfitter
Dam downriver to Pittsburg Landing	Hells Canyon Adventures (or its successor)
Northern boundary upriver to dam	Intermountain Excursions, Snake River Adventures, Snake River Outfitters, River Quest Excursions, Hells Canyon Lodge (or their successors)
Northern boundary upriver to Granite Creek Rapid	S&S Outfitters, H.C. Fish Charters, High Roller Excursions, River Adventures Ltd., Red Woods Outfitters, Z&S Outfitters, Inc. (or their successors)
Northern boundary upriver to Rush Creek Rapid	Snake Dancer Excursions, Two A "T" Outfitters, Heller Bar Excursions, Idaho River Navigation, Rivers Navigation, Three Rivers Outfitters (or their successors)

During the secondary season (253 days from September 11 through the Thursday before Memorial Day), there will be no limit on area of operations.

Launch Point Locations and Maximum and Minimum Numbers of Permits

Manage the number of commercial powerboat permits to assure the continuation of business competition on the river. Maintain a variety of powerboat recreational services with quality experiences to visitors by establishing a maximum and minimum number of powerboat outfitter permits at each river portal. The Proposed Action/Purpose and Need, Item 1, in Chapter I of the EA describes the need for the Forest Service to provide public service.

Portal	Minimum # of Permits	Maximum # of Permits
Hells Canyon Creek	2*	2* (1 existing)
Pittsburg Landing	3	4
Cache Creek	6	13** (15 existing)
TOTAL	10	19

* Based on a voluntary split of the business authorized by the existing special use permit at the option of the permit holder.

** The single powerboat permit currently issued with temporary use only that authorizes trips from the Oregon/Washington border to Pittsburg Landing will not be reissued. If one of the Cache Creek permits moved to Pittsburg Landing, maximum for Cache Creek would then drop to 13.

NOTE: An exception to the launch point location limitation will be allowed for Snake River Outfitters, the only permittee who has regularly launched commercial trips from both Pittsburg Landing and Cache Creek portals. This activity will continue to be authorized. When considering existing outfitters, this business is included in the maximum for the Cache Creek portal only in the preceding table.

Allocation of Use

Each powerboat outfitter will be authorized to operate during the primary season (up to 112 days from the Friday before Memorial Day through September 10) based upon the following boat day allocations.

Commercial powerboat maximum total capacity (cumulative boat days for all permittees) is 1,381 boat days for a 112-day primary season. There is no maximum total capacity during the secondary season. However, the primary and secondary seasons may be adjusted based on monitoring of use levels (page 21 in the ROD, and page 5 in the Snake River Plan).

Commercial Powerboat Primary Season Boat Day Allocation

Outfitter	Wild	Kirkwood	Total
Heller Bar Excursions	72	152	224
Snake River Adventures	70	69	139
Rivers Navigation	18	100	118
Idaho Rivers Navigation	35	50	85
Snake Dancer Excursions	53	32	85
Hells Canyon Lodge	31	54	85
River Quest Excursions	23	62	85
Snake River Outfitters	25	18	43
River Adventures	15	25	40
H.C. Fishing Charters	9	22	31
Intermountain Excursions	3	8	11
Z&S Outfitters	1	5	6
Two A 'T' Outfitters	2	4	6
Red Woods Outfitter	7	2	9
S&S Outfitters	1	6	7
High Roller Excursions	2	4	6
Three River Outfitters	1	3	4
	Wild	**Wild Sheep**	
Hells Canyon Adventures	147	250	397
	515	866	1,381

Hells Canyon Adventures:

Wild Sheep = Can travel within the Hells Canyon Dam-Wild Sheep segment of river
Wild = Can travel within the Hells Canyon Dam-Pittsburg Landing segment of river

All Other Outfitter-Guides:

Wild = Can travel within the wild and scenic corridor except as limited by area of operations
Kirkwood = Can travel within the Cache Creek-Kirkwood segment of river only

The temporary use powerboat permit will not be reissued after December 31, 1996 in order to protect and enhance the recreation experience in the scenic river.

Holders of the Copper Creek and Sheep Creek facility permits will be allowed 16 and 4 cargo trips per primary season, respectively. These trips are for the sole purpose of supplying the facilities and cannot be used for carrying passengers. The trips will not count against the outfitter's share of the maximum total boat day capacity. The trips will be tied to the permits for the facilities and will transfer to the new permittee should the business holding the permit change ownership. Cargo trips can occur any day of the week except that cargo trips to Sheep Creek may not occur on non-motorized days.

Timing and Duration of Non-Motorized Period

Commercial powerboat access will be prohibited on the section of wild river between the top of Wild Sheep Rapid and the upper landing at Kirkwood Historic Ranch, Monday through Wednesday, every other week (seven times during the primary season) starting the first Monday of June for a maximum of 21 days. This schedule results in seven, three-day non-motorized periods providing an opportunity for a non-motorized experience on a segment of the wild river during the primary season.

Launch Schedule

The following commercial outfitter-guides or their successors can use their primary season boat day allocation at any time during the primary season except between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep Rapid during the non-motorized period: Intermountain Excursions, Z&S Outfitters, Two A "T" Outfitters, S&S Outfitters, High Roller Excursions, Red Woods Outfitter, and Three River Outfitters.

The following commercial outfitter-guides or their successors can use their primary season boat day allocation based on a monthly allocation except between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep Rapid during the non-motorized period: River Adventures, Ltd., Hells Canyon Fishing Charters, Snake River Outfitters.

The following commercial outfitter-guides or their successors can use their primary season boat day allocation based on a bi-weekly allocation except between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep Rapid during the non-motorized period: Heller Bar Excursions, Snake River Adventures, Rivers Navigation, Idaho Rivers Navigation, Snake Dancer Excursions, Hells Canyon Lodge, River Quest Excursions.

Party Size

A year-round maximum overnight party size of 24 persons (including guides) will be established for all sections of the river for commercial powerboats. This will not affect commercial powerboat day use party size which will continue to be regulated by U.S. Coast Guard vessel certifications.

Trip Duration

Trip duration will be managed based on historic use, i.e., day use only or overnight use as follows, to reduce competition for campsites and associated impacts to campsites:

Authorization	Outfitter
Day Use Only	Hells Canyon Adventures, Intermountain Excursions, S&S Outfitters, Heller Bar Excursions*, Idaho Rivers Navigation*, Rivers Navigation*, Snake River Adventures*, Three Rivers Outfitters, Snake River Outfitters*, Snake Dancer Excursions, Z&S Outfitters, Inc.
Day and Overnight Use	H C Fish Charters, High Roller Excursions, Two A "T" Outfitters, River Quest Excursions, Hells Canyon Lodge, River Adventures Ltd., Red Woods Outfitter

* These outfitters have separate special use authorizations for lodges or own private land within the Snake River corridor that will allow overnight use at those sites within the HCNRA. All outfitters would have the option of overnighting at other outfitters' lodges or their own lodges located outside the HCNRA boundary.

Commercial powerboat overnight use of the following segments of river will be prohibited:

Cache Creek to Salmon River confluence
Kirkwood to Pittsburg, inclusive, except for Kirby Creek (private land)
Wild Sheep Rapid to Hells Canyon Creek

Powerboat Length

Commercial powerboats will be limited to 42 feet in overall length (to prevent negative visual appearance of double-decked, large boats and potential boat wake effect on other recreationists). Commercial powerboats that exceed this length requirement at the time of this decision will be allowed to continue using them until the boat is replaced. Outfitters with boats exceeding 42 feet and under construction at the time of this decision may have their boats included by providing documentation to support their claim within 30 days of issuance of this decision.

Launching of Inflatables

Launching of inflatable watercraft in conjunction with transportation of people and equipment with a valid float launch permit will be allowed from commercial powerboats. Using a powerboat to launch permitted inflatable watercraft trips will count against the boat day allocation of the commercial powerboat permit.

Commercial Floatboat Use

Area of Operations

Launch reservations will be required for commercial float trip launches in the wild river between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing.

Launch Point Locations and Maximum and Minimum Number of Permits

The number of commercial float permits will be managed to assure the continuation of business competition on the river. A variety of recreational float services with quality experiences to visitors will be maintained by establishing maximum and minimum number of float outfitter permits. A minimum number of 10 and a maximum number of 14 commercial float special use permits with priority use will be authorized. See outfitter-guide operating guidelines on Page C-1 of Appendix C for a description of priority use.

During the primary season, commercial float trips can only originate upstream from Pittsburg Landing in order to reduce encounters in the scenic river. There will be no restrictions on launch point locations in the secondary season.

Allocation of Use

Allocate 224 primary season commercial launches from Hells Canyon Creek to 14 outfitters as shown below.

Commercial Float Allocation

Outfitter	Total Launches
Davis Whitewater Expeditions	14
River Odysseys West (ROW)	14
Canyon Outfitters	21
Idaho Afloat	14
Hughes River Expeditions	21
Heller Bar Excursions	14
Northwest Voyageurs	14
Peer's Snake River Rafting	14
Oregon Trail Adventures	14
Hells Canyon Adventures Raft	14
Freewater	14
Steen's Wilderness Adventures	14
Holiday River Expeditions of Idaho	14
Oars - Dories	14
*Pool Dates	14
TOTAL	**224

* Refer to the EA, page A-3 in Appendix A, for a description of pool dates.

** All launches will be allocated on a launch calendar. Existing float management guidelines will continue including trades and cross-overs between private and commercial users.

Fourteen pool launches will be available to commercial outfitters.

Two one-day, temporary use commercial float permits will be authorized from Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing under the following conditions:

1. Temporary use float launches must be within, not in addition to, the five launches per day launch schedule.

2. Holders of the temporary permits will only have access to cancelled or unused dates in the float launch calendar.

3. All temporary use float launches will be obtained no earlier than 30 days prior to launch after all waiting lists are exhausted. Any open launches will be assigned by calendar.

4. Assignment of launch dates to the one-day float businesses assigned temporary use will be third priority behind private users and other commercial users. (Temporary use is an amount of use assigned under the permit for one season or less. A temporary use assignment does not commit the Forest Service to authorize that amount of use in the future. The other river outfitters have priority use assignments, which is a Forest Service commitment to give priority consideration for a specific amount of use.)

5. Dates can be traded with other float outfitters

6. This service to the public could be maintained as long as there is unused capacity in the launch schedule. When private and other commercial float demand meets or exceeds the seasonal launch supply there will no longer be any launches available for the businesses with temporary use. When there are no longer launches available, the permits will not be reissued. (The highest rate of filling launch dates in the recent past (1988-1994) occurred in 1992 when 80% of the total allocated launches were used. That year, approximately 20% of launch dates went unused.)

7. Permits for temporary use will only be issued to existing permit holders and will not be issued to a new owner if a temporary use business is sold.

8. No one-day float launches will be allowed on a non-motorized day (for the purpose of reducing social encounters between parties traveling at different rates of speed). Only one one-day float may be launched per day during the motorized period.

9. In keeping with how the one-day float permits historically operate and to manage the impact of one-day floats, a maximum of two floatboats per launch will be allowed. The increased impact of one-day floats is discussed in the FEIS, Appendix K, page 114.

10. In keeping with how the one-day floats permits historically operate, to manage the impact of one-day floats, and to avoid having the activity level of one-day float permits contribute to use levels that lead to lengthening the primary season, temporary one-day float authorization will be limited to the primary season only. The increased impact of one-day floats is discussed in the FEIS, Appendix K, page 114.

Refer to Appendix C for more complete operating guidelines for outfitters and guides.

Party Size

Allow a year-round maximum party size of 24 persons (including guides) per trip for all sections of the river for commercial float outfitters.

Number of Floatcraft

Allow a maximum number of eight floatcraft per commercial multi-day trip in all river sections, year-round, to manage congestion, achieve ROS settings for remoteness and social encounters while protecting and enhancing the Snake River's ORVs, and to address issues of access between commercial and private users.

Use of Kickers

The use of kickers (outboard motors) on floatcraft in the wild river is prohibited, year-round, to meet ROS settings for remoteness and social encounters in the wild river by increasing the opportunity for periods of time where visitors are isolated from the sites and sounds of other users.

Limiting Commercial Float Use in the Scenic River Including a Strategy for Lower Salmon River Coordination And Management

The use in the scenic river will be monitored on a yearly basis. If the number of commercial and private float trip takeouts for trips originating at Hells Canyon Creek exceed 30% of total takeouts for two of three consecutive years, this level of use will be capped. The maximum allocation for continuation of trips below Pittsburg Landing will be set at 30% of available launches from Hells Canyon Creek as a means of managing on-river encounters and campsite competition in the scenic river. This is in consideration of the additional float use that enters the Snake River via the Lower Salmon River.

The following direction applies to Lower Salmon River commercial floaters when they enter the Snake River:

- Groups with more than 24 people may camp between the confluence of the Lower Salmon River and Salmon Bar, but will not be allowed to camp overnight elsewhere on the HCNRA.

- Groups originating on the Lower Salmon River are limited to a maximum of eight boats per trip upon reaching the Snake River. Techniques for complying with this standard are described in the outfitter-guide operating guidelines.

II. DECISION RATIONALE

I approached my decision by first reviewing the major issues, the outfitter-guide/public comments on those issues, the EA, and how the various alternatives responded to these issues. I present my rationale for these decisions in the same manner below. My decision to select the EA preferred Alternative C (with modifications) is based on my conclusion that Alternative C responds to public comments and meets the intent of the laws and federal regulations for managing the Wild and Scenic Snake River. The EA and appendices, supporting documentation, and administrative record that I reviewed in formulating this decision are available for public review at the National Forest Headquarters in Baker City, Oregon.

Issue 1: Commercial boating use levels and operational limitations within the established allocation should meet the primitive or semi-primitive recreational settings with attributes that accommodate motorized and non-motorized use and provide a suitable mixture of outfitter-provided services to the public.

Prior to alternative development and analysis for this EA, I directed the interdisciplinary team (ID team) to examine actual commercial use reported for 1988-1992 and amounts paid and verify or refine the numeric estimate of the maximum total capacity without a new decision, pursuant to the Regional Forester's July 1995 appeal decision (page 4). This review resulted in a substantial adjustment to the outfitter operating from the Hells Canyon Creek portal (173 launch increase). I corrected the base period calculations to reflect the additional launches to the outfitter because this was historic use from the 1988-1992 base period. This increase in use changed the maximum allowable capacity for commercial powerboats to 1,381 launches during the primary season, within the intent of the ROD for the Snake River Plan to provide an allocation of commercial use levels that meets the intended recreation experiences (ROD, pages 8-14).

Upon verifying and refining the cap, the ID team developed a range of alternatives that addressed the need for commercial boating use levels and operational limitations to meet the intended recreation experiences as outlined in the Snake River Plan.

Area of operations is an important element of the operational limitations because it affects the number of encounters between river users. In selecting this element of Alternative C, I considered the objectives set forth in the outfitter-guide operating guidelines. The area of operations established in the decision manages social encounters with other competing river uses during the primary season with very limited effects to outfitters, but also provides flexibility for outfitter-guides to operate within the entire river corridor in the secondary season. The area of operations are important and adequate in providing service to the public.

The established launch point locations and maximum and minimum numbers of permits, for both commercial powerboat and floatboat groups, allow for competition at the three primary portals. I decided not to designate commercial powerboat outfitters to the Dug Bar portal. The draft EIS for the Comprehensive

Management Plan proposes to maintain the road corridor to Dug Bar at its current setting (low-level roaded natural). Allowing additional traffic on the existing road system to accommodate new outfitter-guide operations would potentially exceed safety standards and maintenance levels for that road.

Allocation of the commercial powerboat cap was a primary issue with the outfitters and public. I considered outfitter-guide comments, as well as those of the general public. Some commenters felt there was a need to raise the cap beyond Alternative C, or no need to limit river use. I felt those comments were not focused on the purpose and need for action in Chapter I. In response to other comments, I directed the ID team to conduct further analysis of methods for allocating use. Following the comment period, the ID team reviewed 25 options for allocating use based on variations of 1988-1995 use. Within each option there were strengths and weaknesses. Recent data (1993-1995) was only considered in options for distributing use; the cap is based on 1988-1992 data. The 25 options are displayed in the analysis file.

The ID team recommended two final options for my consideration: Alternative C and Option 20A. Option 20A would allocate use based on the average of 1991-1995 combined with the average of the highest two of five years (1991-1995) of total commercial powerboat boat days for each outfitter (priority use guidelines applied to boat days). This approach is similar to Alternative C except that it uses more recent data. I chose the allocation approach of Alternative C, with modifications, over Option 20A for the following reasons:

- Provides for a wide variety of public services.

- Maintains competition for pricing among the mid- to large-sized outfitters, providing continued quality service to the public.

- Increases boat days to outfitters who have traditionally operated one-day trips and/or overnight fishing trips at a level below an average of one boat per day during the primary season, but have demonstrated their ability to provide service to the public. This provides greater responsiveness and opportunities for transient walk-in customers based on public demand for one-day scenic trips.

- Provides equal boat day access for the four largest mid-sized outfitters at the Cache Creek portal and the Pittsburg Landing portal outfitters (in aggregate) to provide a minimum level of service to the public at an average of five boat days per week per outfitter.

In addition, I choose to modify Alternative C by allocating wild river boat days above Kirkwood Historic Ranch based on historic use patterns from 1988-1995. I feel this method of allocation is responsive for two reasons. First, it considers businesses which consistently provide trips with destinations into the wild river over an extended period of time. Second, it considers the more recent use patterns established by current owners.

Based on comments from the permit holders of the Copper Creek and Sheep Creek facilities, I have modified Alternative C to allow the permitted cargo trips to occur on any day of the week, within the allocated 16 and 4 trips per primary season, respectively. I decided not to convert 25 of the Sheep Creek Granger-Thye permit holder's Kirkwood boat days to the outfitter's wild river boat days based on comments from that outfitter, and the modification in allocating boat days upstream from Kirkwood Historic Ranch.

I decided not to reissue the temporary use permit for commercial powerboat use in the scenic section when it expires in December 1996. This temporary permit has historically allowed the activity on an annual basis with no guarantee that the temporary use would be converted to priority use in the future, and each business entity which held this permit was fully informed of these conditions. The allocation of use provides no cushion for additional priority or temporary use permittees without doing so at the expense of other outfitters with priority use assignments.

Many comments were received from the public concerning their desire for me to eliminate the non-motorized period from Alternative C. I considered those comments, and while I understand the concerns expressed, I still believe that the implementation of a non-motorized period is valid. This issue was thoroughly addressed in the FEIS/ROD and the Regional Forester's appeal decision where the non-motorized period was affirmed, subject to review of effects to commercial users.

In regard to that review, and comments received on the EA from commercial floaters, I have chosen to modify Alternative C by allowing non-motorized periods to coincide with 4th of July holiday. Motorized and non-motorized users would be equally affected for four periods during the 4th of July holiday over the next 10 years, i.e., four 4th of July holidays would be motorized, and four would be non-motorized. Alternative C establishes a consistent schedule of seven non-motorized periods every other week beginning on the first Monday in June. This non-motorized period only affects the section of the wild river between Kirkwood Historic Ranch and Wild Sheep Rapid.

I believe this will have minimal impact on motorized users' recreational opportunities. This will provide seven three-day non-motorized periods every other week spread evenly across the months of June, July, and August (21 days). Launch allocations for commercial powerboaters still allow for use of the two other segments of the wild river during non-motorized periods with less than 2% negative economic effect (refer to analysis file). An analysis of recent use levels (1993-1995) shows that an average of 5.5 commercial powerboats per day and 2 private powerboats per day would have been displaced from entering this section of river during the 21 non-motorized days had the non-motorized period been in effect (refer to analysis file).

The preferred Alternative C in the EA provided for a powerboat launch schedule that some floatboat outfitter-guides felt would lead to peaks of use that may result in semi-primitive experiences not being met. Based on those concerns and one of the primary intents of the Snake River Plan FEIS/ROD to minimize conflicting uses that negatively affect the recreational experience of some users, I have chosen to modify Alternative C to provide a bi-weekly allocation of use to the larger outfitters versus a monthly allocation. The objective behind the monthly allocation was to provide flexibility to commercial powerboaters based on weather and water flow fluctuations and the need to be responsive to transient tourists' needs, contracted bus and cruise ship tourists, and multi-day fishing trips. I also considered a weekly allocation, but was concerned that during non-motorized weeks, the commercial powerboat allocation for boat days upstream from Kirkwood would be utilized during the four-day shared use period, with potentially higher peak use than a bi-weekly allocation. Reference pages III-33 and 34 in the EA for more information.

Peaks in total float use will remain the same as displayed in the ROD for the Snake River Plan since my decision only affects distribution of pool dates between private and commercial floaters. There is actually a potential for peak use to decrease each day that a temporary use, one-day commercial float trip launches within the five total launches per day since each of those trips will be limited to a maximum of two boats per trip compared to a maximum of eight boats per trip for all other float trips.

In light of this decision, peaks in total powerboat use beyond those displayed in the ROD will be influenced only by commercial powerboat use. For this discussion, "peak use" is levels of use in excess of the daily allocation for private powerboaters plus the average daily allocation for commercial powerboaters, on a river-wide basis. This differs from the definition in the ROD because this decision is predicated upon the rigid schedule for private powerboat users and is focused upon the effect of changes in how commercial powerboat use affects peaks. Private powerboat use will remain on a rigid schedule of boat day access as identified in the FEIS/ROD. Therefore, daily use will fluctuate based on the number of commercial powerboat trips scheduled.

I directed the ID team to prepare a peak use analysis for total powerboat use to determine what effect Alternative C would have had from 1993-1995 if the plan had been in place in those years. The analysis included the modification of a flexible boat day schedule for commercial powerboat outfitters. The analysis indicates that peaks from powerboat use in the past have primarily been a factor of private powerboat use associated with weekend or holiday use. The factors causing peak use are frequency of occurrence of high use days within the primary season, and size of the peaks.

Based on 1993-1995 data, the management of private powerboat use on a rigid schedule would have reduced the frequency of peak use days by 67% on weekdays and 48% on weekends. In addition, managing private powerboat use would reduce the total number of days experiencing peaks from an average of 17% down to 8% of the days during the entire primary season. This demonstrates that the implementation of the private powerboat schedule will reduce the frequency of peaks by 51%.

The magnitude of use on high use days is generally associated with the total number of private powerboats rather than commercial powerboats. The size or magnitude of the peak use days in 1993-1995 would have been reduced by an average of 65% on weekdays and 84% on weekends and holidays in those years with implementation of a rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters only.

With Alternative C's flexible schedule for commercial powerboat outfitters and the rigid schedule for private powerboaters as identified in the FEIS/ROD, the total number of powerboat launches on the peak use days in 1993-1995 would have been increased by an average of only 3% to 6% above the total powerboat use levels identified in the analysis, whether the days occurred on a weekend, weekday, or holiday. This compares to increases averaging 6% to 15% on weekdays, and 24% to 35% on weekends and holidays in the absence of a rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters.

These factors demonstrate that commercial powerboat use has not been the dominant cause of historical peaks in powerboat use on the river.

Peak use has previously been addressed in the FEIS/ROD through use of a rigid launch schedule that will limit the number of daily private powerboat trips into the wild and scenic sections of the river. Restricting commercial use to monthly and bi-weekly schedules for the larger outfitters should act as an additional deterrent of peak use days.

There are many variables in the new river plan which will affect how commercial powerboat outfitters will conduct their business in the future. How the outfitters will respond to these changes is unknown until the plan is implemented. Marketing, individual business management, environmental and operational factors will also affect the potential for peak use among commercial powerboat outfitters. These include, but are not limited to, factors such as changes in marketing a different array of trips among powerboat outfitters as a group as a result of implementation of the plan, limits on area of operations for each outfitter in the primary season, a limit on the maximum number of trips that each outfitter can take into different sections of the river within the 1,381 commercial boat day cap, sale of businesses, river flows, equipment breakdowns, etc. In short, all of the factors that affected daily use patterns under an unlimited-use scenario will still be factors influencing use levels that will now be managed under a commercial powerboat boat day cap.

In conjunction with the elimination of peaks in private powerboat use, I believe that the potential daily fluctuations in commercial powerboat use under a flexible scheduling system are not likely to result in extreme peaks in use, or be a significant issue among river users. Although there is insufficient data to precisely predict the potential peaks in commercial powerboat use as a result of a flexible boat schedule, I have previously discussed the limited effect of commercial powerboats on recent (1993-1995) peaks in total powerboat use on the river. I expect the modifications in Alternative C, especially the provision to allocate commercial powerboat use in bi-weekly, monthly, and seasonal schedules within the total use cap, will meet the intent of the ROS guidelines of the FEIS/ROD in providing visitors with their desired recreation experiences while protecting the recreation and other ORVs within the river corridor.

As an element of my decision to allow a flexible schedule for commercial powerboat outfitters, I am committed to monitoring use levels on a yearly basis in order to gather sufficient data to analyze potential peaks in commercial powerboat use under the new plan relative to total powerboat use on the river.

Alternative C provides direction for trip durations, i.e., day use only or overnight use, for commercial powerboaters to reduce competition for campsites and associated impacts to campsites. In choosing to implement Alternative C, I considered the objectives for trip duration set forth in the outfitter-guide operating guidelines, which provide for the intended recreation experience set forth in the Snake River Plan. I also considered that outfitters without overnight camping use could still offer overnight trips by making arrangements with other outfitters who operate lodges.

Powerboat length requirements are set at 42 feet as a component of Alternative C. I fully expect this requirement to meet the intended recreation experience and protect the scenic ORV by limiting the negative appearance of double-decked, large boats and potential boat wake effect on other recreationists, while providing expanded seating capacity as compared with Alternative B. This increase in total length provides a better utilization of raw materials used in powerboat manufacturing.

Alternative C will allow the launching of inflatable watercraft in conjunction with transportation of people and equipment with a valid float launch permit. I considered that these activities would be acceptable within the allocation of available commercial powerboat boat days, thus meeting the intended semi-primitive recreation experience.

This decision maintains the existing allocation of two commercial float launches per day during the primary season with the existing float reservation system and pool of 14 dates remaining unchanged. I believe by maintaining the existing float allocation it provides for the intended primitive and semi-primitive recreation experience opportunities set forth in the Snake River Plan and provides a degree of flexibility for scheduling commercial float trips. Since I have provided for commercial powerboat outfitters to have scheduling flexibility, I believe commercial float outfitters also need to maintain their current degree of scheduling flexibility.

Alternative C provides for the continuation of the two, one-day temporary float permits from Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing. The use of these permits would be based on the conditions outlined in I. DECISION above, which I believe to be within the intended semi-primitive recreation opportunity. An important element of this decision is that these temporary use permits will not be reissued when private and other commercial float demand meets or exceeds the seasonal launch supply. This temporary use opportunity will be limited to the existing permit holders only. I fully expect, with the implementation of a powerboat launch allocation and non-motorized period, demand for float permits will increase in the coming years.

This decision changes both the monitoring standard and the maximum allocation of wild river float trips that may continue beyond Pittsburg Landing into the scenic river. Based upon a review of the historical pattern of use (1988-1995), it is evident that a monitoring standard and maximum allocation set at 30% better accomplishes my original goal of providing for historical use, yet preventing major changes in the patterns of use from significantly increasing on-river encounters and campsite competition on the scenic river. During the years 1988-1995, scenic river takeouts resulting from launches in the wild river varied between 20% and 34% of total takeouts without any three-year period exceeding this new monitoring standard.

This decision provides management direction for commercial floaters originating on the Lower Salmon River once they enter the Snake River corridor. As stated in the ROD for the Snake River Plan (pages 25 and 26), this decision provides adequate and appropriate guidelines for river users originating from the Lower Salmon River who wish to use the scenic Snake River as part of their recreation experience. I am committed to continuing coordination with the Bureau of Land Management to ensure that the intended semi-primitive recreation experience of the scenic Snake River is met.

I carefully considered comments on the prohibition of kickers, year-round, on floatboats in the wild river. I believe this operational guideline is warranted to meet the intended primitive and semi-primitive recreation experience, and to minimize social encounters between float parties. This action will increase opportunities for periods where visitors are isolated from the sites and sounds of other users.

This decision will implement the provisions of Alternative C to establish a maximum party size of 24 persons for commercial users (with the exception of commercial powerboat day use) and a maximum number of eight floatboats per party. (Page 22 of the ROD discloses rationale for limiting floatcraft to eight per party.) Some of the float outfitter-guides commented on the potential economic impact of this operational limitation on their business. I considered their concerns, reviewed historic patterns of use, and reviewed additional analysis based on their comments. I concluded that although establishing party sizes and floatboats per party would have economic impacts on commercial outfitters (refer to Appendix D), it is important to meet the intended recreation experiences set forth in the Snake River Plan.

In my review of the EA's environmental consequences for the recreation resources, I determined that implementation of Alternative C, as modified, (see changes described in I. DECISION) meets the management objectives, desired future conditions, and the recreation opportunity spectrum characteristics established in the Snake River Plan. Further, I believe this decision complements the recreation issues (i.e., effects of recreation use regulation on socio-economic conditions and managing for the intended recreation experience) and analysis contained in the FEIS and ROD for its selected alternative that led to the development of the Snake River Plan. Finally, this decision maintains a high capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience to the public by offering a wide variety of outfitter services.

Issue 2: Regulation of commercial boating use could affect the economic conditions of current river-based special use permits.

The Regional Forester's July 1995 appeal decision directed me to further analyze the site-specific effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual permits and then make a new decision (page 3). In response to this direction, I directed the ID team to do a thorough economic analysis that accounts for changes in average gross revenue due to operational limitations. Although one user group and some powerboat outfitters did not agree with this approach and submitted a separate analysis approach, I believe this analysis has provided the commercial float and powerboat outfitters, and the public at large, the information needed to provide substantive comments. Based on the substantive comments and this analysis process, I am able to make an informed decision relative to potential economic effects to individual permittees.

In formulating this decision, I carefully studied the economic analysis disclosed in the EA and the supporting documentation contained in the analysis file. As stated under Issue 1 above, I have chosen to make some modifications (see changes under I. DECISION) to Alternative C that are responsive to outfitter/public comments, ensure that the intended recreational experiences contained in the Snake River Plan will be met, and minimize potential economic impacts to both float and powerboat outfitters. The following table (Table III) displays a summary of the annual gross revenue effects on the commercial powerboat outfitters for the three alternatives contained in the EA and includes Alternative C with modifications as discussed under Issue 1. This table displays the effects based on updated analysis for the 1993-1995 gross revenue period.

Table III
SUMMARY OF ANNUAL GROSS REVENUE EFFECTS (1996$)
(Commercial Powerboats)

Analysis updated to determine effects based on 1993-1995 gross revenue period

	Alternative A	Alternative B	% Change	Alternative C	% Change	MODIFIED ALTERNATIVE C	% Change
Hells Canyon Adventures	$280,018	$177,633	-32%	$242,534	-7%	$251,628	-3%
Heller Bar Excursions	$386,642	$419,169	8%	$427,028	10%	$428,781	11%
Rivers Navigation	$131,957	$297,284	125%	$308,816	134%	$297,520	125%
Snake River Adventures	$295,084	$299,830	2%	$303,106	3%	$300,389	2%
Idaho Rivers Navigation	$350,776	$253,498	-28%	$260,281	-26%	$267,090	-24%
Snake Dancer Excursions	$104,263	$ 69,791	-33%	$ 94,457	-9%	$ 97,884	-6%
River Quest Excursions	$ 90,747	$ 60,069	-34%	$ 80,474	-11%	$ 78,210	-14%
Snake River Outfitters	$ 78,582	$ 76,954	-2%	$ 75,319	-4%	$ 78,249	0%
Hells Canyon Lodge	$211,372	$189,420	-10%	$215,345	2%	$217,147	3%
Two A "T" Outfitters	$ 3,342	$ 4,571	37%	$ 4,686	40%	$ 4,484	34%
Intermountain Excursion	$ 21,450	$ 25,315	18%	$ 25,573	12%	$ 25,573	19%
S&S Outfitters	$ 1,938	$ 965	-50%	$ 965	-50%	$ 1,106	-43%
High Roller Excursions	$ 7,830	$ 6,189	-21%	$ 6,318	-19%	$ 5,968	-24%
Mainstream Outdoor Adv.	$ 12,572	$ 0	-100%	$ 0	-100%	$ 0	-100%
Three Rivers Outfitters	$ 38,806	$ 40,748	5%	$ 40,748	5%	$ 40,748	5%
Z&S Outfitters, Inc.	$ 96,482	$ 79,424	-18%	$ 79,660	-17%	$ 79,525	-18%
Hells Canyon Fishing C.	$ 22,444	$ 16,410	-27%	$ 19,588	-18%	$ 19,696	-12%
River Adventures, Ltd.	$ 36,614	$ 30,365	-17%	$ 32,291	-12%	$ 32,612	-11%
Red Woods Outfitter	$ 14,431	$ 8,706	-40%	$ 9,621	-33%	$ 9,732	-33%
Total	$2,165,682	$2,056,345	-5%	$2,228,514	3%	$2,236,130	3%

For all alternatives:

1. Assumes all boat days would be utilized (sell new scenic and Kirkwood trips).
2. From "Calculation of Gross Revenue" spreadsheets for each powerboat outfitter.
3. Used three-year averages for gross revenue where consistent use was realized to determine effects.
4. Used gross revenue in 1995 for River Quest Excursions, 1993 for Hells Canyon Lodge, 1993-1994 for Two A "T" Outfitters and S&S Outfitters, 1994-1995 for High Roller Excursions, and 1993 for Three Rivers Outfitters due to no income reported, or changes in ownership and no use.
5. Combined effects to Heller Bar Excursions, Rivers Navigation, and Idaho Rivers Navigation under single management shows $943,378 gross revenue (9% increase) for modified Alternative C.

The selected Alternative C, modified, displays a 1% positive economic effect over Alternative C and a 4% positive economic effect compared to Alternative A (no action). (Alternative A used 1993-1995 data for analysis purposes). In review of this information, I recognize that eight outfitters are at risk of experiencing a greater than 10% reduction of their gross revenue under Alternative C, as modified, over Alternative A. This may put these outfitters at a higher risk of not being able to maintain their businesses. The majority of these eight outfitters have stated that they currently operate marginally viable businesses (unrelated to implementation of this decision); thus, my determination that they are at higher risk. One business, Lamm, will no longer be able to operate and will lose all revenue associated with the permitted operation in the scenic section.

Two outfitters are at risk of experiencing between three and six percent reductions of their gross revenue, while eight outfitters show a positive economic benefit or no net change relative to this decision.

The history of the 19 individual powerboat outfitter-guiding businesses on the Snake River has demonstrated a high degree of variability since 1970 when the first special use permits for this type of activity were issued. This variability is based on changes in ownership, types of trips offered, duration of trips, services provided, prices, boat sizes, and differences in business management strategies.

The ability of powerboat outfitters to respond to a decrease in revenue can place a business at risk if the business cannot mitigate or overcome these losses. The businesses that are heavily dependent on boat days for expansion may find it very difficult to adapt to the limits imposed in this decision. However, economic theory shows that with limited supply, an increase in demand will raise prices. Outfitters who earn a higher ratio of revenue to service days compared to other outfitters have less ability to mitigate loss of revenue by increasing prices due to competition (page III-41). In the ROD (pages 15 and 16), I noted that in the past the demand for jetboat trips continued even with price increases and demonstrated that a potential price increase of 10 percent or perhaps higher would not necessarily result in decreased sales. For example, a day trip to Rush Creek may increase by $8.50 to approximately $93.50. The outfitters that are least capable to adapt presently will remain so into the foreseeable future.

Some businesses have continued to adapt to change, in light of their historic variability and will continue, I believe, to adapt to change and to provide service to the public. Using service days as an indicator, there has been a 15% increase on average every year during the 1988-1995 period, even with a high degree of variability in the industry. Further, Alternative C, with modifications, allows for a 4% increase in service days over the historically highest 22,957 service days in 1995 (primary season) based upon current utilization of seating capacity. Since most outfitters are not utilizing their full seating capacity, service days may continue to increase within the boat day cap for years to come.

The primary effects that individual outfitter-guides might experience are from: 1) limiting total river use (allocating the 1,381 primary season powerboat boat days) and; 2) limiting wild river use (515 primary season boat days in the Kirkwood Historic Ranch to Wild Sheep Rapid section). I chose to modify Alternative C to base the allocation of the 515 primary season boat days on the percentage of wild river use for each outfitter from the 1988-1995 period. This resulted in a 31% reduction of wild river boat days between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep Rapid for each outfitter compared with variations in Alternative C ranging from a reduction of over 50% for some outfitters, to increases for others as disclosed in the EA.

Some commenters stated that they would experience potentially devastating effects on their business due to the non-motorized periods. Analysis (in the analysis file and available for public review) indicates that implementation of a 24 day non-motorized period, as displayed in Alternative B, resulted in a 2% reduction in gross revenue when compared to Alternative B without a non-motorized period. The effect in Alternative C will be less because the total length of the non-motorized period has been reduced from 24 to 21 days and the flexible schedules in Alternative C allow outfitters to avoid non-motorized periods when conducting trips upstream from Kirkwood. In addition, the non-motorized period has been spread throughout the primary season, reducing the the impact to July and August by approximately 44%.

The following table (Table IV) displays a summary of the annual gross revenue effects on the commercial floatboat outfitters for the three alternatives contained in the EA and includes Alternative C with modifications. This table displays the effects based on the 1993-1995 gross revenue period.

Table IV
SUMMARY OF ANNUAL GROSS REVENUE EFFECTS (1996$)
(Commercial Float)

Analysis updated to determine effects based on 1993-1995 gross revenue period

	Alternative A	Alternative B	% Change	Alternative C	% Change	MODIFIED ALTERNATIVE C	% Change
Oars Dories, Inc.	$ 51,908	$ 51,251	-1%	$ 51,251	-1%	$ 51,251	-1%
Davis Whitewater Exp.	$ 32,249	$ 32,249	0%	$ 32,249	0%	$ 32,249	0%
River Odysseys West	$139,903	$130,280	-7%	$130,280	-7%	$130,280	-7%
Canyon Outfitters, Inc.	$129,105	$108,932	-16%	$108,932	-16%	$108,93 ~	-16%
Idaho Afloat	$ 64,924	$ 57,286	-12%	$ 57,286	-12%	$ 57,286	-12%
Hughes River Expeditions	$255,368	$220,755	-14%	$220,755	-14%	$220,755	-14%
Heller Bar Boat & Float	$ 11,716	$ 7,811	-33%	$ 7,811	-33%	$ 7,811	-33%
Northwest Voyageurs	$ 71,625	$ 68,616	-4%	$ 68,616	-4%	$ 68,616	-4%
Peer's Snake River Rft.	$ 14,655	$ 14,264	-3%	$ 14,264	-3%	$ 14,264	-3%
Oregon Trail Adv. Inc.	$ 15,905	$ 15,905	0%	$ 15,905	0%	$ 15,905	0%
HCA Raft	$ 39,176	$ 36,816	-6%	$ 36,816	-6%	$ 36,816	-6%
Freewater	$ 17,859	$ 17,859	0%	$ 17,859	0%	$ 17,286	0%
Steen's Wilderness Adv.	$ 59,119	$ 59,119	0%	$ 59,119	0%	$ 59,119	0%
Holiday River Exp.	$112,033	$107,812	-4%	$107,812	-4%	$107,812	-4%
Hells Canyon Adventures	$ 53,575	$ 0	-100%	$ 53,575	0%	$ 53,575	0%
Snake River Adventures	$ 458	$ 0	-100%	$ 458	0%	$ 458	0%
Total	$1,069,578	$ 926,458	-13%	$ 982,491	-3%	$ 982,491	-6%

The 16 floatboat outfitter-guiding businesses on the Snake River have also demonstrated a high degree of variability since the first permits for this type of activity were issued in 1973. This variability is based on changes in ownership, types of trips offered, duration of trips, services provided, prices, boat sizes, etc. These factors would also affect variability of businesses that enter the Snake River from the Lower Salmon River.

Alternative C, with modifications, offers most multi-day outfitters the capability to add launches within their present allocation in order to mitigate reductions due to limits on the number of floatcraft and party size. I also believe that most have the ability to experience growth into the foreseeable future, with the exception of four outfitters who are near capacity with their launch limits. Considering the updated analysis to account for 1993-1995 operations, I recognize that these two outfitters may incur actual reductions in gross revenue since they have little capacity for growth in launches without relying upon the pool. However, even these outfitters may grow by increasing their launches through access to the pool or by increasing average party size within the new party size limitations.

Gross revenue for Alternative C, with modifications, shows an 8% reduction when compared to the 1993-1995 average gross revenue. However, if all outfitters could sell every allocated float launch at the 1993-1995 average revenue per launch, the annual gross revenue would total $1,365,119, a 28% increase from the 1993-1995 period. Additional launches obtained from the pool would provide additional revenue and increase total gross revenue 35%.

The effects of this decision on the two holders of the one-day temporary use float permits varies and is dependent on launch capacity not used by other commercial and private parties. Based on float launch utilization trends, it is likely that some level of temporary one-day float trips will continue in the short term, although this business activity may diminish over time if float launch capacity is more fully utilized.

Based on the individual outfitter-guide economic analysis, I believe that my decision may result in a higher risk for some businesses to become non-economically viable. However, I feel that turnovers in ownership will continue to occur as they have in the past for a variety of reasons not necessarily based solely on implementation of a primary season use allocation with operational limitations, and that the need for service to the public will continue to be met with a variety and diversity of powerboat and floatboat services available.

III. SUMMARY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Scoping

The EIS for the Snake River Plan involved an intense public scoping and notification process including public meetings and mailings to over 1,700 individuals and organizations. For details, see FEIS at I-17 and Appendix K.

For this EA, the following scoping actions were taken:

Date	Action	Number of People Contacted
11/22/95	Fall newsletter mailed to original FEIS mailing list. Contained information about status of FEIS and plans for completing NEPA process. Required completion of an interest card for continued participation in process.	1,766
12/19/95	Scoping notice and proposed action mailed to mailing list generated by fall newsletter. A total of 43 letters were received as a direct result of scoping. Eighteen of the letters were from Snake River outfitters.	585
1/24/96	Meeting held with Snake River outfitters and other interested publics held at Clarkston, Washington.	35
1/24/96	Meetings between individual outfitters and ID team.	20
2/21/96	Meeting with individual Riggins-based outfitters.	6
3/96	Telephone contact follow-up with all outfitters that did not attend 1/24 or 2/21 meetings, except that no contact could be made with Two A "T" Outfitters, S&S Outfitters, Pears Snake River Rafting, Oregon Trail Adventure, Inc., and Freewater.	30
3/96	Narratives describing each outfitter business mailed with cover letter requesting feedback.	30
6/5/96	Letters mailed to Snake River outfitters notifying them of imminent release of the EA and 30-day review and comment period.	30
6/17/96	Copy of the EA sent out for a 30-day review and comment period. 579 of the 695 individuals were sent notification of the EA release. 116 of the 695 were sent copies of the EA and appendices. 259 individual comment letters were received. Substantive comments were coded and used by the ID team, steering committee, and Forest Supervisor to modify Alternative C.	695
6/17/96 through 7/19/96	Meetings and/or telephone contact with outfitter-guides by ID team to review and discuss preferred Alternative C relative to individual businesses.	

Issues

Several issues were identified during the scoping process. Two of these issues were determined to be key issues in relation to the proposed action.

1. Commercial boating use levels and operational limitations within the established allocation should meet the primitive or semi-primitive recreational settings with attributes that accommodate motorized and non-motorized use and provide a suitable mixture of outfitter provided services to the public.

2. Regulation of commercial boating use could affect the economic conditions of current river-based special use permits.

Other issues, concerns, and opportunities were identified during scoping and are addressed in the EA, page I-6, or the FEIS.

A preliminary issue identified by some of the private landowners within the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor and the Lower Snake River corridor related to river access to these private parcels. This decision does not address needed access to private lands. Private land access decisions are being made through separate and subsequent processes.

Alternatives

I considered eight alternatives before selecting Alternative C. Three of these alternatives were analyzed in detail, and five were eliminated from detailed analysis. A summary of each alternative follows:

Alternative A is the "no action" alternative as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. This alternative would not implement the proposed actions and provides a baseline from which to evaluate the action alternatives. This alternative would continue unlimited commercial powerboat use. The commercial use cap established in the Snake River Plan ROD of 10/21/94 would not be implemented with this alternative.

Alternative B was used in the scoping process as the proposed action to identify issues and generate a variety of concepts for designing action alternatives. This alternative responds to the proposed action by limiting commercial powerboat use with rigid schedules to meet the underlying needs identified in Chapter I of the EA.

Alternative C is the selected alternative and was developed in response to issues and concerns raised during the scoping period. This alternative was designed with the objective of providing business flexibility within the overall goal of meeting the underlying needs identified in Chapter I of the EA. The alternative provides business flexibility by allocating boat days on a per time period basis rather than a rigid launch schedule.

The five alternative themes eliminated from consideration are shown below. Refer to the analysis file for more information.

Hells Canyon Alliance Viability Analysis

Hells Canyon Alliance offered an analysis of commercial powerboat use levels needed for viability. They later withdrew permission to use the information because the Forest Service would not agree to use only the Hells Canyon Alliance analysis process or agree to results without modification.

Destinations

The ID team considered several options for reconfiguring the allowable commercial powerboat destinations, including eliminating any limitation on destinations. The option selected and carried forward for detailed study in Alternative C will provide business flexibility and meet the underlying needs identified in Chapter I.

Use Allocations and Launch Schedules

Several options were considered for reconfiguring the commercial powerboat launch allocation and schedule, including eliminating the launch schedule entirely. The option most effective at providing business flexibility and still meeting the underlying needs identified in Chapter I was carried forward for detailed study in Alternative C.

Non-Motorized Period

Variations on the length of the non-motorized period were considered. Options included elimination, decreasing the number of days, and moving the he timing from July and August to other periods in the primary season. Economic analysis showed very little effect of the 24 non-motorized days on commercial outfitters. However, there were issues of timing of the non-motorized periods. The option most effective at distributing the non-motorized period over the primary season was carried forward for detailed study in Alternative C.

Other Limitations

In addition to those above, options for other operational limitations were also considered. These options were eliminated because they could not meet the underlying recreational experience need and also provide business flexibility. Reference the analysis file.

Mitigation

Mitigation measures are designed to avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for environmental effects of implementing the preferred alternative. Mitigation measures, applicable to the allocation of commercial use and the associated operational limitations, are addressed in the Snake River Plan relative to transportation and storage of fuel (page 3), scenery management (page 15), and fish and wildlife (pages 16 and 17).

Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation elements for monitoring commercial use levels and effects on the rivers outstandingly remarkable values are addressed in Appendix D of the Snake River Plan.

IV. FINDINGS REQUIRED BY LAW

NFMA Consistency

I have carefully evaluated the implementation of Alternative C, as modified, and concluded that it does not constitute a significant amendment to the Forest Plan in terms of implementing regulations of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (36 CFR 219.10(e) and (f)). My determination is based on the following four factors (FSH 1909.12 5.32):

Timing

This decision will be implemented in 1997 in conjunction with the ongoing, phased-in implementation of the Snake River Plan. This decision responds to the Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on appeals, where he states: "....limitations of use beyond those currently in effect may not be implemented prior to completion of the permit-by-permit analysis for commercial uses and a new decision" (page 19). Based on the Regional Forester's direction, the timing criteria of this decision does not constitute a significant amendment to the Forest Plan.

Location and Size

This decision affects the 67.5 miles of Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor and approximately 4 miles of study river. The decision is specific to commercial boating use of the Snake River and associated dispersed use of the river corridor. The Forest encompasses over 2.3 million acres, of which MA 11 (the river corridor) is 14, 355 acres–less than 1% of the area covered by the Forest Plan. Thus, the physical area and size of the Snake River, as affected by this decision is not so large in size as to mandate a significant amendment to the Forest Plan.

Goals, Objectives, and Outputs

The decision meets the intent of the goals, objectives, and outputs provided for in the Snake River Plan. Further, the decision meets the intent of the Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on appeals in which the maximum total commercial capacity was affirmed. The Regional Forester also directed me to verify or refine the numeric estimate of this capacity without a new decision. That verification resulted in an upward adjustment of the commercial powerboat capacity. The changes in allocation of powerboat use among outfitters compared with that in the FEIS and ROD for the Snake River Plan is based on the ability to consistently serve the public with a variety of outfitter services. Thus, this decision does not foreclose the achievement of existing goals, objectives, and outputs and therefore does not mandate a significant amendment to the Forest Plan.

Management Prescription

This decision is specific to Management Area 8. Implementation of the decision will begin management actions that will work towards the achievement of the desired future conditions in the Snake River Plan and protecting and enhancing the rivers outstandingly remarkable values. Thus, this decision does not constitute a significant amendment in relation to achieving management area prescriptions.

Findings Required By Other Laws

Alternative C, as modified, complies with Sections 7 and 10 of the HCNRA Act (PL 94-199), Section 10 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (PL 90-542), Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (PL 93-205), and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (PL 89-665). Reference Chapter I of the FEIS for the Snake River Plan (pages I-10 through I-12), the ROD for the Snake River Plan (page 6), and Chapter I of the EA (pages I-4 and I-5).

V. SPECIFICALLY REQUIRED DISCLOSURES

There are no unavoidable adverse environmental effects associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no short-term uses affecting long-term site productivity associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no conflicts with plans and policies of other jurisdictions associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no adverse effects on any threatened or endangered species or critical habitats associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no adverse effects on any prime farm land, range land, or forest land associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no adverse effects on civil rights, consumers, women, and minorities associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan. However, an adverse economic effect to outfitter-guides holding special use permits may occur as a result of this decision dependent upon each outfitter's ability to respond to changes in the allocations and the operational limitations.

There are no adverse effects on public health and safety associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no adverse effects on heritage resources and no known effects on treaty rights associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no adverse effects on wetlands or flood plains associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no adverse effects on air quality associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

There are no unusual energy requirements associated with implementation of this activity which are not already identified in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

VI. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on the site-specific environmental analysis documented in the EA, I have determined that implementation of Alternative C, as modified by this decision notice, is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects discussed in the EA have been disclosed within the appropriate context and will have little intensity. My determination is based on the incorporation of mitigation measures and monitoring requirements associated with Alternative C as addressed in the Snake River Plan and the following factors from the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Part 1508.27:

> The beneficial and adverse environmental and socio-economic effects described in the EA for Alternative C were considered independently from each other to determine if the activity would significantly affect the human environment. The analysis identified beneficial effects to society (EA, pages III-1 through III-21). Although it identified no adverse environmental effects to society, an adverse economic effect to some of the outfitter-guides will occur as a result of allocating use and the operational limitations (EA, pages III-21 through III-56). However, none of the beneficial or adverse effects were determined to be significant in terms of the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations.
>
> Implementation of the activity will not affect public health and safety beyond the recreational opportunities and public expectations intended for wild and scenic river settings (EA, pages III-1 through III-21) and documented in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.
>
> Implementation of the activity will not affect any unique characteristics of the geographic area such as historic or cultural resources (EA, page III-58 and analysis file), parklands, prime farmlands, wetlands (EA, pages III-57 and 58) or ecologically critical areas (FEIS for the Snake River Plan, pages IV-82 through IV-98, and IV-101 through IV-105). Implementation of Alternative C will provide for the protection and enhancement of the rivers outstandingly remarkable values (EA, pages III-1 through III-21, and the FEIS for the Snake River Plan, pages IV-1 through IV-105).

The effects of implementation on the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial. Controversy in this context refers to cases where there is substantial dispute as to the size, nature, or effect of the Federal action, rather than to opposition to its adoption. Based on comments received during the scoping period and the public review and comment periods, implementation of the activity may generate controversy in the form of social or emotional opposition to the action (EA, Page I-6 and Appendix D). Some individuals who are likely to experience adverse economic effects or would be displaced from portions of the wild river during the 21 days of non-motorized periods have taken exception to the proposal. However, this type of controversy does not make an action significant nor require the preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The possible effects on the human environment identified in the EA or already documented in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan are not highly uncertain and do not involve unique or unknown risks (reference analysis file).

Implementation of the activity establishes no precedent for future actions which are likely to result in significant environmental effects. The decision, in conjunction with the Snake River Plan, establishes use levels that are developed to protect and enhance the rivers outstandingly remarkable values. Monitoring and evaluation as addressed in the Snake River Plan (Appendix D) establishes the acceptable thresholds in which to re-evaluate management direction, such as those elements of this decision.

Implementation of the activity in conjunction with past, present, and foreseeable future actions will not have a significant cumulative effect on the environment. The environmental effects associated with the Decision are limited to the direct, indirect and cumulative effects disclosed in the EA (EA, pages III-1 through III-57).

Implementation of the activity will not adversely affect any sites or features listed or eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic places, or any significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources because no ground-disturbing activities are required by the Decision (EA, page III-57 and analysis file).

Implementation of the activity will not adversely affect any threatened or endangered plant, fish, or wildlife species, or their critical habitat (EA, page III-57 and analysis file).

The activity is consistent with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, including provisions for protection of the environment, Wild and Scenic Rivers and the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (EA, pages I-4 through I-5, and II-57).

On the basis of the information and analysis contained in the attached EA and all other information available as summarized above, it is my determination that adoption of Alternative C, as modified, does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed.

VII. DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This decision tiers to Alternative G as modified by the ROD of the FEIS for the Snake River Plan. The following citations support my finding of consistency between my decision and the parent documents:

- The decisions implementing this activity are consistent with the Snake River Plan (Management Area 8) and its accompanying FEIS and ROD.

- The provisions of Alternative C, as modified, are consistent with the Regional Forester's July 19, 1995 decision on the FEIS/ROD appeals directing further analysis of the economic effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual commercial river permits.

- The decisions implementing this activity are consistent with the public land use regulations for the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor (36 CFR 292.45).

VIII. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the decision will begin on January 1, 1997.

Adherence to the following implementation schedule is part of my decision to implement Alternative C, as modified.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>
January 1, 1997	All provisions of this decision and the Snake River Plan are effective except for those listed below
	Outfitter and guide special use permits are in compliance with provisions of this decision

The following schedule is for those elements of this decision and the Snake River Plan which will be implemented after January 1, 1997:

May 23, 1997	Implementation of launch reservations and commercial allocation schedule for all wild river (Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing) users
	Begin Lower Salmon River implementation so that for 1997, primary season groups with more than eight boats and/or 24 people will meet interim management guidelines established in the ROD (pages 25-26)
May 22, 1998	Implementation of launch reservations and commercial allocation schedule for all scenic river users
	Full implementation of Lower Salmon River launch restrictions entering the Snake River

IX. APPEAL PROVISIONS

This decision is subject to administrative review in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 215. Appeal of this decision must conform with the process and content requirements specified in Parts 215.13 and 215.14. The appeal must be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer within 45 days of the date that the legal notice of this decision appears in the *Baker City Herald*.

This decision is subject to administrative review in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 251. Appeal of this decision must conform with the procedures and content requirements specified in Parts 251.88 and 251.90. The appeal must be filed with the Reviewing Officer within 45 days of the date of the written notice of this decision to holders of affected outfitter-guide permits.

Pursuant to Part 251.85 (Election of Appeal Process), persons who qualify as appellants under Part 251 may elect to appeal this decision under Part 251 or Part 215. However, the decision cannot be appealed by the same person under both parts.

On June 25, 1996, the Regional Forester requested a waiver of the Department's position that judicial review of the pending Snake Wild and Scenic River Outfitter/Guide Decision is premature unless all administrative appeal procedures have been exhausted. On July 31, 1996 Chief Thomas granted that waiver in accordance with 36 CFR 215.20 and 36 CFR 251.101. Thus, in the case of HCPC v. Williams, Civil No. 96-68-RE, D. Or (Order on Preliminary Injunction, April 22, 1996), the Departments position is not to assert the defense that exhaustion of administrative remedies is required before a party already in litigation can proceed in court. This waiver applies to litigant existing parties, parties who may be added to the existing lawsuit, or parties who may file separate litigation on this matter.

The Appeal Deciding Officer under Part 215 and the Reviewing Officer under Part 251 for this Decision is Bob Williams, Regional Forester, Pacific Northwest Region. The appeal should be addressed as follows:

Regional Forester
Attn: 1570 Appeals
P. O. Box 3623
Portland, OR 97208-3623

X. CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information regarding this decision, contact Kurt Wiedenmann, Ecosystem Planning Staff Officer, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, P.O. Box 907, Baker City, Oregon 97814 or (541) 523-1296.

R M Richmond

R. M. RICHMOND
Forest Supervisor

September 9, 1996
Date

Environmental Assessment

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FIGURE 1 - VICINITY AND ANALYSIS AREA

CHAPTER I

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest proposes to set outfitter use allocations and operational limitations in the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA). New management direction resulting from the decision on this environmental assessment (EA) will amend the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Implementation is scheduled for September 1996.

Preparation of this EA is in accordance with the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA), as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA), and the associated National Forest System Land and Resource Planning Regulations (36 CFR 219).

Preparation of this EA is required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR 1500), and the implementing regulations of NFMA (36 CFR 219).

This EA is tiered to Alternative G as modified by the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Wild and Scenic Snake River Recreation Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The FEIS and accompanying ROD allocated general recreation use for the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor. The Forest Service, through this EA, proposes implementation of river use decisions made in the ROD. There are no physical or environmental effects different from those described in the FEIS except as discussed herein. All mitigation measures provided for in the ROD remain in effect for all alternatives in the EA.

PROPOSED ACTION/ PURPOSE AND NEED

The proposed action responds to the Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on the appeal of the ROD for the Wild and Scenic Snake River Recreation Management Plan (Snake River Plan) and its accompanying FEIS. The Regional Forester directed the Forest Supervisor to further analyze the specific economic effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual commercial river permits. The proposed actions and the need for each action are described below.

The need for the proposed action originates from Forest Service visitor use reports showing a 147% increase in visitor use during the primary season from 1979 to 1991 (see FEIS). The visitor use study completed in 1989 highlighted a concern that an increase in recreation use in the river corridor was negatively impacting visitors' recreational experiences. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, HCNRA Act and visitor preferences became the underlying reason for initiating actions to achieve the desired recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) settings within the Snake Wild and Scenic River (W&SR) corridor.

The purpose of the proposed action is to adjust the current commercial recreational uses of the Snake W&SR in order to meet the desired recreational experiences as described in the FEIS. In addition, the proposed action seeks to allow business flexibility for commercial permittees to ensure the public need for these services will be met.

1. **Launch locations for commercial floatcraft and powerboats.** There is a need to provide public service through offering a level of outfitted services at each river portal. Forest Service policy (36 CFR 251.56(f)) requires that the permittee charge reasonable rates and furnish such services as may be necessary in the public interest. Through specifying the launch locations, the availability of a desired mix of visitor services can be better assured. These services are needed by members of

the public that are unable to enjoy the unique recreational experience of the Snake W&SR because of a lack of skills or specialized equipment.

2. **Areas of operation.** Permittees currently have the flexibility to operate anywhere in the river corridor. This has resulted in an undesirable concentration of use and associated levels of encounters with other users in some river segments, and has created keen competition for campsites in the wild corridor. Institutionalizing historic area of operation patterns achieves the desired recreation experience and precludes undesirable changes resulting from future growth and uses. Managing these areas requires that use and encounters be addressed, especially in the wild corridor.

3. **Maximum and minimum numbers of commercial outfitters at specific portals.** The establishment of maximum and minimum numbers of commercial outfitters at specific portals is needed to provide a diversity of commercial outfitted services for the public to choose from. It also provides commercial competition which helps to ensure quality services.

4. **Allocation of use.** An examination of the factors affecting the allocation of use for commercial powerboat and floatcraft use is important to assess whether the desired recreational experience can be achieved. Part of the allocation process was designed to reduce campsite competition. The factors affecting the allocation of use are commercial powerboat and floatcraft allocation levels in the wild and scenic sections, temporary special use permits for commercial use, supply trips, access to Sheep Creek Cabin, and reducing the number of commercial float pool dates. The commercial float pool dates are a group of launches made available to float outfitters in aggregate. Drawing from the pool allows an outfitter additional use that is not counted against the outfitter's allocated use.

5. **Timing and duration of a non-motorized period relative to commercial use.** The wild corridor of the Snake W&SR allows motorized use (reference the HCNRA Act). In meeting the desired recreational experience for the wild corridor, there is a need for a non-motorized period relative to commercial use. This need results from a desire from a segment of the public to have a period free of motorized activity within the wild corridor, thus allowing an enhanced perception of solitude and remoteness. While the decision was made in the ROD to have a non-motorized period, the analysis in this EA will determine when that period should be in effect.

6. **Launch schedule.** The majority of commercial powerboat trips are one-day versus multi-day for commercial floatcraft use. Many powerboat customers tend to "walk-in" and make spontaneous trip plans as compared to making long range trip plans. Developing a launch schedule allows outfitters to be responsive to customer needs while managing total use to meet recreation objectives.

7. **Party sizes for commercial users.** Party size is a factor in how visitors relate their experience to the desired type of recreational settings and opportunities. In general, larger party sizes have a greater effect on visitor experiences, particularly in primitive recreation settings. Larger parties also tend to increase the amount of environmental impact, particularly from overnight use. Limiting party size is needed to minimize onshore impacts on ORV's from excessive party sizes. Party size limitations were recommended based on the visitor use study in which nearly all surveyed visitors supported management policies that would protect the natural qualities of the river canyon.

8. **Trip duration for commercial powerboats.** Trip duration for commercial powerboats includes both overnight and day use. Limiting trip duration is needed to reduce campsite competition and the number of parties encountered along the river. In order to reduce impacts at and competition for campsites, trip duration decisions considered historic camping patterns and the availability of overnight facilities.

9. **Maximum size (length) of commercial powerboats.** The need for length restrictions on commercial power boats is based on concerns about the potential negative appearance of large double decked boats conflicting with the desired recreational setting. There is also a concern about the potential boat wake effect from large craft on other recreationists. Currently, size

restrictions are non-existent. Placing limits on size will ensure the desired recreational opportunity experience and settings (established in the FEIS) are met.

10. **Launching of inflatable watercraft from commercial powerboats.** There is currently no limit on launching inflatable watercraft from commercial powerboats. Regardless of where the watercraft launches, it is use on the river, and thus may conflict with the achievement of the desired recreation experience. Because the existing system does not account for inflatable watercraft launches from powerboats, there is a need to address this specific use.

11. **Maximum number of commercial floatcraft per party.** There is a need for establishing a limit on the number of floatcraft per party to protect the desired river recreation experience.

12 **Use of kickers (outboard motors) on commercial floatcraft in the wild river.** Campsite competition is high in the wild corridor, and allowing kickers for commercial floatcraft allows an advantage in selecting campsites. There is a need to preclude the use of kickers in the wild section to provide greater equity in campsite selection. Eliminating or restricting the use of kickers will also reduce the amount of noise during the non-motorized period and increase the opportunity for solitude on motorized days.

13. **Limiting commercial float use in the scenic river, including a strategy for managing the commercial Salmon River float traffic.** There is a need to limit the amount and type of commercial float use in the scenic river in order to protect the desired recreational experience and to prevent traffic congestion on the river. Managing the float traffic entering the Snake W&SR from the Salmon River, including providing a management strategy, is necessary if the recreational settings prescribed in the FEIS are to be achieved.

DECISIONS TO BE MADE

The Forest Supervisor will make the following decisions based on the interdisciplinary analysis contained in this EA:

1. **Launch locations for commercial floatcraft and powerboats**

2. **Areas of operation**

3. **Maximum and minimum numbers of commercial outfitters at specific portals**

4. **Allocation of use, including the following facets:**

   - Commercial powerboat and floatcraft allocation levels in the wild and scenic sections
   - Temporary special use permits for commercial use
   - Supply trips to Sheep Creek Cabin and Copper Creek Resort
   - Access to Sheep Creek Cabin
   - Modifying the number of commercial float pool dates

5. **Timing and duration of a non-motorized period relative to commercial use**

6. **Launch schedule**

7. **Party sizes for commercial users**

8. **Trip duration for commercial powerboats**

9. **Maximum size (length) of commercial powerboats**

10. **Launching of inflatable watercraft from commercial powerboats**

11 **Maximum number of commercial floatcraft per party**

12. **Use of kickers on commercial floatcraft in the wild river**

13. **Limiting commercial float use in the scenic river,** including a strategy for managing the commercial Salmon River float traffic

The Decision Notice for this EA will amend the Forest Plan. Implementation of the decision is scheduled for September 11, 1996.

PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION

The Wild and Scenic Snake River runs north from Hells Canyon Creek to the Oregon-Washington border and forms the northern portion of the boundary between Oregon and Idaho. The Act establishing the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA) designated 67.5 miles of the Snake River as wild and scenic, classified into the following segments:

WILD RIVER: The 31.5 miles from Hells Canyon Creek to Pittsburg Landing.

SCENIC RIVER: The 36 miles from Pittsburg Landing to the northern boundary of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

STUDY RIVER: Approximately four (4) miles of river directly upstream from the Oregon-Washington border to the boundary of the scenic river.

The river corridor is approximately a quarter mile of each side of the high water mark. Hells Canyon Wilderness is adjacent to the corridor along southern portions of the river in both Oregon and Idaho but does not include the wild and scenic corridor.

See Figure I-1 for a vicinity map.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act [Sec. 3 (A)(d)(1)] requires that the river management plan shall address user capacities. Section 10 (d) of the HCNRA Act specifies that such rules and regulations shall include provision for the control and the use and number of motorized and non-motorized river craft.

The Forest Plan, as amended, provides guidance through its established goals, objectives, desired future condition, Forest-wide standards and guidelines, and specific management direction. The Snake River Plan is Forest Plan Amendment 12.

The primary management emphasis for Forest Plan Management Area 6, Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Snake River Corridor (14,355 acres), is to ensure the protection and enhancement of the river's outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) pursuant to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and assure that use levels are compatible with the objectives of Sections 7 and 10 of the HCNRA Act. Administrative sites within the corridor are to be managed in accordance with Forest Plan Management Area 10, Administrative and Recreation Sites.

The study river portion is managed according to the guidance provided by Management Area 7, Wild and Scenic Rivers, until determined unsuitable as a wild and scenic river or acted upon by Congress.

For additional discussion on management direction and legislative requirements, refer to pages I-9 through I-12 in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan.

KEY ISSUES

Based on concerns and comments received during the scoping process and the scope of the proposed action, the following issues were identified as key in relation to the proposed action. Each issue is accompanied by key indicators to provide a basis for comparison among the alternatives analyzed in this EA.

1. **ISSUE: Commercial boating use levels and operational limitations within the established allocation should meet the primitive or semi-primitive recreational settings with attributes that accommodate motorized and non-motorized use and provide a suitable mixture of outfitter provided services to the public.**

   Scoping comments and responses to the Snake River EIS displayed a wide array of opinions about the appropriate type and level of river access. While most agreed that both powerboating and floating were valid uses of the river, there was little agreement on the mix of use levels. There was not complete consensus regarding allocation of use, however, most people recognized a need to limit use in order to preserve the special recreation settings that draw people to the canyon.

   Commercial outfitters and guides provide access to the river for people who prefer not to pilot their own woater craft. The Forest Service has concluded (ROD) that there is a demonstrated need for commercial public services to access the Snake River.

Key Indicators:

- *Capability of visitors to achieve the desired recreational experience: sense of remoteness, level of social encounters*
- *Capability to provide an appropriate level of visitor management*
- *Campsite competition*
- *Capability to provide a diversity of necessary outfitter services to the public*

2. **ISSUE: Regulation of commercial boating use could affect the economic condition of current river-based special use permittees.**

   During scoping and the review of the DEIS and FEIS, and through use of the appeal process, many of the river outfitter/guide services expressed concern about their ability to maintain businesses if their access to the river was restricted by use allocations and/or other operational limitations. This EA provides further analysis of the effects of the use allocations and operational limitations to individual permits. Economic effects are disclosed.

Key Indicators:

- *Change in boat days/float launches by outfitter*
- *Change in total gross revenue by outfitter*
- *Scheduling flexibility*

OTHER ISSUES

The following issues, concerns, and opportunities were identified during scoping and were addressed in the associated FEIS, by establishing management elements, or through monitoring.

Issues Outside the Scope of this Document

People raised concerns about whether the Forest Service used correct planning protocol in developing NEPA documents, interpreting the HCNRA Act, and applying the proper connection to other planning processes and decisions (including the Limits of Acceptable Change process). These issues have already been addressed in the FEIS. See Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-4 through K-45.

Comments regarding noise levels and increasing rules and regulations received during scoping for this EA were considered in the FEIS. See Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-190 through K-195 and FEIS pages IV-35 through IV-41.

Safety concerns about navigation markers, hazards created by presence or absence of powerboats, campsites, and fuel transportation continue to be of concern to many respondents. These issues were responded to in the FEIS. See Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-260 through K-269.

Some respondents raised appropriate uses of wilderness as an issue. This issue was responded to in the FEIS. See Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-274 To K-277.

Aircraft use and cultural and historical resource issues raised by comments are outside the scope of this document.

Other Issues

Adequacy of the data

Several comments on the proposed action responded that if visitor surveys were conducted today, they would reveal continued visitor satisfaction with their Hells Canyon experience and, therefore, no limitations on commercial use levels should be instituted.

The 1989 Visitor Use Study is not the only factor that led to identification of a need to manage visitor use. Other factors that led to the decision to investigate methods of managing visitor use included a 147% increase in visitor use during the primary season from 1979 to 1991 and the results of the "Recommended Limits of Acceptable Change Recreation Management Plan for the Snake River." Use has continued to increase. There is no indication that the original factors which showed a negative impact on some visitors recreation experience have improved.

In fact, a 1994 public opinion poll of HCNRA users confirmed that some visitor recreation experiences continue to be negatively impacted (see analysis file).

Although visitor use surveys were used to identify perceived satisfaction levels, there is also a need to meet standards for ROS settings and to provide for appropriate recreation opportunity experiences.

SCOPING PROCESS

The original EIS involved an intense public scoping and notification process including public meetings and mailings to over 1,700 individuals and organizations. For details, see FEIS at I-17 and Appendix K.

For this EA, the following scoping actions were taken:

Date	Action	Number of People Contacted
11/22/95	Fall newsletter mailed to original FEIS mailing list. Contained information about status of FEIS and plans for completing NEPA process. Required completion of an interest card for continued participation in process.	1,766
12/19/95	Scoping notice and proposed action mailed to mailing list generated by fall newsletter.	585
1/24/96	Meeting held with Snake River outfitters and other interested publics held at Clarkston, Washington.	35
1/24/96	Meetings between individual outfitters and Interdisciplinary Team.	20
2/21/96	Meeting with individual Riggins-based outfitters.	6
3/96	Telephone contact follow-up with all outfitters that did not attend 1/24 or 2/21 meetings. Exceptions: No contact could be made with Anderson River Adventures, S&S Outfitters, Pears Snake River Rafting, Oregon Trail Adventure, Inc., and Freewater.	30
3/96	Narratives describing each outfitter business mailed with cover letter requesting feedback.	30
8/5/96	Letters mailed to Snake River outfitters notifying them of imminent release of the Environmental Assessment and 30-day review and comment period	30

A total of 43 letters were received as a direct result of scoping. Eighteen of the letters were from Snake River outfitters.

CHAPTER II

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the proposed action and two alternatives, including one alternative which represents no action. It presents different approaches to meeting the underlying needs identified in Chapter I. The alternatives provide a mix of activities and schedules centered around a particular emphasis or theme.

This chapter consists of the following four sections:

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS outlines the process used to formulate the proposed action and alternatives.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED, BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY describes alternatives eliminated from detailed study and the reasons they were eliminated.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVES presents the overview and design of the three alternatives, including the following:

> **Mitigation Common To All Alternatives**
>
> **Monitoring Common To All Alternatives**
>
> **Alternative A.** This is the "No Action" alternative as required by the National Environmental Policy Act and would not implement the proposed action.
>
> **Elements Common To B and C Alternatives.** This subsection describes management direction that is common to Alternatives B and C.
>
> **Alternative B.** Proposed Action. This alternative was used in scoping to identify issues and generate a variety of concepts for designing other alternatives. This alternative was derived from the selected alternative in the 1994 final environmental impact statement and record of decision for the Wild and Scenic Snake River Recreation Management Plan.
>
> **Alternative C.** Preferred Alternative. This alternative was developed in response to issues and concerns raised during the scoping period . This alternative was derived from Alternative B with the objective of assessing the effect of the verified base period use levels and providing business flexibility within the overall goal of meeting the underlying needs identified in Chapter I.

Table II-1, which follows the detailed descriptions of alternatives, summarizes alternative management requirements.

COMPARISON OF THE ALTERNATIVES displays the differences in the alternatives using a summary format.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The proposed action is derived from the selected alternative of the 1994 Record of Decision implementing the Wild and Scenic Snake River Recreation Management Plan. A Forest Service interdisciplinary team (ID team) of resource specialists used opinions, comments, and suggestions gathered at internal and public scoping meetings to help define key issues identified in the proposed action. Alternative themes were developed by the ID team to respond to the issues generated by analyzing the proposed action. The alternative carried forward for detailed study is designed to resolve the significant issues surrounding the proposed action.

The alternatives are designed to achieve the purpose and need for action, desired future conditions (DFC) for the river corridor, the protection and enhancement of the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV's), and the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) for the river corridor as set forth in the River Recreation Management Plan.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED, BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

In the development of alternatives, the planning team considered a wide variety of options for modifying the operational limitations featured in Alternative B in order to resolve the issues generated from the Proposed Action. See Analysis File for variations considered for each limitation. Many of these were not carried forward for detailed study as noted below:

Hells Canyon Alliance (HCA) Viability Analysis. HCA offered an analysis of commercial powerboat use levels needed for viability. Permission to use the information was later withdrawn by HCA.

Destinations. Several options were considered for reconfiguring the allowable commercial powerboat destinations including eliminating any limitation on destinations. The option most effective at providing business flexibility and still meeting the underlying needs identified in Chapter I was carried forward for detailed study in Alternative C.

Use Allocations and Launch Schedules. Several options were considered for reconfiguring the commercial powerboat launch allocation and schedule including eliminating the launch schedule entirely. The option most effective at providing business flexibility and still meeting the underlying needs identified in Chapter I was carried forward for detailed study in Alternative C.

Non-Motorized Period. Variations on the length of the Non-Motorized Period (NMP) from full elimination to something less than 24 days and the timing of the NMP from all days in July and August to spread in different ways across the primary season were considered. Economic analysis showed very little effect of the 24 non-motorized days on commercial outfitters. However, there were issues of timing of the non-motorized window. The option most effective at spreading the non-motorized window over the primary season was carried forward for detailed study in Alternative C.

Other Limitations. In addition to those above, options for other operational limitations were also considered. These options were eliminated because they could not meet the underlying recreational experience need and also provide business flexibility. Reference Analysis File.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVES

Described below are the mitigation measures and monitoring and evaluation elements common to all alternatives.

Mitigation Common To All Alternatives

Mitigation measures are designed to avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for environmental effects of implementing the proposed action and alternatives. Mitigation measures, applicable to the allocation of commercial use, are addressed in the River Recreation Management Plan relative to transportation and storage of fuel (page 3), scenery management (page 15), and fish and wildlife (pages 16 and 17).

Monitoring And Evaluation Common To All Alternatives

Monitoring and evaluation elements for monitoring commercial use levels and effects on the river's Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) are addressed in Appendix D of the River Recreation Management Plan.

Alternative A - No Action

This is the "No Action" alternative as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. This alternative would not implement the proposed actions and provides a baseline from which to evaluate the action alternatives. This alternative would continue unlimited commercial powerboat use. The commercial use cap established in the Snake River Management Plan ROD of 10/21/94 would not be implemented with this alternative.

Implementation of this alternative would not contribute toward meeting the purpose and need for action identified in Chapter I (also see FEIS Chapter I and II). Commercial use levels for the wild and scenic sections would likely continue to increase, thus reducing the quality of recreation experience for many river users and precluding achievement of desired conditions established for the identified ORV's, short- or long-term. The effects of Alternative A are used as a frame of reference to compare the effects of implementing the action alternatives.

The specific management direction for Alternative A is as follows:

Commercial Powerboat Use

Launch Point Locations

Outfitters operating from Pittsburg Landing and Cache Creek are not allowed to launch from Hells Canyon Creek. Otherwise, there are no limits on launch point locations.

Area of Operations

There is currently no limit on the Area of Operations with the exception of Mainstream Outdoor Adventures, Inc., which is limited to the scenic section of the river.

Maximum and Minimum Numbers of Commercial Outfitters at Specific Portals

Currently, there are no limits on maximum or minimum numbers of permits at specific portals with the exception of Hells Canyon Creek where there is a maximum of two permits allowed. There are currently three permits located at Pittsburg Landing, fifteen permits at Cache Creek and one at Hells Canyon Creek.

Allocation of Use

In the Wild and Scenic corridors there would be no use level limits on commercial powerboats, year-round. Primary season base period (1988-92) average use was 1,283 boat days. 1993-94 average primary season use was 1,324 boat days. The vacant permit at Hells Canyon Creek would be filled with a maximum of one boat.

The temporary use permit would continue to be authorized on a yearly basis limited to the scenic section of the river.

Supply trips for Copper Creek Resort and Sheep Creek Cabin would continue to be unlimited.

Access to Sheep Creek Cabin would continue to be unlimited.

Timing and Duration of Non-Motorized Period

There would be no non-motorized period under Alternative A.

Launch Schedule

There would be no calendar of launches for daily use.

Party Size

Day use powerboat party size limits would continue to be established by Coast Guard capacity regulations. Overnight camping party size would continue to be limited to 30.

Trip Duration

There would continue to be no limits on which outfitters can provide an overnight camping experience.

Powerboat Length Limitation

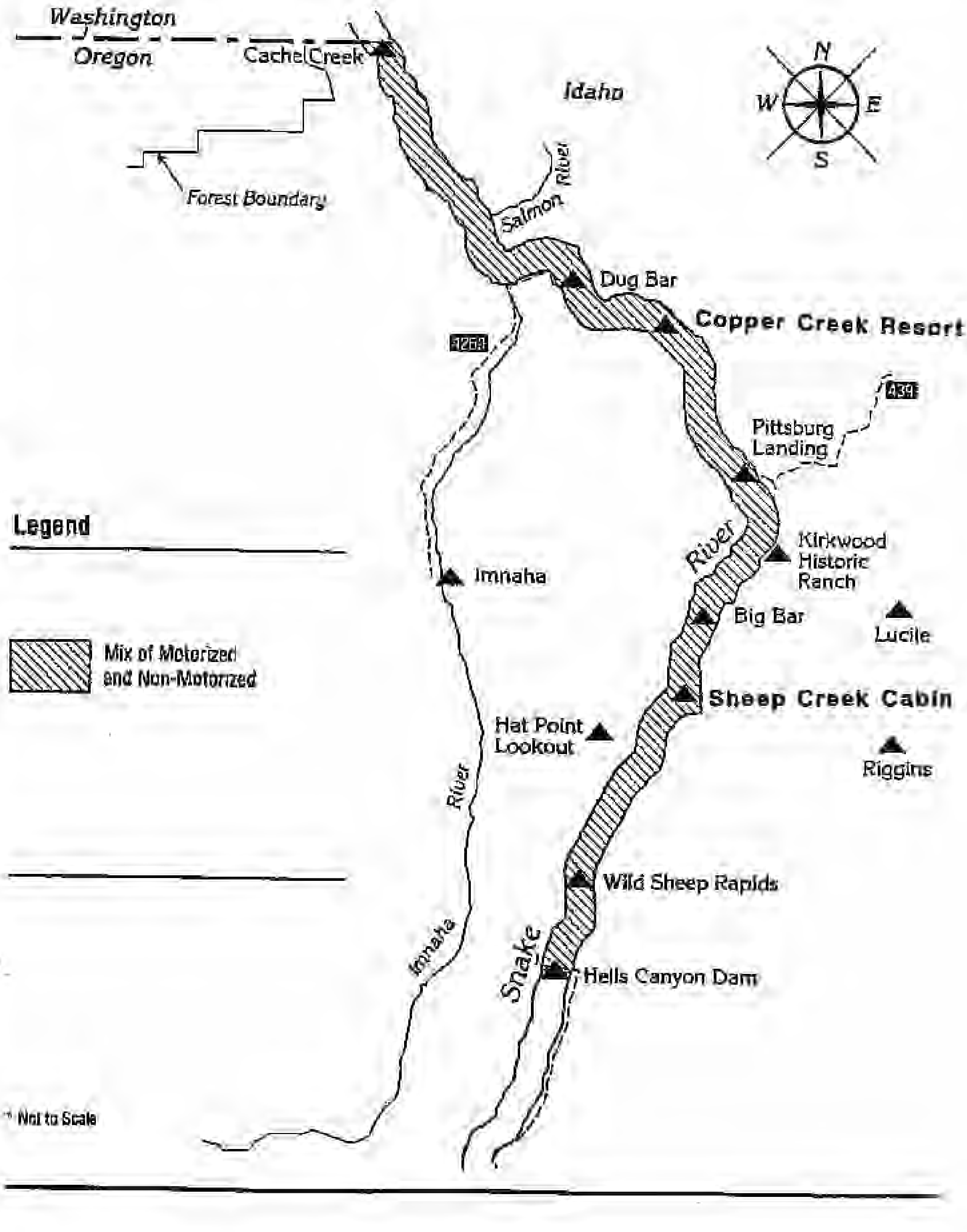
There would continue to be no limits on powerboat length.

Launching of Inflatables

There would continue to be no restrictions on the launching of inflatable craft from commercial powerboats.

Figure II-1

Alternative A—Primary Season



Commercial Floatcraft Use

Launch Point Locations

Commercial float trips could continue to launch from Hells Canyon Creek, Pittsburg Landing and Dug Bar.

Area of Operations

There is currently no limit on the area of operations for commercial multi-day float permits. Temporary one-day float permits would continue to be limited to use between Hells Canyon Creek and Pittsburg Landing.

Launch reservations would continue to be required only for commercial float trip launches in the wild river between Hells Canyon Creek and the top of Rush Creek Rapid during the primary season. Commercial launches from the remainder of the river would continue to be unlimited.

Maximum and Minimum Number of Permits

Currently, there are 16 commercial float permits. This is the maximum number of permits allowed on the river. Two of those are temporary. There are no limits on the minimum number of permits.

Allocation of Use

Currently, 224 primary season commercial launches from Hells Canyon Creek are allocated to 14 permittees as shown below. Two one-day float trip permits with a maximum of two boats per launch are limited to one launch per day for each commercial outfitter on alternating days, Monday through Friday only, during the primary season. This allocation would continue.

Commercial Float Allocation

Outfitter	Total Launches
Davis Whitewater Expeditions	14
River Odysseys West (ROW)	14
Canyon Outfitters, Inc.	21
Idaho Afloat	14
Hughes River Expeditions, Inc.	21
Heller Bar Excursions	14
Northwest Voyageurs	14
Peer's Snake River Rafting	14
Oregon Trail Adventures	14
Hells Canyon Adventures Raft	14
Freewater	14
Steen's Wilderness Adventures	14
Holiday River Expeditions of Idaho	14
Oars - Dories	14
Pool Dates	14
TOTAL	*224

* All launches would be allocated on a launch calendar. Existing float management guidelines would continue including trades and crossover. A minimum of three trips would be required to maintain priority use.

14 pool dates would continue to be available to the commercial outfitters

The two temporary permits would continue to be reauthorized on a yearly basis.

Timing and Duration of Non-Motorized Period

There would be no non-motorized period under Alternative A.

Launch Schedule

A limited daily use schedule would continue to be in effect with an initial commercial allocation of two multi-day launches per day. Temporary one-day float launches would be in addition to the basic commercial allocation..

Party Size

Commercial party size would continue to be limited to a maximum of 30 people during the primary season, and limited by conditions of use on permits during the secondary season for all river sections.

Number Of Floatcraft

Commercial float parties would continue to be limited to a maximum of 30 craft per party, based on maximum party size, in all river sections. One-day float permits would continue to be limited to two craft per trip.

Use of Kickers

Kickers would continue to be allowed in all sections of the river at any time.

Lower Salmon Coordination and Management

Lower Salmon commercial float trips would continue to be subject to the same party size and floatcraft limits as the Snake.

See Figure II-1 for a map of Alternative A.

ELEMENTS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES B AND C

The following management elements are common to action alternatives B and C.

Management Elements Specific To Commercial Powerboat Use

Launch Point Locations and Maximum and Minimum Numbers of Permits

Manage the number of commercial powerboat permits to assure the continuation of business competition on the river. Maintain a variety of powerboat recreational services with quality experiences to visitors by establishing a maximum and minimum number of powerboat outfitter permits at all river portals.

Location	Minimum	Maximum
Hells Canyon Creek	2*	2* (1 existing)
Pittsburg Landing	3	4
Cache Creek	5	13**(15 existing)
TOTAL	10	19

* Based on a voluntary split of the business authorized by the existing special use permit at the option of the permit holder

** The single powerboat permit issued with temporary use only that authorizes trips from the Oregon/Washington border to Pittsburg Landing would not be reissued. If one of Cache Creek permits moved to Pittsburg Landing, maximum for Cache Creek would drop to 13.

NOTE:
An exception to the launch point location limitation is Snake River Outfitters which has historically launched from both Pittsburg Landing and Cache Creek portals. This activity would continue to be authorized under all alternatives.

This element of Alternative B was modified from the Proposed Action mailing of December 1995. In the proposed action mailing, Dug Bar was listed as a potential portal for basing commercial operations. This was removed as an element of the action alternatives. The condition of the Dug Bar road precludes efficiently basing a commercial operation from this location and there is no demonstrated need to do so.

Allocation of Use - Temporary Permit Sub-element

The temporary use powerboat permit would not be reauthorized. This use would be retired effective December 31, 1996 and not reassigned in order to manage Scenic river use to protect and enhance the recreation experience.

Party Size

A year-round maximum over-night party size of 24 persons (including guides) would be established for all sections of the river for commercial powerboats. This would not affect commercial powerboat day use party size which would continue to be regulated by U.S. Coast Guard vessel certifications.

Trip Duration

Trip duration would be managed based on historic use, i.e., day use only or overnight use as follows, to reduce competition for campsites and associated impacts to campsites:

Authorization	**Outfitter**
Day Use Only	Hells Canyon Adv., Intermountain Exc., S&S Outfitters, Heller Bar Exc.*, Idaho River Navigation*, Rivers Navigation*, Snake River Adv.*, Three Rivers Outfitters, Snake River Outfitters*, Snake Dancer Excursions, Z&S Outfitters, Inc.
Day Use and Overnight	HC Fish Charters, High Roller Excursions, Anderson River Adventures, River Quest Excursions, C.C. Lodge, Inc., River Adventures Ltd., Red Woods Outfitters

* These outfitters have separate special use authorizations for lodges or own private land within the Snake River corridor that would allow overnight use at those sites within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area.

In addition, commercial power overnight use of the Cache Creek to Salmon confluence would be prohibited.

Management Elements Specific To Commercial Floatcraft Use

Area of Operations

Launch reservations would be required for commercial float trip launches in the wild river between Hells Canyon Creek and Pittsburg Landing.

Launch Point Locations and Maximum and Minimum Number of Permits

The number of commercial float permits would be managed to assure the continuation of business competition on the river. A variety of float recreational services with quality experiences to visitors would be maintained by establishing maximum and minimum number of float outfitter permits. A minimum number of 10 and a maximum number of 14 commercial float Special Use Permits would be authorized.

Allocation of Use - Pool Dates Sub-element

The commercial float allocation would continue as under Alternative A except the commercial pool would be reduced from 14 to 6. The other 8 launches would be allocated to private float parties.

Party Size

A year-round maximum party size of 24 persons (including guides) for all sections of the river for commercial floatboats would be established.

Number of Floatcraft

A maximum limit of eight floatcraft per commercial multi-day trip in all river sections year-round would be established, to achieve ROS settings for remoteness and social encounters while protecting and enhancing the Snake River's ORVs, and to address issues of fair and equitable access between commercial and private users.

Use of Kickers

The use of kickers on floatcraft in the wild river would be prohibited year-round, to meet ROS settings for remoteness and social encounters in the wild river by increasing the opportunity for periods of time where visitors are isolated from the sites and sounds of other users.

Lower Salmon River Coordination And Management

The recreational resource and resource impacts of commercial floaters originating on the Lower Salmon River when they enter the Snake River would be managed as follows:

- Groups with more than 24 people may camp between the confluence of the Lower Salmon River and Salmon Bar but would not be allowed to camp overnight elsewhere on the HCNRA.

- Groups originating on the Lower Salmon River would be limited to a maximum of eight boats per trip upon reaching the Snake River.

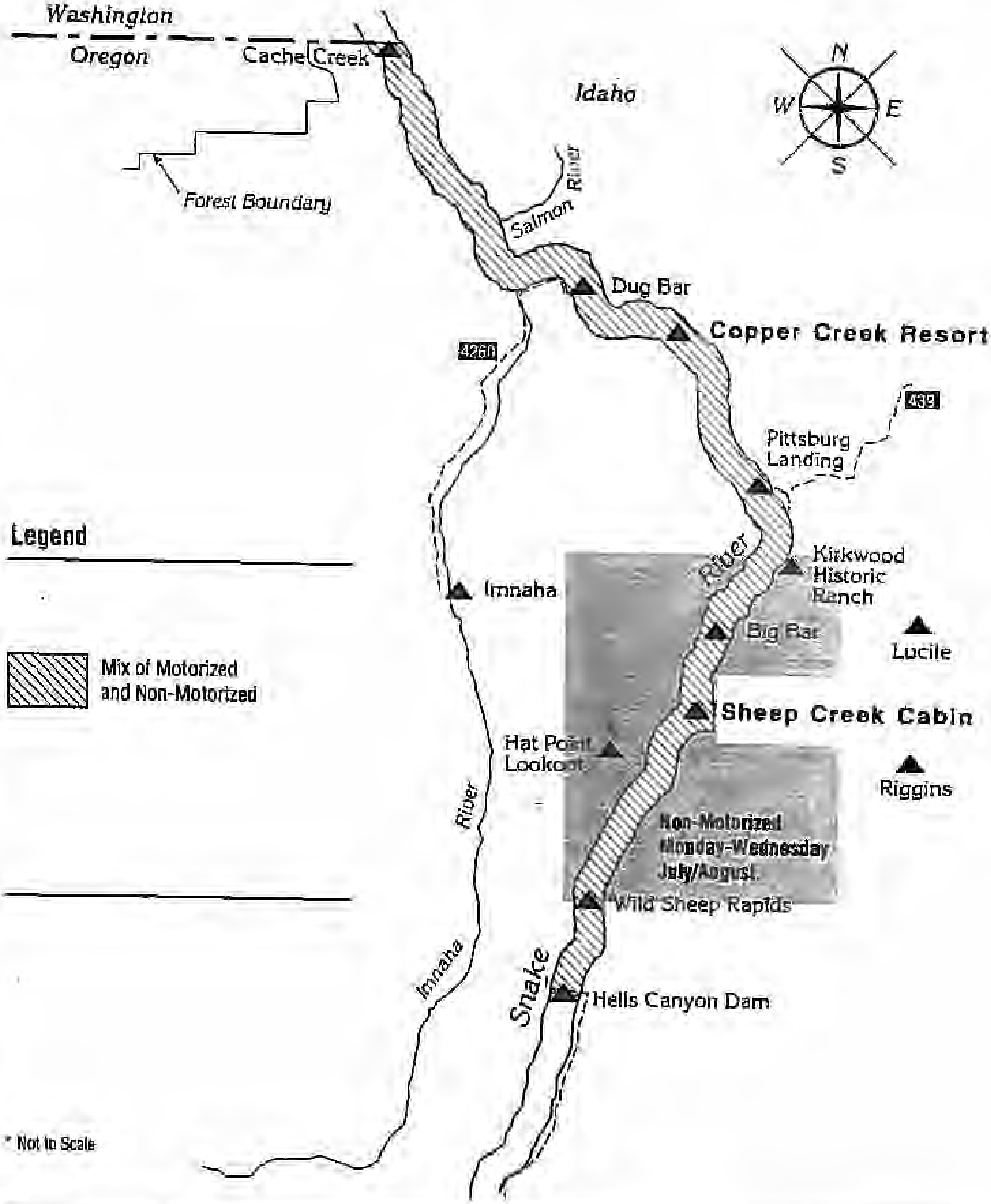
Phasing in the above direction would take place as detailed on FEIS pages II-7 and II-8. Full implementation would occur in 1996.

ALTERNATIVE B - PROPOSED ACTION

This alternative was used in the scoping process to identify issues and generate a variety of concepts for designing alternatives to the proposed action. The allocation element of Alternative B was modified subsequent to the Proposed Action mailing of December 1995. One of the tasks assigned by the Regional Forester in his July 1995 appeal decision was to examine actual use and verify or refine the numeric estimate of the cap. Alternative B reflects the verified numeric estimate of the cap for all permittees except Hells Canyon Adventures (HCA). In all cases, except for HCA, adjustments to the allocation based on verified use were less than 10% and did not affect the total cap. The verified and recalculated use for HCA was greater than estimated in the Snake FEIS. Because this level of use was not scoped for in the Proposed Action mailing to the public, the difference in HCA's use was not included in Alternative B (Proposed Action).

Figure II-2

Alternative B---Primary Season



Management Direction Specific To Commercial Powerboat Use

Area of Operations

Commercial operations for each powerboat outfitter permit in their primary area of operation would be managed year-round as follows in order to address social encounters with other competing river uses:

Area of Operation	**Outfitter**
Dam Downriver to Pittsburg Landing	Hells Canyon Adventures
N. Boundary Upriver to Dam	Intermountain Exc., Snake River Adv., Snake River Out., River Quest Exc., C.C. Lodge, Inc.
N. Boundary Upriver to Granite	S&S Outfitters, H.C. Fish Charters, High Roller Exc., River Adventures Ltd., Red Woods Out., Z&S Out., Inc.
N. Boundary Upriver to Rush Creek	Snake Dancer Exc., Anderson River Adv., Heller Bar Exc., Idaho River Navigation, Rivers Navigation, Three Rivers Outfitters

Allocation and Launch Schedule

Each powerboat outfitter would be authorized to operate during the primary season (112 days from May 22 through September 10) based upon the following boat day allocations. The maximum number of boat days to be allocated among 19 powerboat permits was determined in the ROD for the FEIS. This proposal deals specifically with the allocation of those boat days.

Commercial Power Boat Day Allocation*					
Outfitter	Total Boat Days	Wild Sheep ****	Wild ****	Kirkwood ****	Scenic ****
Hells Canyon Adventures	224	136	88		
Heller Bar Excursions	222		87	24	111
Snake River Adventures	139		52	18	69
Rivers Navigation	120		46	14	60
Idaho River Navigation	78		33	6	39
Snake Dancer Excursions	73		31	6	36
Cougar Country Lodge	65		24	9	32
River Quest Excursions	58		20	9	29
Snake River Outfitters	39		16	3	20
River Adventures, Ltd.	31		14	2	15
H.C. Fishing Charters	24		8	4	12
Intermountain Excursion	11		4	1	6
Z&S Outfitters, Inc.	6		3	0	3
Anderson River Adv.	6		3	0	3
Red Woods Outfitter	7		3	0	4
S&S Outfitters	7		3	0	4
High Roller Excursions	6		3	0	3
Three River Outfitters	4		2	0	2
Special**	88			88	
TOTAL***	1,208	136	440	184	448

* A boat day is defined as one boat on the river for one day on a specific trip. A minimum of three trips would be required to maintain priority use.

** Boat days spread equally between River Adventures, Ltd., H.C. Fishing Charters, Red Woods Outfitter for day trips between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood only.

*** All boats days would be allocated on a launch calendar with trading of boat days allowed within specific guidelines. Trading launches between commercial and private users would not be allowed.

**** Hells Canyon Adventures:
Wild Sheep = Can launch to Hells Canyon Creek-Wild Sheep segment of river
Wild = Can launch to Hells Canyon Creek-Pittsburg Landing segment of river

All Others
Wild = Can launch to Kirkwood-Hells Canyon Creek segment of river (as limited by Area of Operations)
Kirkwood = Can launch to Cache Creek-Kirkwood segment of river (except 88 special)
Scenic = Can launch to Cache Creek-Pittsburg Landing segment of river (Scenic section)

Timing and Duration of Non-Motorized Period

Permitted commercial powerboat access would be restricted to the section of wild river between the top of Wild Sheep Rapid and the upper landing at Kirkwood Historic Ranch, Monday through Wednesday each week, for a maximum of 24 days during the primary season between the Fourth of July and Labor Day weekends to provide an opportunity for non-motorized recreational experiences.

Launch Schedule

Each powerboat outfitter would be authorized to operate on a specific daily launch schedule during the primary season (112 days from May 22 through September 10). See Appendix B Outfitter and Guide Operating Guidelines for details.

Powerboat Length

New commercial powerboats would be limited to 39.6 feet in overall length. Commercial outfitters would be allowed to operate existing boats that exceed this length only until those boats are replaced.

Launching of Inflatables

The launching of inflatable watercraft from commercial powerboats on all river sections would be prohibited year-round.

Refer to Appendix B for more complete operating guidelines for outfitters and guides.

Management Direction Specific To Commercial Floatboat Use

Launch Point Locations

All commercial float trips would only be permitted to originate from Hells Canyon Creek during the primary season to reduce congestion at other launch ramps and encounters in the scenic river. There would be no limitations in the secondary season.

Allocation of Use - Temporary Use Permits Sub-element

The two one-day float permits authorizing temporary use only from Hells Canyon Creek to Pittsburg Landing, would not be reissued. This would be for the purpose of achieving the ROS settings for the wild river by decreasing the congestion at launch sites, decreasing the number of encounters between float parties, decreasing the number of motorized encounters during jetbacks of the one-day float parties, and decreasing congestion at rapids and other popular sites.

Refer to Appendix B for more complete operating guidelines for outfitters and guides.

See Figure II-2 for a map of Alternative B.

ALTERNATIVE C - PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

This alternative was developed in response to issues and concerns raised during the scoping period. This alternative was designed with the objective of providing business flexibility within the overall goal of meeting the underlying needs identified in Chapter I. The alternative provides business flexibility to respond to commercial powerboat walk-in traffic (i.e. customers not making trip plans in advance) by allocating boat days on a per time period basis rather than a rigid launch calendar. The alternative minimizes economic effects of operational limits while protecting ORVs, providing for a wide range of visitor recreation experiences and meeting the intended recreation experience.

Management Direction Specific To Commercial Powerboat Use

Area of Operations

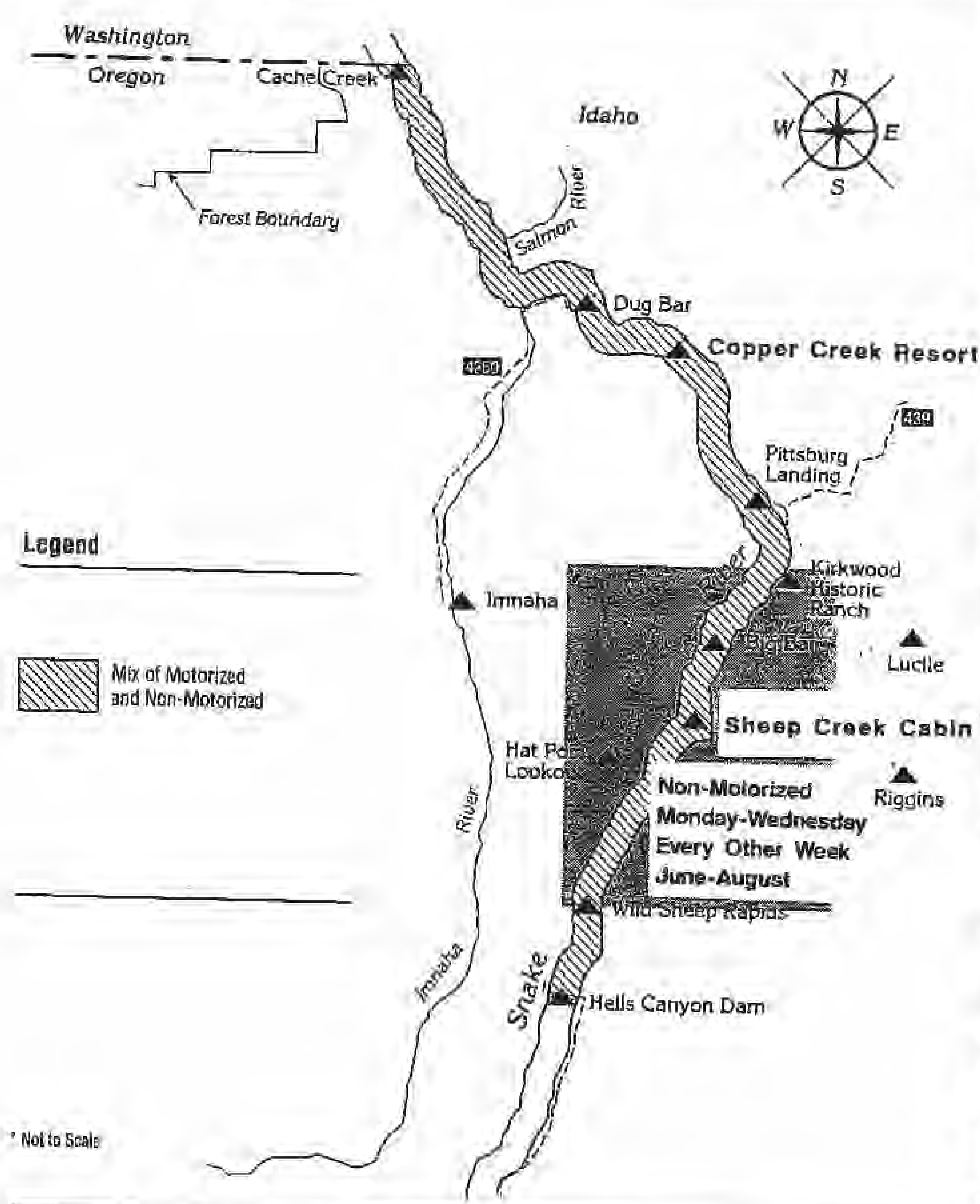
Commercial operations for each powerboat outfitter permit in their primary area of operations would be authorized as under Alternative B in order to address social encounters with other competing river uses. However, the area of operations would only be applied during the primary season. During the secondary season, there would be no limit on area of operations.

Allocation of Use

Each powerboat outfitter would be authorized to operate during the primary season (112 days from May 22 through September 10) based upon the following boat day allocations.

Figure II-3

Alternative C---Primary Season



Commercial Powerboat Monthly Allocation

	May		June		July		August		September		Total		Tot
Outfitter	Wild	Kirkwood	Wild	Kirkwood	Wild	Kirkwood	Wild	Kirkwood	Wild	Kirkwood	Wild	Kirkwood	
Heller Bar Exc.	10	10	24	35	24	37	25	37	10	12	93	131	224
ake River Adv.	5	6	15	22	16	23	16	23	6	7	58	81	139
..iver Navigation	4	6	13	19	13	19	14	19	5	6	49	69	118
Idaho Rivers Nav.	4	6	9	14	8	14	9	14	3	5	33	52	85
Snake Dancer Exc.	3	5	9	14	8	15	8	15	3	5	31	54	85
Cougar Country Lodge	3	4	8	16	7	16	7	16	3	5	28	57	85
River Quest Exc.	2	5	7	17	6	16	7	17	3	5	25	60	85
Snake River Outfitter	0	1	0	6	5	10	5	10	2	4	12	31	43
River Adventure Ltd.	1	2	3	7	4	8	4	8	1	2	13	27	40
H.C. Fishing Charter	1	1	3	6	2	6	3	6	1	2	10	21	31
Intermountain Exc.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	5	6	11
Z&S Outfitters	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	3	6
Anderson River Adv.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	3	6
Red Woods Outfitter	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	6	9
S&S Outfitters	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	4	7
High Roller Exc.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	3	6
Three River Outfitter	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2	2	4
Outfitter	Wild Sheep	Wild	Wild Sheep	Wild	Wild Sheep	Wild	Wild Sheep	Wild	Wild Sheep	Wild	Wild Sheep	Wild	
Hells Canyon Adv.	23	9	76	31	76	32	79	32	26	10	283	114	397
													1,381

A minimum of three trips would be required to maintain priority use.

Hells Canyon Adventures:

Wild Sheep = Can launch to Hells Canyon Creek-Wild Sheep segment of river
Wild = Can launch to Hells Canyon Creek-Pittsburg Landing segment of river

All Others

Wild = Can launch to Kirkwood-Hells Canyon Creek segment of river (as limited by Area of Operations
Kirkwood = Can launch to Cache Creek-Kirkwood segment of river

Hells Canyon Adventures would be allocated use commensurate with their actual use during the 1988-92 base period. Hells Canyon Adventures base period use has been recalculated to be 397 boat days. Thus, the commercial powerboat cap is recalculated to be 1,381 boat days.

The seven smallest commercial outfitters (Intermountain Excursions, Z&S Outfitters, Anderson River Adventures, Red Woods Outfitter, S&S Outfitters, High Roller Excursions, and Three river Outfitters) could use their boat day allocation at any time during the primary season.

The 88 special boat days allocated under Alternative B would be reallocated in a different configuration and with a different use pattern. This is in response to comments concerning the marketability of this opportunity as configured under Alternative B.

In Alternative C, the 88 special boat days would be defined to include the Scenic River (from Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing) and the Wild River from Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood. They would be reallocated based on the following goals:

1. Provide public service at a minimum level of an average of five boat days per week throughout the primary season from the Pittsburg Landing portal (Hells Canyon Fishing Charter, Red Woods Outfitter, and River Adventures, Ltd.).

2. Provide public service at a minimum level of an average of five boat days per week per outfitter throughout the primary season from the middle-size Cache Creek portal outfitters (Idaho Rivers

Navigation, Snake Dancer Excursions, Cougar Country Lodge and River Quest Excursions).

3. Provide the level of service commensurate with past operating practices of Snake River Outfitters offering three day fishing trips in July, August, and September.

Holders of the Copper Creek and Sheep Creek facility permits would be allowed 16 and 4 cargo trips per primary season, respectively. These trips would be for the sole purpose of supplying the facilities only and could not be used for carrying passengers. The trips would not count against the outfitter cap. The trips would be tied to the facilities and would transfer to the new permittee should the permit change hands. Supply trips could only take place on weekdays (Monday through Thursday) for the purpose of reducing on-river congestion and encounters on weekends.

Up to a maximum of 25 of the Sheep Creek Granger-Thye permit holder's Kirkwood-only boat days would be converted to Wild river launches above Kirkwood and apportioned evenly throughout the primary season for the period that the permittee holds the permit in order to assure continued benefits of historic site protection. If the permittee drops or loses the permit, those boat days would revert back to Kirkwood-only status. If a permittee that successfully bids on the permit is allocated less than 25 Kirkwood-only boat days, then only the amount the permittee is allocated could be temporarily converted to Wild river boat days above Kirkwood and only for the time period that the permittee holds the Sheep Creek Granger-Thye permit.

Timing and Duration of Non-Motorized Period

No commercial powerboat access would be permitted to the section of wild river between the top of Wild Sheep Rapids and the upper landing at Kirkwood Historic Ranch, Monday through Wednesday every other week starting the first Monday of June through the end of August. When the Fourth of July coincides with a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday of a scheduled non-motorized period, that period would be skipped. The every-other-week schedule would recommence the week following the Fourth of July. This schedule results in six three-day non-motorized periods in six of the next ten years and seven three-day non-motorized periods in four of the next ten years (1997 through 2006). This would provide an opportunity for a non-motorized recreational experience spread across the primary season.

Launch Schedule

Each powerboat outfitter would be authorized to operate on a launch schedule during the primary season (112 days from May 22 through September 10) based upon a flexible monthly or seasonal boat day allocation. See Allocation of Use above for a schedule of the monthly and seasonal use by outfitter.

Trip Duration

Overnight use would be authorized as shown under Management Elements Common to Alternatives B and C. However, commercial overnight use of the Hells Canyon Creek-Wild Sheep and Kirkwood-Pittsburg Landing segments would be prohibited in order to offset the higher commercial powerboat numbers permitted in these segments of the wild river (as compared to Alternative B).

Powerboat Length

New commercial powerboats would be limited to 42 feet in overall length (to prevent the negative visual appearance of double-decked, large boats and potential boat wake effect on other recreationists from large boats. Commercial outfitters could continue to operate existing boats that exceed this length only until those boats are replaced.

Launching of Inflatables

Launching of inflatable watercraft and transportation of people and equipment with a valid commercial float launch permit would be allowed from commercial powerboats. Using a powerboat to launch permitted inflatable watercraft trips would count against the boat day allocation of the commercial powerboat permit.

Refer to Appendix C for more complete operating guidelines for outfitters and guides.

Management Direction Specific To Commercial Floatboat Use

Launch Point Locations

All commercial float trips could only originate upstream from Pittsburg Landing during the primary season to reduce encounters in the scenic river. There would be no restrictions on launch point locations in the secondary season.

Allocation of Use - Temporary Float Permits Sub-element

Two one-day float permits would be authorized with temporary use only from Hells Canyon Creek to Pittsburg Landing under the following conditions:

1. Temporary use float launches must be within, not in addition to, the 5 launches per day launch schedule.

2. Holders of the temporary permits would only have access to cancelled or unused dates in the float launch calendar.

3. Up to 50% of historic base period use launch dates (15 and 4 for Hells Canyon Adventures and Snake River Adventures, respectively) could be confirmed after the March 16 confirmation period after all other commercial and private users. Any additional launches could be obtained 30 days prior to launch after all waiting lists are exhausted. Any open launches would be assigned by calendar.

4. Assignment of launch dates would be third priority behind private users and other commercial users.

5. Dates could be traded with other float outfitters.

6. This service to the public could be maintained as long as there is unused capacity in the launch schedule. The highest rate of filling launch dates in the recent past (1988-94) occurred in 1992 when 80% of the total allocated launches were used. Approximately 20% of the launch dates went unused. If and when private and other commercial float demand meets or exceeds the seasonal launch supply, the permits would not be reissued.

7. Permits for temporary use would only be issued to the existing permit holders and would not be issued to a new owner if a temporary use business was sold.

8. No one-day float launches would be allowed on a non-motorized day (for the purpose of reducing social encounters between parties traveling at different rates of speed). Only one one-day float may be launched per day.

9. A maximum of two floatboats per launch would be allowed.

10. Temporary float authorization would be limited to the primary season only.

Refer to Appendix C for more complete operating guidelines for outfitters and guides.

Table II-1 – Summary of Alternative Management Requirements

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT USE			
Wild (Dam to Kirkwood)	P&S - Unlimited use	P- Avg. 7 launches/day (5.0/day in Kirkwood to Wild Sheep) except no motorized use M-W, Wild Sheep to Kirkwood in July and August. S - Unlimited use	P-Avg. 7 launches/day (5.5/day in Kirkwood to Wild Sheep) except no motorized use M-W, Wild Sheep to Kirkwood every other week June through August. S - Unlimited use
Wild (Kirkwood to Pittsburg Landing)	P&S - Unlimited use	P - Avg. 6 launches/day S - Unlimited use	P - Avg. 9 launches/day S - Unlimited use
Scenic	P&S - Unlimited use	P-8 launches/day. No overnight except at Copper Creek. S - Unlimited use	P - Included in above allocation S - Unlimited use
COMMERCIAL FLOATCRAFT USE			
Wild (Dam to Kirkwood)	P-2 launches/day, 1 one-day trip M-F. S - Unlimited use (except one-day permits)	P-2 launches/day, one-day trips could be included in multi-day allocations. S - Unlimited use	P - Same as Alt. B S - Unlimited use (except one-day permits)
Wild (Kirkwood to Pittsburg Landing)	P- Included in above allocation. S - Unlimited use	P-Included in above allocation. S - Unlimited use	P - Included in above allocation S - Unlimited use
Scenic	P&S - Unlimited use	P&S - Unlimited use	P&S - Unlimited use

P = Primary Use Season
S = Secondary Use Season

Table II-1 -- Summary of Alternative Management Requirements
Commercial Powerboat Operational Limits

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Launch Point Locations	Outfitters operating upstream from Pittsburg Landing can't launch at Hells Canyon Creek, otherwise unlimited	Limited to primary historical entry (year-round)	Same as B
Area of Operations	No limit (except temporary permit limited to Scenic)	Limited to historical areas, (year-round)	Same as B, except only in primary season
Min/Max Number of Permits	Hells Canyon Creek - 1, Pittsburg Landing - 3, Cache Creek - 15	Hells Canyon Creek 2-2 (1), Pittsburg Landing 3-4 (3), Cache Creek 6-14 (15)	Same as B
Primary Season Launch Allocation	None. Base period average use = 1,283 boat days. No limit, wild or scenic	1208 boat days limited cap (see Alt. B table) Wild & Scenic	1381 boat days (see Alt. C table) Wild & Kirkwood
Timing and Duration of Non-Motorized Window	None	24 days, 3 day (M,T,W) blocks from 7/4 to 9/1 from Kirkwood to Wild Sheep, no powerboats (8 weeks)	3 day blocks (M,T,W), start 1st Monday of June every other week except 4th of July if on M,T,W, go to next week to end of August. No powerboats from Kirkwood to Wild Sheep
Launch Schedule	None	Rigid launch calendar - first Friday before Memorial Day in May through September 10 (primary)	Flexible number of boat days per month - first Friday before Memorial Day in May through September 10 (primary)
Temporary Use Permit	One Permit	Permit not reauthorized	Same as B
Supply Trips	As needed	Within allocation	Copper Creek - 16, Sheep Creek - 4 (primary season)
Party Size	Day use limited by Coast Guard capacity regulations - 30 overnight	24 overnight. Coast Guard limit on day use based on boat capacity	Same as B
Trip Duration	Day use or overnight	11 powerboat outfitters limited to day use only, 7 powerboat outfitters allowed overnight use	Same as B
Jetboat Length	As required by Coast Guard	39.8 ft, as replaced	42 ft., as replaced
Launching of Inflatables	Allowed	Not allowed (Year-round)	Allowed only with valid float permit (year-round)
Sheep Creek Site	No limit to access	Within cap allocated	Convert maximum of 25 boat days to wild to permit holder to access site in primary season only for duration of permit at the site

Table II-1 -- Summary of Alternative Management Requirements
Float Outfitters Operational Limits

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Launch Point Locations	Hells Canyon Creek, Pittsburg Landing, Dug Bar (primary & secondary)	Hells Canyon Creek only (primary), no restriction in secondary	Above Pittsburg Landing (primary), no restriction in secondary
Max/Min Number Permits	16 (two temporary included)	10 - 14 (no temps)	10 - 16 (with two temps)
Float Allocation	2 Launches/day during primary for multi-day trips in wild section	Same, can use multi-launch for one day float	Same as B
Temporary Permits	2 temporary 1-day float permits with max of 1 launch per day (Mon - Fri only), primary only, no pool launches	Eliminate temporary float permits	Maintain temporary float permits within 2 commercial launches per day from cancelled or unused dates with max of 1 per day on motorized days
Pool Dates	14 commercial	6 commercial, 8 private	Same as B
Party Size	30 (primary season); permit limits in secondary	24 (year-round)	Same as B
Number of Float Craft	30	8 (Year-round)	Same as B
Use of Kickers	Allowed	None in wild (year-round), scenic okay (year-round)	Same as B
Lower Salmon River	Party size limit of 30 Float craft limit of 30	Parties >24 must camp within one mile of Salmon confluence (year-round). Groups entering Snake must be ≤ 8 maximum boats (year-round)	Same as B Same as B

COMPARISON OF THE ALTERNATIVES

This section of Chapter II contains a narrative and graphic comparison of the alternatives. Tabular and written comparisons of the social and economic effects of implementing each alternative are presented.

ISSUE: Commercial boating use levels and operational limitations within the established allocation should meet the primitive or semi-primitive recreational settings with attributes that accommodate motorized and non-motorized use and provide a suitable mixture of outfitter provided services to the public.

Key Indicators:

Using the ROS classes, evaluate each alternative's ability to protect and enhance the recreation Outstandingly Remarkable Value (ORV) and Desired Future Conditions (DFC's) through the following settings:

- Capability of visitors to achieve the desired recreational experience: sense of remoteness, level of social encounters

- Capability to provide an appropriate level of visitor management
- Campsite competition
- Capability to provide a diversity of necessary outfitter services to the public

SUMMARY: Table II-2 -- Capability to Achieve Desired Recreation Experience

Alternative	A		B		C	
Analysis Category	**Wild**	**Scenic**	**Wild**	**Scenic**	**Wild**	**Scenic**
Desired Recreation Experience	L	L	H	M	H	M
Visitor Management	L	L	H	H	H	H
Campsite Competition	H	*	H	*	H	*
Diversity of Outfitter Services	M	L	M	M	H	H

H = High potential for achieving objective as discussed in Chapter III

M = Moderate potential for achieving objective as discussed in Chapter III

L = Low potential for achieving objective as discussed in Chapter III

* Acceptable for Alternatives B and C. Unacceptable for Alternative A.

Alternative A has a low potential to provide the desired recreation experience because encounters between users would continue to increase and the opportunity for a non-motorized experience would only occur on a sporadic basis dependent on daily powerboat use patterns that would be expected to fluctuate. Alternatives B and C have a high potential to achieve the desired recreation experience in the wild section based on providing a variety of experiences, both motorized and non-motorized.

Alternative A has a low potential to achieve the objective for visitor management with unregulated to high motorized use. Alternatives B and C have a high potential to meet the visitor management objectives in both the wild and scenic river through controlling and dispersing use.

Alternative A would have a high potential to achieve the campsite competition objective in the wild river but only if a campsite reservation system were implemented. Alternatives B and C have high potential in the wild river to achieve the objective for reduced campsite competition based on moderate use levels.

Alternative A has a low potential in the scenic river and a moderate potential in the wild river to achieve the objective of providing a diversity of outfitted services to the public. Alternative B has a moderate potential for providing a diversity of outfitted services to the public. Alternative C has a high potential for providing a diversity of outfitted services to the public.

ISSUE: Regulation of commercial boating use could affect the economic condition of current river-based special use permittees.

Economic effects to each outfitter were evaluated with the following key indicators.

Key Indicators:

- Change In Boat Days/Float Launches by Outfitter
- Change in Total Gross Revenue by Outfitter
- Scheduling Flexibility

Alternative A provides the greatest opportunity for growth for commercial outfitters because there are no restrictions on boat day use, and no additional restrictions on float use. Alternative B allocates 75 less boat days (industry wide) than was used on average during the Base Period (1988-92). Alternative C allocates 98 more boat days than was used on average during the Base Period. Alternative B eliminates the two temporary one-day float permits. Alternative C retains this service to the public. Alternative C potentially reduces gross revenue by 5% for the outfitter industry (power and float) compared to 11% and 8% decrease for power and float, respectively, under Alternative B.

Flexibility to schedule trips any day of the week is highest in Alternative A due to no new restrictions on use. Alternative C offers greater flexibility than Alternative B primarily due to allocating boat days on a monthly or season-long basis and spreading the non-motorized period from June to the end of August compared to a daily launch schedule under Alternative B with the non-motorized period concentrated in July and August. The launch schedule of Alternative C provides more flexibility to float outfitters than they are afforded under Alternative B for using jetback and jetout services .

Table II-3
Comparison of Alternatives
Allocation of Primary Season Boatdays Use

Outfitters	Alternative A (Base Period Average - Actual Use)					Alternative B Allocation					Alternative C Allocation					93-94 Actual Use Average
	Total	Wild Sheep	Wild	Kirk-wood	Scenic	Total	Wild Sheep	Wild	Kirk-wood	Scenic	Total	Wild Sheep	Wild	Kirk-wood	Scenic	Total
Hells Canyon Adventures	387	136	251	-	-	224	136	88	-	-	397	283	114	-	-	405
Heller Bar Excursions	228	-	125	1	102	222	-	87	24	111	224	-	93	131	-	224
Snake River Adventures	131	-	128	-	3	139	-	52	18	69	139	-	58	81	-	126
Rivers Navigation	111	-	100	2	9	120	-	46	14	60	118	-	49	69	-	33
Idaho River Navigation	62	-	50	-	12	78	-	33	6	39	85	-	33	52	-	137
Snake Dancer Excursions	75	-	71	1	3	73	-	31	6	38	85	-	31	54	-	87
Cougar Country Lodge	64	-	57	-	7	65	-	24	9	32	85	-	28	57	-	52
River Quest Excursions	50	-	46	4	-	58	-	20	9	29	85	-	25	60	-	42
Mainstream Outdoor Adventures	52	-	-	-	52	0	-	-	-	0	0	-	-	-	0	16
Snake River Outfitters	37	-	34	2	1	39	-	16	3	20	43	-	12	31	-	40
River Adventures, Ltd	30	-	16	9	5	61[1]	-	14	32[1]	15	40	-	13	27	-	43
Hells Canyon Fishing Charters	20	-	9	1	10	53[2]	-	8	33[2]	12	31	-	10	21	-	43
Intermountain Excursions	8	-	5	-	3	11	-	4	1	6	11	-	5	6	-	8
Z & S Outfitters, Inc.	4	-	3	-	1	6	-	3	-	3	6	-	3	3	-	25
Anderson River Adventures	4	-	4	-	-	6	-	3	-	3	6	-	3	3	-	2
Red Woods Outfitter	7	-	6	-	1	36[2]	-	3	29[2]	4	9	-	3	6	-	19
S & S Outfitters	6	-	2	-	4	7	-	3	-	4	7	-	3	4	-	8
High Roller Excursions	5	-	4	-	1	6	-	3	-	3	6	-	3	3	-	2
Three Rivers Outfitters	2	-	1	-	1	4	-	2	-	2	4	-	2	2	-	12
TOTAL	1,283	136	912	20	215	1,208	136	440	184	448	1,381	283	488	610		1324

1 - Includes 30 boat days that can only launch between Pittsburg and Kirkwood.
2 - Includes 29 boat days that can only launch between Pittsburg and Kirkwood.
Wild Sheep - can only launch in Hells Canyon Dam - Wild Sheep segment of wild river.
Wild - can only launch in wild segment of river (subject to Area of Operations).
Kirkwood - can only launch in scenic and Pittsburg - Kirkwood segments of river.
Scenic - can only launch in scenic segment of river.

Table II-4
Summary of Economic Effects
Changes to Boat Days/Launches, Gross Revenue, and Scheduling Flexibility

Outfitter	Alternative A			Alternative B			Alternative C		
Commercial Powerboat	Average Boat Days/ Launches	Average Gross Revenues	Scheduling Flexibility	Change in Boat Days/ Launches	Change in Gross Revenues	Scheduling Flexibility	Change in Boat Days/ Launches	Change in Gross Revenues	Scheduling Flexibility
Armacost	387	$144,961	H	-163	-35%	L	10	-12%	M
Koch HBE	228	$434,595	H	-6	-1%	L	-4	-2%	M
Koch IRN	62	$159,787	H	16	-10%	L	23	-7%	M
Koch RN	111	$224,482	H	9	-15%	L	7	-12%	M
Luther	131	$172,961	H	8	-7%	L	8	0%	M
Alboueq	75	$76,879	H	-2	-16%	L	10	-1%	M
Odegaard	50	$31,819	H	8	-4%	L	35	37%	M
Riddle	87	$66,817	H	2	-5%	L	6	6%	M
Taylor	64	$166,983	H	1	5%	L	21	9%	M
Anderson	4	$10,104	H	2	5%	L	2	7%	M
Bentz	8	$9,700	H	3	15%	L	3	16%	M
Bream	6	$4,034	H	1	7%	L	1	7%	M
Eddins	5	$7,121	H	1	1%	L	1	3%	M
Lamm	52	$67,382	H	-52	-100%	NA	-52	-100%	NA
Maxwell	2	$42,341	H	2	6%	L	2	6%	M
Zapfle	4	$41,868	H	2	4%	L	2	4%	M
Cook	20	$25,202	H	4	7%	L	11	17%	M
Whitten	30	$28,436	H	1	5%	L	10	19%	M
Woods	7	$6,464	H	-	-13%	L	2	-11%	M
Totals:	1,283	$1,721,955	H	-75	-11%	L	98	-5%	M
Commercial Float									
Wendt	11	$91,574	H	-	-8%	L	-	-8%	M
Davis	8	$23,309	H	-	-1%	L	-	-1%	M
Grubb	11	$81,822	H	-	-2%	L	-	-2%	M
Hauptman	17	$125,489	H	-	-5%	L	-	-5%	M
Howard	11	$66,888	H	-	-6%	L	-	-6%	M
Hughes	17	$166,283	H	-	-7%	L	-	-7%	M
Koch B&F	16	$27,211	H	-	-	L	-	-	M
Peavey	12	$49,934	M	-	-5%	L	-	-5%	M
Peer	5	$21,433	H	-	-	L	-	-	M
Porfily	6	$18,690	M	-	-20%	L	-	-20%	M
Randle	32	$57,502	H	-	-3%	L	-	-3%	M
Steele	10	$32,059	H	-	-	L	-	-	M
Steen	9	$31,371	H	-	-4%	L	-	-4%	M
Stewart	14	$69,854	H	-	-1%	L	-	-1%	M
Armacost	30	$27,244	H	-30	-100%	NA	-	-	M
Luther	8	$4,072	H	-8	-100%	NA	-	-	M
Totals:	217	$884,634	H	-38	-8%	L	-	-5%	M

(1) Alternatives B and C are compared to Alternative A (Base Period) to determine changes in boat days or float launches, gross revenue, and scheduling flexibility
(2) Scheduling Flexibility: H= High; M - Medium; L = Low

CHAPTER III

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

INTRODUCTION

Environmental consequences are the estimated physical, biological, social, and economic effects that would result from implementing each of the alternatives described in Chapter II. This chapter describes the scientific and analytic basis for the comparison of alternatives. The effects of the components of the environment that result from the implementation of alternatives are discussed in terms of their direct and indirect effects as well as the cumulative effect(s) that could potentially occur in the reasonably foreseeable future through the remainder of the planning decade.

Direct And Indirect Effects

Direct and indirect effects occur from management activities and are the consequences expected to occur from implementation of each alternative. Direct effects are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place as the triggering action. Indirect effects are caused by the action and occur later in time or are farther removed in distance from the triggering action.

Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects are the sum of past actions, the proposed action (direct and indirect effects of each alternative), as well as the effects of activities anticipated in the reasonably foreseeable future.

The analysis and disclosure of cumulative effects is required by the NEPA. It provides informed decisionmakeing and public disclosure. For purposes of this analysis the reasonably foreseeable future is defined as a planning decade through the year 2006.

Effects were analyzed based upon a number of key indicators:

- Capability of visitors to achieve the desired recreational experience: sense of remoteness, level of social encounters

- Capability to provide an appropriate level of visitor management

- Campsite competition

- Capability to provide a diversity of necessary outfitter services to the public

- Change in boat days/launches by outfitter

- Change in total gross revenue by outfitter

- Scheduling flexibility

RECREATION RESOURCES

CAPABILITY OF VISITORS TO ACHIEVE THE DESIRED RECREATION EXPERIENCE: SENSE OF REMOTENESS, SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

WILD SECTION - DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A

In Alternative A, growth in commercial powerboat use would continue on an unlimited basis. While the number of daily commercial float launches would be restricted during the primary season, the average number of people per party and boats per party could continue to grow to current limitations of 30 people and 30 craft, respectively.

The effects of Alternative A are:

Floatcraft

It allows commercial floaters a maximum party size of 30, a maximum number of boats dependent on party size (up to 30) and the use of kickers in the wild river. Currently, private floaters are allowed a maximum party size of 24 and maximum boats per party of 8, with no use of kickers in the wild river.

The average number of float craft per commercial float trip is anticipated to increase towards the maximum of 30 float craft, due to the increasing popularity of inflatable kayaks, catarafts and commercial row-your-own trips. Additionally, the number of floatcraft per commercial float trip will increase due to the maximum party size of 30. The overall effect of the potential for increased numbers of commercial float craft even with limited growth in numbers of passengers on commercial trips would lessen the sense of remoteness. In addition, commercial floaters use of kickers would continue to reduce the opportunity for solitude or isolation from the sights of sounds of others even among float parties at times when no powerboats were present.

The potential increase in numbers of float craft per party and use of kickers would tend to spread individual parties over longer distances while traveling through the river corridor, increasing the level of and length of encounters with other groups. Increased numbers of commercial float craft would cause congestion at rapids, in narrow stretches of the river and at launch/takeout ramps. Set up and take down times would increase with additional craft per party, adding to congestion at launch/take-out ramps and campsites.

The one-day temporary commercial float permits would continue to add a 6th launch with an additional two boats on weekdays throughout the primary season. The one-day commercial float operators generally travel greater distances than overnight commercial float trip operators and have associated jetboat support services. This use increases the level of encounters in the wild river corridor.

Powerboats

Commercial powerboat use would not be limited as to numbers of boat days or party size except as established by the Coast Guard. Currently, private powerboat use in the wild section is limited to 6 launches per day, and a party size for overnight use of 24.

Commercial powerboat use has historically fluctuated on a daily basis, and, with limited launches by private powerboats, would be primarily responsible for creating peaks in river recreational use. The resulting combined use levels (commercial power and commercial float) would diminish the opportunity to experience a sense of remoteness, especially during periods of peak use.

Continued unlimited commercial powerboat use would also increase the number of multiple encounters, especially in association with trips originating at Hells Canyon Creek and day trips to Rush Creek from downstream portals. Congestion at boat ramps at Hells Canyon Creek and Pittsburg Landing would be expected to increase. There would also be congestion at these sites associated with limited vehicle parking space. However, unlimited commercial powerboat use will provide the maximum opportunity to service those members of the public desiring a commercial powerboat experience.

This alternative would have a low potential to provide the desired recreation experience because of unlimited commercial powerboat use, kickers on commercial float craft and the potential for large growth in the number of commercial float craft. Over time, there would be a reduction in the opportunity for visitors to experience solitude or isolation from the sights and sounds of others. The magnitude and duration of encounters would increase, resulting in many contacts with other users at rapids and access points.

ALTERNATIVE B

In Alternative B, the wild river would be managed for mixed motorized and non-motorized use with maximum commercial powerboat launches representative of the 1988-1992 base period to meet the desired recreation experience. This would include an opportunity for a non-motorized experience on a limited basis between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood Historic Ranch during Monday through Wednesday each week in July and August.

The effects of Alternative B are:

Floatcraft

Commercial and private floaters would be limited to a maximum party size of 24 and a maximum number of float craft per party of eight, with no use of kickers in the wild river. These limitations would result in less congestion at rapids, in narrow stretches of the river and at launch/take-out ramps.

Each commercial float outfitter per launch group would have access to 3 launch dates during the non-motorized period (one each on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday). This non-motorized period provides the commercial and private floatboat users a period removed from encounters with motorized users, which represents their desired experience as indicated in the University of Idaho user survey and the scoping for this proposed action. This use occurs on a portion of the wild river for 24 days or 7% of each year. The non-motorized period would enhance the sense of remoteness for floaters and trail users. There would be a greater importance placed on self-reliance by floaters during this time period.

The 6th commercial float launch on weekdays attributed to the two temporary one-day float permits would be eliminated with non-renewal of these permits. This would result in a reduction in encounters associated with jetback support services.

Powerboats

The average amount of use for commercial powerboaters would be comparable to total private powerboat use in the wild river when the average stay lengths per trip for private powerboaters is considered. Private powerboats are limited to six launches per day during the primary season with advance reservations required. Average stay length is three days with no limit on area of operations. Commercial powerboat use would be assigned on a specific daily launch schedule during the primary season in the entire river corridor, with allocations of use based on boat days. This rigid launch schedule would assign a maximum of seven boat days on motorized days and six boat days on non-motorized days. It would also require use of consecutive boat days for overnight trips. Commercial trips would further be limited by area of operations. This would substantially reduce the potential for commercial powerboat use to be the cause of fluctuating levels of total use, thereby reducing the number of peak use days.

Two permits would be available for commercial powerboat service from Hells Canyon Creek at the option of the outfitter, within the amount of powerboat use permitted at this site. This option, if exercised, would create competitive services at the site.

Access to Sheep Creek and Temperance Creek by powerboat is expected to diminish significantly as a result of the end of sheep grazing operations at these two locations. The reduced number of powerboat trips to these locations will decrease encounters with other user groups in this section of the river.

Commercial power day use trips would not be limited by hours of operation, causing a slight reduction in experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of others during early morning and evening hours.

This alternative would have a high potential to achieve the desired recreation experience because both commercial floatcraft and powerboat use is regulated to moderate peak use days. The non-motorized period contributes to achieving a sense of remoteness for both commercial and private floaters. Few contacts would occur with other users at rapids and access points. Most encounters would be of short duration.

ALTERNATIVE C

In Alternative C, the wild river would be managed for mixed motorized and non-motorized use with maximum commercial powerboat launches representative of the 1988-1992 base period to meet the desired recreation experience. This would include an opportunity for a non-motorized experience on a limited basis between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood Historic Ranch during Monday through Wednesday every other week in June, July and August.

The effects of Alternative C are:

Floatboats

Commercial and private floaters would be limited to a maximum party size of 24 and a maximum number of float craft per party of eight, with no use of kickers in the wild river. These limitations would result in less congestion at rapids, in narrow stretches of the river and at launch/take-out ramps.

The non-motorized period would be spread throughout the summer providing floaters a longer season in which to schedule their trip. This non-motorized period is also designed to reduce effects to powerboaters by not concentrating the period in a two month period of the summer. This use occurs on a portion of the wild river for 21 days for four out of the next ten years and 18 day for six out of the next ten years. The non-motorized period would enhance the sense of remoteness for floaters and trail users. There would be a greater importance placed on self-reliance by floaters during this time period. Commercial floaters would have unequal access to the availability of non-motorized launches within the total commercial float allocation as a result of the 8 day turnaround and the every other week schedule for the non-motorized period. The total number of non-motorized launches for each outfitter would vary from year to year. However, the outfitted public would be provided a variety of commercial services during the non-motorized period.

The two temporary commercial one-day float permits would continue to be offered as temporary use permits only. Launches for these trips would be limited to one per day seven days per week except for non-motorized days. Launches for this use would come from under-utilized capacity within the 5 launches per day as long as unallocated capacity was available. Based on recent trends, it is anticipated that underutilized capacity will be available for the life of this plan. This would provide the opportunity for the continuation of businesses specializing in a one-day float experience but without permanently affecting other floaters' ability to obtain float launches. These two permits would allow the use of only two boats per trip and an alternating day launch schedule, resulting in a reduction in the level of encounters associated with total float boat traffic on the river at one time. However, these trips usually travel longer distances per day than overnight trips and often involve jetboat support services. As a result, the encounters associated with these trips produce an overall negligible effect.

Powerboats

The average amount of use for commercial powerboaters would be comparable to total private powerboat use in the wild river when the average stay lengths per trip for private powerboaters is considered. Private powerboats are limited to six launches per day during the primary season with advance reservations required. Average stay length is three days with no limit on area of operations except during non-motorized periods. Commercial powerboat use would be assigned on a flexible launch schedule during the primary season for the entire river corridor, with allocations of use based on boat days. This flexible launch schedule would allow commercial powerboaters the opportunity to schedule trips to accommodate the bulk of their historic passenger base, which is made up of a transient tourist population which often book trips on short notice. Commercial powerboat allocations would be spread over the entire primary season, with specific numbers of boat days limited to use within specific blocks of time. The flexible schedule would allow an average of seven boats per day between Hells Canyon Creek and Kirkwood, but only 5.5 boats per day between Wild Sheep and Kirkwood. Commercial trips would be further limited by area of operations and would require use of consecutive boat days for overnight trips. These limitations on use, in association with the projection of less than 100% utilization, would improve the opportunity for visitors to obtain commercial powerboat services following historic use patterns. It would also manage numbers of boats to reduce the potential for, and magnitude of, peak use days.

This alternative reallocates a portion of commercial powerboat use occurring in the base period to the area between Hells Canyon Creek and the top of Wild Sheep Rapids. This action will reduce the number of encounters between groups in the more remote sections of the wild river between Wild Sheep Rapid and Rush Creek Rapid.

Two permits would be available for commercial powerboat service from Hells Canyon Creek at the option of the outfitter, within the amount of powerboat use permitted at this site. This option, if excercised, would create competitive services at the site.

Commercial powerboaters would also have a higher level of access in this alternative than in Alternative B into the 4.2 miles of wild river corridor upstream from upper Pittsburg Landing in order to allow visitors access to Kirkwood Historic Ranch. The average number of daily powerboat trips in this section of the river would increase from seven boats per day on motorized days under Alternative B to 10 boats per day. Kirkwood Historic Ranch is a major component of the Cultural ORV and a primary visitor destination in the wild river. Allowing additional commercial motorized access will meet visitor expectations to tour this site. This could diminish the sense of remoteness for other users in the wild river between Upper Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood Historic Ranch. However, since the majority of this use would be associated with day trips, this effect would be tempered based on the time of day the trips entered and exited this section of the river corridor, the relatively short time period these boats would be travelling in this stretch of river, and the relatively short distances involved, (4.2 wild river miles, 1.1 scenic river miles). This 4.2 mile section represents 13% of the total length of the wild river.

Private powerboats travelling in the section of river between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood would be included in the total daily allocation of six launches per day in the wild river. Commercial powerboat access between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood would average 10 boats per day with some of those boat days already included in the daily boat day allocation in the wild river upstream from Kirkwood. All commercial launches from scenic river portals could have access to Kirkwood, as well as approximately one boat per day from Hells Canyon Creek (except during non-motorized periods). The average amount of commercial use could be less than 8 boats depending on each day's trip destination (some trips may not be sold into this section of the river).

As a result of expected reductions in powerboat use to Sheep Creek and Temperance Creek associated with the end of grazing operations, four (4) cargo launches would be authorized, except on non-motorized days, and spread througout the primary season, to support the commercial outfitter operation at Sheep Creek. This would reduce powerboat use historically associated with these sites, reducing floatboat and powerboat encounters indirectly enhancing the recreation experience of all visitors by assuring the routine maintenance and upkeep of the historic structures at Sheep Creek, a component of the cultural ORV. A limited number of boat days (4) to support lodge operations at Sheep Creek, spread over the entire primary season, will produce a negligible increase in sights and sounds of others and levels of encounters.

This alternative would have a high potential to meet the desired recreation experience in the wild river corridor from Hells Canyon Creek to Kirkwood Historic Ranch and a moderate potential from Kirkwood Historic Ranch to upper Pittsburg Landing. The non-motorized period contributes to achieving a sense of remoteness for commercial and private floaters.

While the number of encounters may fluctuate slightly day to day due to the flexible launch schedule for commercial powerboats, this fluctuation is expected to meet the objective to minimize the effects of peak use because demand for commercial powerboat trips is a fairly steady daily market throughout the primary season. Peak use will be managed through specific use allocations for all river users. Encounters with other users at rapids and access points will be significantly reduced. Most encounters would be of short duration.

SCENIC SECTION - DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A

In Alternative A, both commercial powerboat and floatboat use would continue without regulation. The average number of floatboat people per party and boats per party could continue to grow to current limitations of 30 people and 30 craft, respectively.

The effects of Alternative A are:

Floatcraft

Alternative A allows commercial floaters a maximum party size of 30, and a maximum number of boats dependent on party size (up to 30). Currently, private floaters are allowed a maximum party size of 24 and maximum boats per party of 8.

The average number of float craft per commercial float trip is anticipated to increase towards the maximum of 30 float craftdue to the increasing popularity of inflatable kayaks, catarafts and commercial row-your-own trips, as well as the ability to increase the average number of passengers per trip up to a maximum party size of 30. This effect would be most noticeable below the mouth of the Salmon due to Lower Salmon commercial floaters.

The overall effect of the potential for increased numbers of commercial float craft below the mouth of the Salmon, even with limited growth in numbers of passengers on commercial trips, would lessen the sense of remoteness. Increased commercial floating could occur from trips launched at Hells Canyon Creek that continue into this section of the scenic river and from additional launches at Pittsburg Landing and Dug Bar. In addition, kickers are allowed in the scenic river and are frequently used by commercial floaters, reducing the opportunity for solitude or isolation from the sights of sounds of others even among float parties at times when no powerboats were present.

Powerboats

Commercial powerboat use would not be limited as to numbers of boat days. Currently, private powerboat use in the scenic section of the river is limited to 23 boats per day on weekends (Friday through Sunday) and 8 boats per day on weekdays (Monday through Thursday) during the primary season.

Commercial powerboat use has historically fluctuated on a daily basis and, coupled with row-your-own commercial float trips from the Lower Salmon, would create substantial peaks in river recreational use. While most commercial powerboat use below the mouth of the Salmon is short term, pass through traffic upstream from Cache Creek, the Lower Salmon commercial float operators spend a substantially longer period of time traversing this section of river, or create additional commercial powerboat traffic by contracting for jetback/jetout services with commercial powerboaters. The resulting combined use levels (commercial power and commercial float) would diminish the opportunity to experience a sense of remoteness, especially during periods of peak use.

This alternative would have a low potential for achieving the desired recreation experience. The use levels associated with this alternative, especially relative to row-your-own Lower Salmon commercial float use, would create a reduction in the opportunity for a moderate expectation of solitude and some expectation of experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of others at a level appropriate for a scenic river setting. The magnitude and duration of encounters would increase, resulting in many contacts with other users at rapids and access points.

ALTERNATIVE B

In Alternative B, commercial powerboat use would be regulated on a limited daily use allocation. No commercial floatboat use could be originated within the scenic section of the river in the primary season. Commercial float use would be limited to a maximum party size of 24 and a maximum number of floatcraft per party of eight.

The effects of Alternative B are:

Floatcraft

Commercial and private floaters would be allowed a maximum party size of 24 and maximum boats per party of eight.

Special conditions of use for Lower Salmon commercial floaters to meet Snake River guidelines would be implemented in 1997.

Powerboats

Commercial powerboat use would be limited to 8 boats per day during the primary season.

The temporary use commercial powerboat permit would not be renewed upon expiration at the end of 1996. This would reduce the total amount of commercial powerboat use that took place in the scenic river during the base period of 1988-1992, improving the quality of the recreation experience by reducing the number of encounters.

Due to the higher levels of private powerboat use allowed on weekends as compared to weekdays, there would be more opportunities for encounters between parties on the weekends.

This alternative would have a moderate potential of achieving the desired recreation experience due to the increased levels of powerboat use on weekends during the primary season. There would be a higher expectation of solitude and some expectation of experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of others on weekdays, and a lower expectation on weekends, but still at a level appropriate to a scenic river setting. There would be some contacts with other users at rapids and access points. The number and duration of contacts would vary from short to moderate duration, but at a level acceptable for a scenic river.

ALTERNATIVE C

In Alternative C, commercial powerboat use would be regulated on a flexible schedule. No commercial floatboat use could be originated within the scenic section of the river in the primary season. Commercial float use would be limited to a maximum party size of 24 and a maximum number of floatcraft per party of eight.

The effects of Alternative C are:

Floatcraft

Commercial and private floaters would be allowed a maximum party size of 24 and maximum boats per party of eight.

Special conditions of use for Lower Salmon commercial floaters to meet Snake River guidelines would be implemented in 1997.

Powerboats

Commercial powerboat use would be assigned on a flexible launch schedule during the primary season for the entire river corridor, with allocations of use based on boat days. This flexible launch schedule would allow commercial powerboaters the opportunity to schedule trips to accommodate the bulk of their historic passenger base, which is made up of a transient tourist population which often books trips on short notice. Commercial powerboat allocations would be spread over the entire primary season, with specific numbers of boat days limited to use within specific blocks of time. These limitations on use, in association with the projection of less than 100% utilization, would improve the opportunity for visitors to obtain commercial powerboat services following historic use patterns. It would also manage numbers of boats to reduce the potential for, and magnitude of, peak use days.

Commercial powerboat use would average 8.8 boats per day between the north boundary of the HCNRA and Pittsburg Landing (38.9 miles), and 9.8 boats per day between Pittsburg Landing and upper Pittsburg Landing (1.4 miles). The increase from 8 boats per day under Alternative B to 8.8 boats per day in Alternative C is a result of increasing the area of operations for the 88 Special boat days to include the entire scenic section of the river. As a result of the flexible launch schedule, there would be some daily variation in this average level, but within levels that would not significantly effect the sense of remoteness for other users in a scenic river setting.

The temporary use commercial powerboat permit would not be renewed upon expiration at the end of 1996. The reduction in use levels and associated encounters attributed to this business that occurred during the base period would partially offset the effect of increasing the area of operations for the 88 "Special" boat days.

A limited number of boat days (16) to support lodge operations at Copper Creek, spread throughout the primary season (the equivalent of one per week), would produce a negligible effect on the recreation experience of other users and would be limited to traveling on Monday through Thursday only. The area of the scenic river upstream from Copper Creek would not be affected.

A limited number of boat days (4) to support lodge operations at Sheep Creek in the wild river that would travel through the scenic river (the equivalent of one per month during the primary season) would have a negligible effect on the recreation experience of other users.

The average amount of use for commercial powerboaters, even with a flexible launch schedule, is substantially lower than total private powerboat use in the scenic river on weekdays and weekends. While the number of encounters may fluctuate slightly day to day due to the flexible launch schedule for commercial powerboats, this fluctuation is expected to meet the objectives to minimize the effects of peak use because demand for commercial powerboat trips is a fairly steady daily market throughout the primary season. Peak use will be managed through specific use allocations for all river users.

This alternative would have a moderate potential of achieving the desired recreation experience due to the increased levels of powerboat use on weekends during the primary season. There would be a higher expectation of solitude and some expectation of experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of others on weekdays, and a lower expectation on weekends, but still at a level appropriate to a scenic river setting. There would be some contacts with other users at rapids and access points. The number and duration of contacts would vary from short to moderate duration, but at a level acceptable for a scenic river.

PROVIDING FOR THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF VISITOR MANAGEMENT

WILD RIVER - DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A

In Alternative A, commercial powerboat use would be unlimited and commercial float use would be limited but able to grow toward maximum numbers of launches and party size.

Unlimited commercial powerboat use and the ability for commercial float use to grow within the daily launch allocation while increasing the number of boats per party, including the 6th launch on weekdays for commercial one-day float trips, will continue to increase river traffic, create resource impacts at campsites, create conflict over campsites and impact the opportunity to experience a high degree of challenge and risk for private users. Regimentation of visitors or scheduling of stops at specific sites such as Kirkwood may be necessary due to lack of shoreline access brought about by increased commercial use.

This alternative would have a low potential to meet visitor management objectives. It minimizes the outdoor setting for self-reliance through application of outdoor skills, a perception of a high degree of challenge and risk, or subtle visitor management controls or regulations.

ALTERNATIVE B

In Alternative B, the river would be managed for a variety of experiences for commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized use including a limited opportunity for a non-motorized experience between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood.

The regulation and scheduling of commercial powerboat and floatboat use will make commercial use predictable; thereby, lessening the competition for campsites and reducing on-river visitor conflicts. These effects are anticipated as a result of requiring a rigid launch schedule for both powerboat and floatboat commercial users, limiting the commercial float party size and number of floatcraft per party, eliminating the one-day temporary float permits (and need for jetbacks). Management personnel and law enforcement are less necessary in this alternative in comparison to Alternative A because of the reduced visitor conflicts associated with lessening congestion at campsites, at rapids, launch and take-out ramps, and other popular sites. This alternative will also result in less need for regimentation of visitors and on-site controls because overall use and peak use is managed to reduce user conflicts.

This alternative would have a high potential to meet visitor management objectives. It would provide the appropriate experience setting that would require a great deal of self-reliance through application of outdoor skills for commercial floaters and powerboaters in a shared use setting.

ALTERNATIVE C

In Alternative C, the river would be managed for a variety of experiences for commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized use including a limited opportunity for a non-motorized experience between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood.

Alternative C has similar effects to Alternative B. It, however, manages commercial powerboat use with a flexible launch schedule. This approach will not result in as predictable of a pattern of commercial use as under Alternative B; however, demand for commercial powerboat trips is a fairly steady daily market throughout the primary season. Alternative C also differs from Alternative B in that the one-day temporary commercial float trips remain and there is a higher level of commercial powerboat use allocated between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood Historic Ranch and between Hells Canyon Creek and Wild Sheep Rapid. The retention of the temporary commercial float trips and the higher level of commercial use between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood Historic Ranch would slightly increase the number of powerboat/floatboat encounters with the associated potential for user conflicts. Conversely, reallocating commercial powerboat use to a higher level between Hells Canyon Creek and Wild Sheep Rapids will reduce the number of jetboat/floatboat encounters and provide a higher level of challenge and risk in the more remote sections of the wild river between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood on motorized days.

This alternative would have a high potential to meet visitor management objectives. For the majority of the wild river, it would provide the appropriate experience setting that would require a great deal of self-reliance through application of outdoor skills for commercial floaters and powerboaters in a shared use setting.

SCENIC RIVER - DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A

Under this alternative, unlimited commercial powerboat use would be allowed to increase above existing use levels. Increased commercial floating could occur as a result of a higher number of Hells Canyon Creek launches continuing into this section of the river, and from unlimited launches at Pittsburg, Dug Bar and the lower Salmon River. Commercial float use would be limited to maximum numbers of boats per party and party size.

The opportunity to experience a moderate degree of challenge and risk associated with a scenic river trip would be diminished in the absence of adequate management of commercial uses. Unlimited commercial powerboat and commercial float use will continue to increase river traffic, create resource impacts at campsites, create conflict over campsites and impact the opportunity to experience a high degree of challenge and risk for private users.

This alternative would have a low potential to meet visitor management objectives. Increasing levels of commercial use and increases in the number of days of peak use would not provide the appropriate experience setting. As a result, there would be less dependence on self-reliance through application of outdoor skills and a reduced perception of a moderate degree of challenge and risk. Visitor management controls or regulations would increase.

ALTERNATIVE B

In this alternative, commercial use levels would be established that would protect the ORV's within the river corridor including the experience of the visitor.

The regulation and scheduling of commercial powerboat and floatboat use will make commercial use predictable; thereby, lessening the competition for campsites and reducing on-river visitor conflicts. These effects are anticipated as a result of requiring a rigid launch schedule for both powerboat and floatboat commercial users, limiting the commercial float party size and number of floatcraft per party, eliminating the one-day temporary float permits (and need for jetbacks), and eliminating the temporary power permit. Management personnel and law enforcement are less necessary in this alternative in comparison to Alternative A because of the reduced visitor conflicts associated with lessening congestion at campsites, at rapids, launch and take-out ramps, and other popular sites. This alternative will also result in less need for regimentation of visitors and on-site controls because overall use and peak use is managed to reduce user conflicts.

This alternative would have a high potential to meet visitor management objectives. The alternative would provide the appropriate experience setting that would require self-reliance through application of outdoor skills in an environment that offered a moderate degree of challenge and risk.

ALTERNATIVE C

In this alternative, commercial use levels would be established that would protect the ORV's within the river corridor including the experience of the visitor.

Alternative C has similar effects to Alternative B. It, however, manages commercial powerboat use with a flexible launch schedule. This approach will not result in as predictable of a pattern of commercial use as under Alternative B; however, demand for commercial powerboat trips is a fairly steady daily market throughout the primary season. Alternative C also differs from Alternative B in that there is a limited number of boat days provided to support lodge operations at Copper Creek (16) and Sheep Creek (4). However, the potential for additional powerboat and floatboat encounters and possible visitor conflict is negligible.

This alternative would have a high potential to meet visitor management objectives. The alternative would provide the appropriate experience setting that would require self-reliance through application of outdoor skills in an environment that offered a moderate degree of challenge and risk.

REDUCING CAMPSITE COMPETITION

Several assumptions were made in this analysis as follows:

- Campsite competition would be at an acceptable level in the scenic river for alternatives that provided for specific limits on the number of users during the primary season (Alternatives B and C). Alternative A would result in level of competition for campsites that would not meet recreation objectives without instituting a campsite reservation system.

- Campsite competition and associated campsite stay lengths would be at an acceptable level in the secondary season throughout the entire wild and scenic river corridor.

- Campsite competition in regard to drop camps would be controlled as a component of commercial powerboat access limitations for all alternatives that had specific limits on powerboat use.

- Campsite competition between river users and trail users would be minimal due to the different seasons of use as a result of extremes in temperature in the canyon during the summer months that discourage trail use during the time periods of highest demand for river use.

- A campsite reservation system would not fully resolve all issues concerning campsite competition because a reservation system diminishes the self-reliance component of a semi-primitive or primitive experience. Individuals that are not familiar with the river may float past their assigned campsite. Inclement weather may force people to stay in a campsite longer than it is reserved for them. All of these situations can lead to conflict over campsites between users.

- The recreation experience of river users could be enhanced by reducing campsite competition.

For the purposes of this analysis, campsite competition is measured subjectively in terms of high, moderate, or low potential for each alternative to reduce competition for campsites as a means of enhancing the camping experience associated with travel in the Wild River corridor in the primary season.

WILD SECTION - DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A

In Alternative A, the wild section would continue to be managed for unlimited commercial powerboat use and limited commercial float use. Campsites would continue to be available on a first-come, first-served basis, but there would be a management option to implement campsite reservations if mitigation measures failed to resolve high levels of competition.

Previously established controls, including limits on private powerboat use, requirements for a limit of 5 launches per day in the entire wild river corridor for all float trips, and changes in campsite stay limits in the primary season would significantly reduce the overall competition for campsites. However, continued unlimited commercial powerboat use, with an increase in overnight trips by commercial powerboaters, could create increased levels of competition for campsites. Implementation of the campsite reservation system would occur at a faster rate if mitigation measures did not resolve the competition problems.

The ability to have larger party sizes on commercial float trips would require competing for larger campsites. The use of kickers by commercial floaters would continue to provide an advantage over private floaters (who cannot use kickers in the wild river) in securing campsites.

Drop camps are allowed in the primary season if transported by commercial outfitters, subject to campsite stay lengths. This would provide an additional user group that would be competing for campsites.

This alternative would have a high potential to reduce campsite competition but the implementation of campsite reservations would occur sooner than with other alternatives due to unlimited commercial powerboat use and the associated potential for an increase in overnight trips by commercial powerboaters.

ALTERNATIVE B

In Alternative B, commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized use would be managed in a mixed use setting for a variety of recreation experiences. There would be a limited opportunity for a non-motorized experience on Monday through Wednesday from the second Monday of July through the Wednesday prior to Labor Day between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood.

This alternative would have a high potential to reduce campsite competition. It would initially continue a first-come, first-served system for obtaining campsites. Use levels would be monitored and if monitoring indicated that levels of mixed use were creating high levels of campsite competition, a series of other actions would be implemented over time to resolve campsite competition. If the level of campsite competition remained at a high level after all mitigation measures were used, a campsite reservation system would be implemented.

ALTERNATIVE C

In Alternative C, commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized use would be managed in a mixed use setting for a variety of recreation experiences. There would be a limited opportunity for a non-motorized experience on Monday through Wednesday on alternating weeks starting the first Monday in June and running through August. During the 10-year planning period, there would be six years with six, three-day non-motorized periods spread through the primary season and four years with seven, three-day non-motorized periods, an average of 19 non-motorized days per year.

With the following exceptions, the effects of Alternative C would be equivalent to Alternative B.

There would be no overnight camping by commercial powerboats between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood Historic Ranch (inclusive), and between Hells Canyon Creek and Wild Sheep Rapid (inclusive).

during the primary season. This would be a mitigation measure in response to commercial powerboat use levels in these sections of the wild river and to reduce competition for campsites in these sections of the river. Private land at Kirby Creek would be exempt from this requirement.

This alternative would have a high potential to reduce campsite competition. It would initially continue a first-come, first-served system for obtaining campsites. Use levels would be monitored and if monitoring indicated that levels of mixed use were creating high levels of campsite competition, a series of other actions would be implemented over time to resolve campsite competition. If the level of campsite competition remained at a high level after all mitigation measures were used, a campsite reservation system would be implemented.

CAPABILITY TO PROVIDE A DIVERSITY OF NECESSARY OUTFITTER SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

The diversity of outfitted experience is measured objectively by total launches per portal. In addition to this measure, diversity of outfitted experience is also measured subjectively in terms of high, moderate, or low capability of each alternative to provide a diversity of outfitter services to the public.

WILD SECTION - DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A

In alternative A, commercial powerboat use would be unlimited and commercial float use would be limited but able to grow toward maximum numbers of launches and party size.

Powerboat businesses would be able to continue to expand their businesses yearround based on user demand and the individual marketing capability of each outfitter. The types of trips offered would provide a variety of opportunities, primarily focused on one day tours. The ability to serve walk-in, short notice transient tourists would be limited only by the availability of the outfitters to provide boats. Outfitters would be able to service large groups. All outfitters with priority use permits would be able to expand their business into the full length of the wild river corridor, with associated changes in the types of trips offered including overnight camping. Trip length would be limited only by stay lengths at individual campsites. There would be no upper limit on the length of commercial powerboats. Individual business growth would be limited only by each individual outfitter's business goals and financial capability, resulting in variations in sizes of businesses and their associated specialized services.

There would be no designated maximum or minimum number of powerboat businesses at portals for visitors. The businesses operating from Cache Creek and Pittsburg Landing could be bought and sold, with movement of entire businesses from one portal to another. Individual outfitters could acquire multiple businesses and their associated permits, creating the potential for monopolies at some portals. Outfitters could operate out of multiple portals, increasing the amount of competition at some locations, particularly at Pittsburg Landing. Movement of businesses away from sites would reduce options for visitor services. Monopolies at portals could reduce the quality of services to visitors, including the lack of competition associated with options in trip packages.

The business at Hells Canyon Creek would continue to be limited to 2 boats in the water, but with unlimited trips per day using the 2 boats. A second permit could be issued to operate from this site, limited to 1 boat in the water, but with unlimited trips per day using the single boat. These two businesses would be the only powerboat businesses that could originate passengers above Wild Sheep Rapid.

Commercial powerboats would be able to launch inflatable watercraft, subject to the float party having a valid float permit, yearround. Jetback and jetout service would be available for floaters.

Two, one-day commercial float permits would be issued for conducting one-day trips between Hells Canyon Creek and Pittsburg Landing, limited to one per day on Monday through Friday only with a maximum of two boats per trip. This opportunity would require a sixth launch to accomodate this use.

A maximum of 16 special use permits for multi-day commercial floating could be issued, with an initial allocation of 2 commercial launches per day. The 16th commercial launch would be set aside as a pool of dates available for use by all float outfitters. Each trip would be limited to a maximum of 30 people, with no limit on the number of boats. During the secondary season there would be no limit on party size or number of daily launches. Commercial floaters could use kickers on rafts to shorten the duration of trips on the river. There would be no opportunity to provide a non-motorized experience to customers.

A Granger-Thye permit would be issued to occupy the facilities at Sheep Creek to provide the opportunity for overnight use in association with outfitted trips.

Total commercial powerboat launches per portal that could enter the wild river:

> Hells Canyon Creek - Limited to 3 boats at this portal (2 permits, one not currently issued) in the water, with unlimited launches per day using the 3 boats
>
> Pittsburg Landing -- Unlimited launches
>
> Cache Creek ------ Unlimited launches
> WILD RIVER TOTAL Unlimited

This alternative would have a moderate capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience by offering a variety of outfitted services. Variables associated with unlimited commercial powerboat use and associated business decisions concerning selling, purchasing and moving businesses could change the mix of commercial opportunities at different portals. The potential for monopolies at sites may be detrimental in regard to the availability of quality services and competitive prices for visitors.

ALTERNATIVE B

In Alternative B, permits would be managed to provide a variety of services for commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized customers including a limited opportunity for a non-motorized experience between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood Historic Ranch.

During the primary season, commercial powerboat use would be assigned as boat days on a rigid launch schedule. The types of trips offered would provide a variety of opportunities, primarily focused on one day tours. The ability to serve walk-in, short notice transient tourists would be extremely limited, based on the availability of each outfitter to have an assigned launch date on any given day. Marketing of trips would be more dependent on pre-scheduling of trips by visitors, which would be a departure from a large component of their historic customer base. Outfitters may have difficulty servicing large tour groups associated with bus tours due to lack of adequate boat days to accommodate a trip on a particular day.

Powerboat outfitters would be limited to their historic area of operation year round in the wild river corridor, and further limited in trip duration (day use or overnight) depending on their historic use. Trip lengths would be limited by the need to use consecutive boat days on overnight trips, if that type of use was authorized and by stay lengths at individual campsites. There would be an upper limit on the length of commercial powerboats of 39.6 feet. The ability of visitors to obtain outfitted services in the primary season would be dependent on the total number of boat days available, if the available boat days coincided with their schedule and whether or not there was room on the boat. Scheduling a trip on short notice could be difficult.

There would be maximum and minimum numbers of powerboat businesses based at portals to assure that services would always be available at portals for visitors. This would assure that, if businesses were bought and sold, there would continue to be outfitter services at all portals that could provide access into the wild river. Individual outfitters would be limited in their ability to acquire multiple businesses and their associated permits, reducing the potential for the creation of monopolies in prices and services to visitors. Outfitters could not operate out of multiple portals, maintaining a diverse customer base for outfitters to compete for at each portal.

The business at Hells Canyon Creek would continue to be limited to 2 boats in the water and a maximum of two trips per day. There would be no additional permits issued for this site with the exception that, at the option of the outfitter, the existing business could be equally divided, with two permits issued with a maximum of one boat and one trip per day for each permit. This would provide the potential for a second business owner at the site in the future, with choices for visitors in services and prices. Whether one or two businesses operated from this site, they would be the only powerboat businesses that could originate passengers above Wild Sheep Rapid.

Commercial powerboats would not be able to launch inflatable watercraft. Jetback and jetout service would be available for floaters subject to availability of powerboat launches within the rigid boat day schedule. This would probably result in a reduction in the availability of this type of service to floaters.

The opportunity for visitors to travel by commercial powerboat to Kirkwood Historic Ranch would be reduced when compared to the historic base period use.

The two, one-day temporary use commercial float permits for conducting one-day trips between Hells Canyon Creek and Pittsburg Landing would not be reissued upon their expiration in 1996. While this type of use would remain available as an option for multi-day float outfitters to provide, the opportunity for visitors to experience this type of trip would probably be reduced.

A maximum of 14 and a minimum of 10 special use permits for commercial floating could be issued, with an initial allocation of 2 commercial launches per day. Six additional launches would be set aside as pool dates available for use by all float outfitters, with 8 launches from the commercial pool being allocated to private floaters. Each trip would be limited to a maximum of 24 people and a maximum of 8 float craft per party year-round Commercial floaters could not use kickers on rafts. There would be an opportunity to provide a non-motorized experience to customers on Monday through Wednesday each week from July through August, for a maximum of 24 days per primary season.

A Granger-Thye permit would be issued to occupy the facilities at Sheep Creek to provide the opportunity for overnight use in association with outfitted trips. However, the ability of outfitters to access the site due to the rigid launch schedule and non-motorized days may not make the site attractive enough for commercial outfitters to bid on. As a result, the opportunity for the outfitted public to use this location for overnight lodging in association with outfitted trips may end.

Total commercial powerboat launches (boat days) per portal that could enter the wild river:

> Hells Canyon Creek - 224 boat days - limited to 2 boats in the water, with a maximum of 2 trips per day (136 of the 224 boat days limited to Wild Sheep)
>
> Pittsburg Landing – 119 boat days - 88 of the 119 limited to Kirkwood only (special allocation). A portion of the remaining boatdays limited to Kirkwood only based on the rigid launch schedule. Approx. 8 of the remaining 31 boat days limited to Kirkwood only due to rigid schedule.
>
> Cache Creek ----- 448 boat days - a maximum of 4 boats/day. 96 of the 448 limited to Kirkwood only.
>
> WILD RIVER TOTAL 791 boat days - 136 limited to Wild Sheep, approx. 192 limited to Kirkwood, 463 entire wild river within individual outfitter's area of operation.

This alternative would have a moderate capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience by offering a variety of outfitted services. Variables associated with the rigid boat day schedule for commercial powerboats would affect the ability to reach particular destinations without booking well in advance or travelling to a different portal for an available launch date or destination. Powerboat outfitters would be limited in areas of operation year-round, limiting their ability to expand their trips in the secondary season. The elimination of the one-day float permits and the projected reduction in jetback/jetout service would substantially reduce the opportunity for these types of outfitted experiences, but the opportunity would remain available and dependent on the type of services individual powerboat outfitters decided to provide.

ALTERNATIVE C

In Alternative C, permits would be managed to provide a variety of services for commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized customers including a limited opportunity for a non-motorized experience between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood Historic Ranch.

During the primary season, commercial powerboat use would be assigned as boat days on a flexible launch schedule. The types of trips offered would provide a variety of opportunities, primarily focused on one day tours. Walk-in, short notice transient tourists could be accommodated, based on the ability of each outfitter to have the flexibility to move boat days within specific blocks of time. Marketing of trips would not be as dependent on pre-scheduling of trips by visitors as in Alternative B, except for overnight trips which is not a departure from the norm. Compared to Alternative B, outfitters could more easily accommodate pre-scheduled, large groups due to flexibility to use the number of boats that will accommodate the size of the trip as long as an adequate number of boat days within each outfitters' allocation remain available within a specific block of time.

Powerboat outfitters would be have the flexibility to schedule three day fishing trips that would avoid non-motorized periods in the wild river. Trips could be scheduled on a customized basis for visitors to coincide with prime fishing seasons or to meet customers' schedules within the outfitter's allocation of boat days within different sections of the wild river.

Powerboat outfitters would be limited to their historic area of operation during the primary season only. They would be limited in trip duration (day use or overnight) depending on their historic use, but outfitters that were not allowed to camp overnight would have the option of obtaining overnight services at an outfitter lodge. Trip lengths would be limited by the need to use consecutive boat days on overnight trips. There would be an upper limit on the length of commercial powerboats of 42 feet which would expand seating capacity on new boats as compared to Alternative B. Scheduling a trip on short notice would be dependent on availability of a trip by a particular outfitter, and the total boat day allocation of the outfitter within a specific block of time (based on historic use levels).

Outfitters could only operate out of (launch boats) multiple portals based upon historic use.

The business at Hells Canyon Creek would continue to be limited to 2 boats in the water, but the number of daily trips would be limited based on revised use. There would be no additional permits issued for this site with the exception that, at the option of the outfitter, the existing business could be equally divided, with two permits issued with a maximum of one boat for each permit. This would provide the potential for a second business owner at the site in the future, with choices for visitors in services and prices. Whether one or two businesses operated from this site, they would be the only powerboat businesses that could originate passengers above Wild Sheep Rapid.

Commercial powerboats would be able to launch inflatable watercraft, subject to the float party having a valid float permit, year-round. Jetback and jetout service would be available for floaters, but the opportunity for this type of service would be dependent on the number of powerboat outfitters who would choose to provide this service in lieu of, or in combination with conducting jet boat tours and fishing trips.

The opportunity for visitors to travel by commercial powerboat to Kirkwood Historic Ranch would be comparable to the historic base period. The entire allocation of boat days for powerboat outfitters that originated their trips from Pittsburg Landing and Cache Creek would allow travel to Kirkwood Historic Ranch.

The two, one-day commercial float permits for conducting one-day trips between Hells Canyon Creek and Pittsburg Landing would be renewed on an annual basis with temporary use only. They would be limited to one trip per day on an alternating schedule as dates were available, 7 days per week with a maximum of 2 boats per trip and a maximum party size of 24. These trips would be dependent on the availability of excess, underutilized launches from within the 5 launch per day limit for float use. The one-day float trip opportunity would also remain available as an option for multi-day float outfitters to provide.

A maximum of 14 and a minimum of 10 special use permits for multi-day commercial floating could be issued, with an initial allocation of 2 commercial launches per day. Six additional launches would be set aside as pool dates available for use by all float outfitters, with 8 launches from the commercial pool being allocated to private floaters. Each trip would be limited to a maximum of 24 people and a maximum of 8 float craft per party year-round. Commercial floaters could not use kickers on rafts. There would be an opportunity to provide a non-motorized experience to customers on Monday through Wednesday every other week from June through August, for an average of 19 days per primary season.

A Granger-Thye permit would be issued to occupy the facilities at Sheep Creek to provide the opportunity for overnight use in associated with outfitted trips. The holder of this permit would have up to 25 allocated boat days changed from a limited wild river launch to launches that would cover the outfitter's entire area of operation during the term of the Granger-Thye permit. This will provide the opportunity for overnight use in association with outfitted trips. In addition, a maximum of 4 boat days would be assigned to this Granger-Thye permit to provide cargo trips to support the continuation of this commercial overnight opportunity for visitors. The cargo trips would not count against the cap on commercial passenger boat days.

Total commercial powerboat launches (boat days) per portal that could enter the wild river:

Hells Canyon Creek - 397 boat days - limited to 2 boats in the water at one time, with daily trips limited by total allocation of boat days per block of time; 283 of the 397 boat days limited to Wild Sheep only.

Pittsburg Landing -- 80 boat days - 54 of the 80 boat days limited (north boundary to Kirkwood only).

Cache Creek -------- 904 boat days - 556 of the 904 boat days limited to Kirkwood only

WILD RIVER TOTAL 1,381 boat days - 283 limited to Wild Sheep, 610 limited to Kirkwood, 488 entire Wild River within area of operation for each outfitter. (Sheep Creek access would change these totals to 585 limited to Kirkwood, 513* entire wild river.)

This alternative would have a high capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience by offering a variety of outfitted services. The flexible boat day schedule for commercial powerboats would generally allow visitors to reach particular destinations without advance bookings or the need to travel to a different portal for an available launch date or destination. Powerboat outfitters would be limited in areas of operation only during the primary season, allowing them to expand their operations in the secondary season. One-day float permits would be included in the mix of use without relying on multi-day permit holders to provide all of this service, and utilize excess launches that were previously lost opportunities for float trips. The non-motorized experience would be available to visitors throughout the primary season, providing a variety of river and weather conditions as part of the experience. The continuation of outfitted services at Sheep Creek would provide an overnight opportunity for visitors.

SCENIC SECTION - DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A

In Alternative A, commercial powerboat use would be unlimited and commercial float use would be unlimited for launches originating in the scenic river and those entering the scenic river that originated in the wild river. Commercial float use would be limited in party size.

Powerboat businesses would be able to continue to expand their businesses year-round based on user demand and the individual marketing capability of each outfitter. The types of trips offered would provide a variety of opportunities, primarily focused on one day tours. The ability to serve walk-in, short notice transient tourists would be limited only by the availability of the outfitters to provide boats. Outfitters would be able to service large groups. All outfitters would be able to expand their business into the full length of the scenic river corridor, with associated changes in the types of trips offered including overnight camping. Trip length would be limited only by stay lengths at individual campsites. There would be no upper limit on the length of commercial powerboats. Individual business growth would be limited only by each individual outfitter's business goals and financial capability, resulting in variations in sizes of businesses and their associated specialized services.

There would be no maximum or minimum number of powerboat businesses based at portals to assure that services would always be available at all portals for visitors. The businesses operating from Cache Creek and Pittsburg Landing could be bought and sold, with movement of entire businesses from one portal to another. Individual outfitters could acquire multiple businesses and their associated permits, creating the potential for monopolies at some portals. Outfitters could operate out of multiple portals, increasing the amount of competition at some locations. Movement of businesses away from sites would reduce options for visitor services. Monopolies at portals could reduce the quality of services to visitors, including the lack of competition and the associated lack of options in trip packages and prices.

A second permit could be issued to operate commercial trips from Hells Canyon Creek, limited to 1 boat in the water, but with the potential of introducing additional commercial services into the scenic river year-round. The temporary use commercial powerboat permit authorizing use in the scenic river only, would be renewed on an annual basis, providing additional commercial opportunities for visitors.

Commercial powerboats would be able to launch inflatable watercraft, subject to the float party having a valid permit, year-round. Jetback and jetout service would be available for floaters.

The commercial float launches originating in the wild river could continue their trips into the scenic river subject to the maximum allocation of launches that could originate at Hells Canyon Creek during the primary season. In addition, each of the commercial float outfitters could launch unlimited numbers of trips from scenic river portals, introducing a new opportunity for customers, but adding considerable congestion at the launch ramps and on the river, which may negatively affect the quality of the service. Each trip, regardless of point of origin, would be limited to a maximum of 30 people, with no limit on the number of boats. Commercial floaters could use kickers on rafts to shorten the duration of trips on the scenic river.

The resort at Copper Creek would use cargo boats to transport supplies in support of overnight lodging services for visitors in conjunction with outfitted trips.

Total commercial powerboat launches per portal that could enter the scenic river:

Hells Canyon Creek - Limited to 3 boats in the water, with unlimited launches per day using the 3 boats

Pittsburg Landing -- Unlimited launches

Cache Creek ——— Unlimited launches
SCENIC RIVER TOTAL Unlimited

This alternative would have a low capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience by offering a variety of outfitted services. Variables associated with unlimited commercial powerboat use and unlimited commercial float launches, and associated business decisions concerning selling, purchasing and moving businesses could change the mix of commercial opportunities at different portals and substantially increase the amount of traffic into this area. Congestion on the river and at portals would not be an attractive selling point for commercial trips, and could diminish the quality of the services provided to customers. The potential for monopolies at sites may be detrimental in regard to the availability of quality services and competitive prices for visitors.

ALTERNATIVE B

In Alternative B, permits would be managed to provide a variety of services for commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized customers.

During the primary season, commercial powerboat use would be assigned as boat days on a rigid launch schedule. The types of trips offered would provide a variety of opportunities, primarily focused on one day tours. The ability to serve walk-in, short notice transient tourists would be extremely limited, based on the availability of each outfitter to have an assigned launch date on any given day. Marketing of trips would be more dependent on pre-scheduling of trips by visitors, which would be a departure from a large component of their historic customer base. Outfitters may have difficulty servicing large groups due to lack of adequate boat days to accommodate a trip on a particular day.

Powerboat outfitters would be limited to their historic area of operation year round in the wild river corridor, and further limited in trip duration (day use or overnight) depending on their historic use. Trip lengths would be limited by the need to use consecutive boat days on overnight trips (if that type of use was authorized) and by stay lengths at individual campsites. There would be an upper limit on the length of commercial powerboats of 39.6 feet. Limiting boat length would preclude large double-decked boats, reducing potential capacity as compared to Alternative A. The ability of visitors to obtain outfitted services in the primary season would be dependent on the total number of boat days available, if the available boat days coincided with the customer's schedule and whether or not there was seating capacity available on the boat. Scheduling a trip on short notice could be difficult.

There would be maximum and minimum numbers of powerboat businesses based at portals to assure that services would always be available at portals for visitors. This would assure that, if businesses were bought and sold, there would continue to be outfitter services at all scenic river portals that could provide access into the scenic river. Individual outfitters would be limited in their ability to acquire multiple businesses and their associated permits, reducing the potential for the creation of monopolies in prices and services to visitors. Outfitters could not operate out of multiple portals.

The area of operation for the business at Hells Canyon Creek would be limited to operating in the scenic river downstream as far as Pittsburg Landing only, year-round.

Commercial powerboats would not be able to launch inflatable watercraft. Jetback and jetout service would be available for floaters subject to availability of powerboat launches within the rigid boat day schedule. This would probably result in a reduction in the availability of this type of service to floaters.

The opportunity for visitors to travel by commercial powerboat to Cache Creek Ranch as the entry portal would be unlimited for trips originating downstream from Cache Creek.

The temporary use commercial powerboat permit authorizing use in the scenic river only, would not be renewed upon expiration of the permit at the end of the 1996 season. The types of services provided by this outfitter would be provided by other powerboat outfitters.

Each commercial float trip, regardless of point of origin, would be limited to a maximum of 24 people and 8 boats per party year-round. During the secondary season there would be no limit on numbers of launches entering the scenic river, regardless of point of origin. Commercial floaters could use kickers on rafts to shorten the duration of trips on the scenic river year-round.

The resort at Copper Creek would be required to supply cargo to the site within the allocation of boat days for the powerboat business associated with the resort permit. Since some of these trips involved transporting supplies which do not allow hauling of customers (propane), this would reduce the number of boat days allocated to the business for providing outfitter services to customers. As a result, the opportunity for the outfitted public to use this location for overnight lodging in association with outfitted trips would be reduced.

Total commercial powerboat launches (boat days) per portal that could enter the scenic river:

> Hells Canyon Creek - 88 boat days - limited to travel downstream to Pittsburg Landing only (one trip per day maximum on motorized days only in the wild river). This would result in travelling in only 1.4 miles of the scenic river.
>
> Pittsburg Landing -- 119 boat days - 88 of these 119 boat days would be limited to travel upstream to reach Kirkwood, travelling in only 1.4 miles of the scenic river.
>
> Cache Creek ——- 865 boat days - a maximum of 8 boats/day when combined with the allocation of 31 boat days from Pittsburg that are allowed to travel in the entire scenic and study river. 448 of these boat days do not allow access upstream from Pittsburg Landing.
>
> SCENIC RIVER TOTAL 1,191 boat days - 207 limited to 1.4 miles of Scenic River, 896 entire scenic and study river with the exception that 448 are not allowed in 1.4 mile section above Pittsburg Landing. The ramp at Pittsburg is used as a management point dividing wild river and scenic river boat day allocations.

This alternative would have a moderate capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience by offering a variety of outfitted services. Variables associated with the rigid boat day schedule for commercial powerboats would affect the ability to reach particular destinations without booking well in advance or travelling to a different portal for an available launch date or destination, but not as difficult as wild river destinations as a result of a greater number of boat days available in the scenic river. There would be problems associated with the ability to supply boats to support large groups. The outfitter based at Hells Canyon Creek would be limited in area of operation yearround, limiting the ability to expand trips into the scenic river in the secondary season. The lack of support trips to exclusively transport cargo to supply Copper Creek would reduce the availability of this site for overnight use by the outfitted public.

ALTERNATIVE C

In Alternative C, permits would be managed to provide a variety of services for commercial motorized and commercial non-motorized customers.

During the primary season, commercial powerboat use would be assigned as boat days on a flexible launch schedule. The types of trips offered would provide a variety of opportunities, primarily focused on one day tours. The ability to serve walk-in, short notice transient tourists would be easy to accommodate, based on the ability of each outfitter to have the flexibility to move boat days within specific blocks of time. Marketing of trips would not be as dependent on pre-scheduling of trips by visitors, except for overnight trips which is not a departure from the norm. These trips could be scheduled on a customized basis for visitors to coincide with prime fishing seasons or to meet customers' schedules within the outfitter's allocation of boat days. Outfitters could easily accommodate pre-scheduled, large groups due to flexibility to use the number of boats that will accommodate the size of the trip as long as an adequate number of boat days within each outfitters' allocation remain available within a specific block of time.

Powerboat outfitters originating at Pittsburg or Cache Creek would be able to utilize the entire scenic river year-round, and not limited in the scenic river by areas of operation. They would be limited in trip duration (day use or overnight) depending on their historic use, but outfitters that were not allowed to camp overnight would have the option of obtaining overnight services at an outfitter lodge. Trip lengths would be limited by the need to use consecutive boat days on overnight trips. There would be an upper limit on the length of commercial powerboats of 42 feet which would expand seating capacity on new boats as compared to Alternative B. Scheduling a trip on short notice would be dependent on availability of a trip by a particular outfitter, and the total boat day allocation of the outfitter within a specific block of time (based on historic use levels).

Outfitters could only operate out of multiple portals based upon historic use.

The business at Hells Canyon Creek would not be limited by area of operation during the secondary season, allowing expansion of trips into the entire scenic and study river.

Commercial powerboats would be able to launch inflatable watercraft, subject to the float party having a valid float permit, year-round. Jetback and jetout service would be available for floaters, but the opportunity for this type of service would be dependent on the number of powerboat outfitters who would choose to provide this service in lieu of, or in combination with conducting jet boat tours. Overnight camping by commercial powerboats downstream from the mouth of the Salmon River would not be allowed.

The opportunity for visitors to travel by commercial powerboat to Cache Creek Ranch as the entry portal would be unlimited for trips originating downstream from Cache Creek.

The temporary use commercial powerboat permit authorizing use in the scenic river only, would not be renewed upon expiration of the permit at the end of the 1996 season. The types of services provided by this outfitter would be available through other powerboat outfitters.

Each commercial float trip, regardless of point of origin, would be limited to a maximum of 24 people and 8 boats per party year-round. During the secondary season there would be no limit on numbers of launches entering the scenic river, regardless of point of origin. Commercial floaters could use kickers on rafts in the scenic river year-round.

The resort at Copper Creek would be allocated a maximum of 16 cargo boat days per primary season (one per week) to support the overnight operations at this location. These boat days would not count against the cap on commercial passenger boat days, and would result in the outfitter being able to utilize the full allocation of boat days associated with the commercial powerboat permit to provide the opportunity for the outfitted public to use this location for overnight lodging in association with outfitted trips.

Total commercial powerboat launches (boat days) per portal that could enter the scenic river:

> Hells Canyon Creek - 114 boat days - limited to travel downstream to Pittsburg Landing only (one trip per day maximum on motorized days only in the wild river). This would result in travelling in only 1.4 miles of the scenic river.
>
> Pittsburg Landing -- 80 boat days
>
> Cache Creek ------- 904 boat days

SCENIC RIVER TOTAL = 1,098 boat days - a maximum of 9.8 boats/day. However, 114 boat days are confined to operating in only 1.4 miles of the scenic river upstream from Pittsburg Landing. This would be a maximum of 8.8 boats per day downstream from Pittsburg.

This alternative would have a high capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience by offering a variety of outfitted services. The flexible boat day schedule for commercial powerboats would improve the opportunity for visitors to reach particular destinations without advance bookings or the need to travel to a different portal for an available launch date or destination. Only one outfitter would be limited to an area of operation in the scenic river during the primary season, but allowed to expand operations in the secondary season. Cargo launches in support of Copper Creek would allow complete use of the commercial powerboat allocation associated with the resort to provide overnight lodging for visitors as a component of an outfitted trip.

Table III-1 -- Capability to Achieve Desired Recreation Experience

Alternative	A		B		C	
Analysis Category	**Wild**	**Scenic**	**Wild**	**Scenic**	**Wild**	**Scenic**
Desired Recreation Experience	L	L	H	M	H	M
Visitor Management	L	L	H	H	H	H
Campsite Competition	H	*	H	*	H	*
Diversity of Outfitter Services	M	L	M	M	H	H

H = High potential for achieving objective as discussed in Chapter III

M = Moderate potential for achieving objective as discussed in Chapter III

L = Low potential for achieving objective as discussed in Chapter III

* Acceptable for Alternatives B and C. Unacceptable for Alternative A.

TOTAL LAUNCHES/BOAT DAYS BY PORTAL

Primary Season Commercial Power Boat Days/Portal	1988-92 (Base Period) Avg. Actual Use Alternative A	Allocation Alternative B	Allocation Alternative C	1993-94 Average Actual Use
Hells Canyon Creek	387	224	397	405
Pittsburg	57	62 (+88**)	80	105
Cache Creek	839*	834	904	814
TOTAL	1,283	1,208	1,381	1,324

Primary Season Commercial Float Launches/Portal	1988-92 (Base Period) Avg. Actual Use Alternative A	Allocation Alternative B	Allocation Alternative C	1993-94 Average Actual Use
Hells Canyon Creek	179	216	216	150
Pittsburg	1	0	0	0
Cache Creek	NA	NA	NA	NA

* Includes Mainstream Outdoor Adventures, Inc., temporary use
** 88 "Special" boat days limited by area of operations to Pittsburg Landing-Kirkwood segment of river

ECONOMIC EFFECTS

INTRODUCTION

This section displays potential economic effects to commercial powerboat and float outfitters operating on the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area section of the Snake River due to implementing the alternatives described in Chapter II. The alternatives affect the mix and intensity of recreation opportunities in the river corridor. The alternatives result in changes to the amount of access to different segments of the river for commercial powerboat and floatboat permittees. Businesses which supply goods and services for commercial outfitters and river recreationists are also affected. The potential economic effects to communities in the impact area due to changes in commercial outfitter purchases and the associated recreation expenditures are also discussed.

The economic effects of the operational limitation decisions in each alternative are assessed for the powerboat and floatboat outfitters. See Chapter I for a list of these decisions. The key indicators used to assess the effects are:

- Total allocation of use (boat days for powerboats and launches for floatcraft)
- Annual commercial permittee gross revenue
- Scheduling flexibility

Changes to these key indicators are measured in comparison to Alternative A (No-Action) which represents the average use and gross revenue that occurred during the base period of analysis (1988-92). Additional effects to communities in the impact area are described in terms of changes to jobs and income.

Dollar values displayed in this section are only estimates of the comparative impacts of the alternatives and are not necessarily precise predictors of actual impacts which may occur with the implementation of any alternative. All dollar values are described in terms of 1996 dollars.

For additional information on methods and assumptions used to determine the economic effects, refer to the FEIS for the Snake River Plan, Ch. III - 22 to 31, Ch. IV - 105 to 107, and Snake River Outfitter EA economic analysis files. Information used to determine effects was developed from actual use reports submitted by each outfitter.

The powerboat businesses are discussed in the first part of this chapter followed by the floatboats businesses.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT OUTFITTERS

Currently, there are 19 powerboat outfitters (18 priority use and 1 temporary use) permitted to operate on the HCNRA portion of the Snake River. In order to help describe the outfitters, they are grouped by three portals of operation to identify where they primarily access the river; Hells Canyon Creek, Pittsburg Landing, and Cache Creek. These groups, unless otherwise, noted are further defined by size of business (in terms of amount of boat days used), and primary type of business (scenic tours or fishing). Koch is grouped due to like ownership.

Hells Canyon Creek (scenic tours and fishing)

- Hells Canyon Adventures (Armacost)

Cache Creek 1 (more than 1 launch per day, primarily scenic tours)

- Heller Bar Excursions (Koch HBE)
- Idaho Rivers Navigation (Koch IRN)
- Rivers Navigation (Koch RN)
- Snake River Adventures (Luther)

Cache Creek 2 (approximately 1 launch every other day and primarily scenic tours)

- Snake Dancer Excursions (Alboucq)
- River Quest Excursions (Odegaard)
- Snake River Outfitters (Riddle) (primarily fishing, but one launch every 2-3 days)
- Cougar Country Lodge (Taylor)

Cache Creek 3 (approximately 10 launches or less per primary season (except Lamm) and primarily fishing)

- Anderson River Adventures (Anderson)
- Intermountain Excursions (Bentz)
- S&S Outfitters (Bream)
- High Roller Excursions (Eddins)
- Mainstream Outdoor Adventures, Inc. (Lamm)
- Three River Outfitters (Maxwell)
- Z&S Outfitters, Inc. (Zapfe)

Pittsburg Landing (7-30 launches per primary season, primarily fishing and scenic tours)

- Hells Canyon Fishing Charters (Cook)
- River Adventures Limited (Whitten)
- Red Woods Outfitter (Woods)

Each outfitter offers a specific range of services which are not shown above. For detailed information by outfitter, refer to "Outfitter Narratives" in the analysis file and the historical summary of outfitter businesses in Appendix A.

The following discussion of effects uses the outfitter's last name instead of the registered business name for clarity.

RECENT TRENDS IN COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT BUSINESSES

Several factors are evaluated to determine recent trends in individual business and overall industry operations since the base period, *refer to* Table III-2. Comparisons are made between the base period 1988 to 1992 *and* 1993 to 1994. Displayed *in* Table III-2 is the most recent complete information.

Table III-2
Primary Season Gross Revenue, Boat Day, and Service Day Trends
(Base Period Average 1988-92 Compared to Two-year Average 1993-94)
(Commercial Powerboat Outfitters)

Outfitter	Turnover Rate from first SUP	Change in Revenue	Change in boat days	Change in service days	Change in svds/btday	Change in $/boat day	Change in $/service day
Hells Canyon Creek:							
Armacost	2	66%	5%	73%	65%	59%	-4%
Cache Creek #1:							
Koch HBE	2	-4%	-2%	-17%	-15%	-2%	15%
Koch IRN	2	101%	121%	115%	-2%	-9%	-7%
Koch RN	2	87%	-70%	-27%	147%	531%	155%
Luther	0	59%	-4%	62%	69%	65%	-2%
Cache Creek #2:							
Alboucq	2	28%	15%	18%	3%	11%	8%
Odegaard	3	5%	-16%	-13%	4%	25%	20%
Riddle	0	18%	8%	-3%	-10%	9%	22%
Taylor	2	-14%	-19%	-10%	11%	6%	-4%
Pittsburg Landing:							
Cook	3	-15%	113%	84%	-13%	-60%	-54%
Whitten	0	27%	42%	76%	24%	-10%	-28%
Woods	0	120%	171%	164%	-3%	-19%	-17%
Cache Creek #3:							
Anderson	1	-67%	-50%	-59%	-17%	-34%	-20%
Bentz	0	106%	0%	7%	7%	106%	92%
Bream	0	-52%	100%	91%	-5%	-76%	-75%
Eddins	3	34%	60%	92%	20%	-16%	-30%
Lamm	1	-76%	-71%	-46%	88%	-17%	-56%
Maxwell	1	-54%	0%	-40%	-40%	-54%	-24%
Zapfle	0	133%	513%	474%	-6%	-62%	-59%
TOTALS	24	35%	3%	32%	28%	32%	3%

Several commercial powerboat businesses have changed ownership since their first special use permit was issued in 1970. Seven outfitters have operated continually since their first permits were issued. During the base period, outfitter businesses changed ownership eight times. After 1992, outfitter businesses changed ownership nine times.

Changes in overall revenue are due to a combination of factors including changes in number of trips, trip lengths, passengers, prices, discounts, services supplied, marketing efforts, weather, size of boats, river conditions, and numerous other elements. Over half of the outfitters (12) have experienced an increase in total revenue ranging from 5% to 133% since the base period. Decreases range from -4% to -76%. The average increase across all owners is 35%.

Ten of the 19 outfitters have increased the number of boat days used ranging from 5% to 513% since the base period. Decreases range from -2% to -71%. Overall, boat days have increased 3%. Twelve outfitters have increased the number of service days (one person per day or part of the day on the river) ranging from 7% to 474% since the base period. Decreases range from -3% to -59%. The industry average is an increase of 32%.

Changes in ownership, type of trips, duration of trips, services provided, prices, boat sizes, etc., are variable between outfitters. However, the amount of revenue earned per service day provides a reasonable measure for comparing each business's performance to the base period. Six of the businesses have increased their revenue per service day since the base period ranging from 8% to 155%. The remaining businesses have decreased the amount of revenue earned per service day ranging from -25 to -75%. The average change across all owners is an increase of 3%.

Over the entire industry group, primary season revenue and primary season service days have increased by 35% and 32%, respectively. Boat days and revenue per service day have remained relatively stable, increasing by 3%. Secondary season revenue and service days over the same period have increased 25% and 69%, respectively. Boat days have increased 82% from the base period average.

EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVES TO POWERBOAT OUTFITTERS

Refer to Chapter II for a detailed description of the operational limits for Alternative A (no action) and Alternatives B and C (action alternatives). The following sections describe direct and indirect effects to commercial powerboat outfitters.

<u>Launch Locations for Commercial Powerboats</u>

Alternative A allows all powerboat outfitters to launch from the portal during the base period except Hells Canyon Creek which is limited to a maximum of two outfitters. Refer to Table III-3 below for a description of effects from limiting launch point locations for each outfitter. Alternative A in Table III-3 represents where the outfitter primarily launched during the base period.

Alternatives B and C limit outfitters to one portal for access, except Riddle, who historically launched from both Cache Creek and Pittsburg Landing portals. Outfitters can no longer launch their boats from different portals, but they can still pick up passengers from different locations on the river with the exception that outfitters originating trips from the scenic river section could not pick up passengers upstream of Wild Sheep Rapids.

Limiting launch point locations does not directly reduce boat days for powerboat outfitters because they can continue to operate from the portal they primarily use. Establishing a single launch point limits flexibility for launching boats from a different portal, but no economic impacts to outfitter's gross revenue are expected compared to Alternative A because all outfitters can launch from their usual launch point.

Table III-3 Launch Locations			
Outfitter	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Hells Canyon Creek:			
Armacost	Hells Canyon Creek	No change	No change
Cache Creek 1:			
Koch HBE	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Koch IRN	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Koch RN	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Luther	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Cache Creek 2:			
Alboucq	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Odegaard	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Riddle	Cache Creek/Pittsburg	No change	No change
Taylor	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Cache Creek 3:			
Anderson	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Bentz	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Bream	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Eddins	Pittsburg Landing	Cache Creek accommodates current owner	Cache Creek accommodates current owner
Lamm	Cache Creek	No permit	No permit
Maxwell	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Zapffe	Cache Creek	No change	No change
Pittsburg Landing:			
Cook	Pittsburg Landing	No change	No change
Whitten	Pittsburg Landing	No change	No change
Woods	Pittsburg Landing	No change	No change

Areas of Operation

Alternative A allows powerboat outfitters to operate in the any section of the river. Refer to Table III-4 below for a description of effects from limiting areas of operation for each outfitter by alternative. Alternative A in Table III-4 represents the farthest point each outfitter traveled on at least one trip during the base period. Effects are displayed in terms of the percent of total boat days from the base period affected by limiting areas of operation.

Alternative B limits outfitters to a specific area on the river year-round reducing the flexibility of conducting a trip anywhere on the river for the entire year. Approximately 2% or less of annual boat days used by Armacost, Koch HBE, Anderson, Maxwell, and Zapffe are moved from their historic area of use. Eddins, Cook, and Woods have approximately 8%, 13%, and 14%, respectively, of their annual boat days moved from their historic area of operation.

Alternative C limits outfitters to a specific area on the river during the primary season reducing the flexibility of conducting a trip anywhere on the river, but less than Alternative B because outfitters can continue to operate anywhere on the river in the secondary season. Approximately 2% or less of annual boat days used by Armacost, Koch HBE, Maxwell, and 3% of annual boat days used by Woods are moved from their historic area of operation.

Economic impacts to gross revenue from moving boat days due to limitations on areas of operation for Alternatives B and C are displayed in the gross revenue summary of effects and Table III-9 later in this chapter.

Table III-4
Areas of Operation

Outfitter	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Hells Canyon Creek:			
Armacost	Below Pittsburg Landing	Limit to Pittsburg, affects 2% of base period use	Limit to Pittsburg, affects 2% of base period use
Cache Creek 1:			
Koch HBE	Hells Canyon Dam	Limit to Rush Creek, affects ≤ 1% of base period use	Limit to Rush Creek, affects ≤ 1% of base period use
Koch IRN	Rush Creek	No change	No change
Koch RN	Rush Creek	No change	No change
Luther	Hells Canyon Dam	No change	No change
Cache Creek 2:			
Alboucq	Rush Creek	No change	No change
Odegaard	Hells Canyon Dam	No change	No change
Riddle	Hells Canyon Dam	No change	No change
Taylor	Hells Canyon Dam	No change	No change
Cache Creek 3:			
Anderson	Hells Canyon Dam	Limit to Rush Creek, affects 2% of base period use	No change
Bentz	Hells Canyon Dam	No change	No change
Bream	Granite	No change	No change
Eddins	Hells Canyon Dam	Limit to Granite, affects 6% of base period use	No change
Lamm	Pittsburg Landing	No permit	No permit
Maxwell	Hells Canyon Dam	Limit to Rush Creek, affects ≤ 1% of base period use	Limit to Rush Creek, affects ≤ 1% of base period use
Zapffe	Hells Canyon Dam	Limit to Granite, affects 2% of base period use	No changes
Pittsburg Landing:			
Cook	Hells Canyon Dam	Limit to Granite, affects 14% of base period use	No change
Whitten	Granite	No change	No change
Woods	Hells Canyon Dam	Limit to Granite, affects 13% of base period use	Limit to Granite, affects 3% of base period use

Maximum and Minimum Numbers of Commercial Powerboat Outfitters at Specific Portals

Alternative A does not change the number of permits by portal from the base period (19 total). Refer to Table III-5 for a description of effects from establishing minimum and maximum numbers of permits by portal by alternative.

Alternatives B and C maintain the overall maximum number of potential permits at 19. The alternatives allow voluntary splitting of one business at Hells Canyon Creek (Armacost), and issuing a second priority use permit, and by eliminating the temporary use permit from the Cache Creek portal (Lamm). Minimum numbers of permits are established at Hells Canyon Creek (2), Pittsburg Landing (3), and Cache Creek (6) to maintain services offered to the public at each portal. Establishing minimum and maximum numbers of permits by portal have no effect on outfitter's boat days, gross revenue, or flexibility (except Lamm) because no change to the outfitters portals where they launch trips from is required. Lamm can no longer operate which eliminates all boat days and associated gross revenue. Refer to Chapter II and Appendix B and C for rationale and specific operating guidelines for maximum and minimum number of permits by portal.

Table III-5
Maximum Number of Outfitters

Portal	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Hells Canyon Creek	1	2*	2*
Cache Creek	15	13	13
Pittsburg Landing	3	4	4
TOTAL	19	19*	19*

* Total of 19 permits due to voluntary splitting of business at Hells Canyon Creek, adding one permit at Pittsburg Landing as a result of movement of one business from Cache Creek to Pittsburg, and eliminating the temporary use permit from the Cache Creek portal. If a Cache Creek permit relocated to Pittsburg Landing, the maximum at Cache Creek would drop from 14 to 13.

Allocation of Use (total boat days)

Alternative A does not restrict outfitters number of boat days or destinations on the river. Commercial powerboat outfitters can increase their business commensurate with customer demand. Commercial powerboat use has increased an average of 6% annually from 1982 to 1992 and is expected to continue in the future (FEIS IV-114). During the base period, actual primary season use averaged 1,283 boat days. Based on outfitter actual use reports, over 70% (912 boat days) of the primary season boat days had destinations primarily to the wild river section between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep rapids. Approximately 17% (215 boat days) had destinations primarily in the scenic section between Cache Creek and Pittsburg Landing. The remaining 11% (136 boat days) had destinations primarily between Hells Canyon Dam and Wild Sheep, and 2% (20 boat days) had destinations primarily between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood.

Refer to Table III-6 for a description of boat days by section of the river for each outfitter and by portal groups. Refer to Table III-7 for a description of the change in boat days by section of the river for each outfitter. The Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing (Scenic) section of the river is in the scenic river portion, and the Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood (Kirkwood), and Kirkwood to Wild Sheep (Wild) sections of the river are in the wild river portion (see Figure I-1 in Chapter I).

Alternative B limits primary season use to 1,208 boat days, a 6% reduction from the base period (1,283 boat days). Refer to Chapter II and Appendix B for explanation of the allocation of total boat days. Allocating 1,208 boat days to all outfitters changes the total number of boat days by section of the river compared to the base period. Approximately 36% of the primary season boat days (440 boat days) are allowed in the wild river section between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep, a 52% reduction from the base period. Approximately 37% of the boat days can reach destinations in the scenic section (448 boat days). The remaining 15% (184 boat days) and 11% (136 boat days) are available for destinations in the Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood section and the Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep section, respectively. No change to the amount of use from Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep occurs compared to the base period.

Distributing 1,208 boat days changes the total number of boat days for each outfitter compared to the base period. All outfitters except Alboucq (-3%), Armacost (-42%), and Lamm (-100%) receive a greater number of primary season boat days than they used during the base period. Increases in boat days range from 5% for Riddle to 100% (an increase from two to four boat days) for Maxwell. Lamm's will not be reissued upon expiration in 1996. Lamm will no longer incur the financial revenues and costs necessary to build and operate the business. Lamm will no longer provide river transportation for commercial recreation users to commercial lodging facilities on private land at Getta Creek.

Distributing 1,208 boat days changes the destinations of primary season boat days for each outfitter compared to the base period. All outfitters (except Armacost) receive a greater number of primary season boat days in the Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing, and Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood sections of the river. An additional increase (88 primary season boat days) occurs in the Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood section for Pittsburg Landing portal outfitters only. Boat days for eight outfitters in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section are reduced by over 50% compared to the base period. Armacost receives the largest reduction (65%), followed by Luther (59%), Alboucq and Taylor (58% each), Odegaard (57%), Koch RN (54%), and Riddle and Woods (50% each). Two outfitters, Bream and Maxwell gain one and two days, respectively. Seven outfitters (Koch HBE, Koch IRN, Anderson, Bentz, Eddins, Cook, and Whitten) experience reductions in the boat days ranging from -11% to -34%. Zapffe maintains the same number of boat days in this section of the river compared to the base period.

Alternative B requires Koch RN and Luther to make supply trips to the Copper Creek Resort and Sheep Creek Cabin within their allocated boat days. Since these trips cannot carry passengers, this reduces their total boat days by 16 days for Koch RN and 4 days for Luther.

Alternative C limits primary season use to 1,381 boat days, an 8% increase over the base period (1,283 boat days). Refer to Chapter II and Appendix C for explanation of the allocation of total boats days. Allocating 1,381 boat days changes the total number of boat days by section of the river compared to the base period. Approximately 37% of the primary season boat days (513 boat days) are allowed in the wild river section between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep. Approximately 42% of the boat days can reach destinations up to Kirkwood (585 boat days). The remaining 20% (283 boat days) are allowed for destinations in the Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep section, an increase of 107% compared to the base period use.

Distributing 1,381 boat days changes the total number of boat days for each outfitter compared to the base period. All outfitters except Koch HBE (-2%) and Lamm, whose temporary use permit is not reissued, receive a greater number of primary season boat days than they used during the base period. Increases range from 3% for Armacost to 100% (increase from two to four boat days) for Maxwell. The effects to Lamm are the same as described for Alternative B above.

Distributing 1,381 boat days changes the destinations of primary season boat days for each outfitter compared to the base period. All outfitters (except Armacost) receive a greater number of primary season boat days in the Cache Creek to Kirkwood section of the river. Primary season boat days with destinations allowed in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep wild river section are reduced by over 50% for six outfitters compared to the base period. Riddle receives the largest reduction (65%), followed by Alboucq (56%), Armacost (54%), Koch RN and Taylor (51% each), and Woods (50%). Two outfitters, Bream and Maxwell, gain one and two days, respectively. Nine outfitters (Koch HBE, Koch IRN, Luther, Odegaard, Anderson, Eddins, and Whitten) experience reductions in the boat days with destinations allowed in this section ranging from -19% to -46%. Bentz and Zapffe maintain the same number of boat days in this section of the river compared to the base period.

Additional boat days are allocated to Koch RN (16 boat days) for weekday use only, and Luther (4 boat days) for cargo trips to supply the Copper Creek Resort and the Sheep Creek Cabin, respectively. The number of boat days for cargo trips was based on input provided by these outfitters. These boat days are not included in the effects described above nor in Table III-6 and Table III-7.

Up to a maximum of 25 of the Sheep Creek Granger-Thye permit holder's Kirkwood-only boat days would be converted to Wild river launches above Kirkwood for the period that the permittee holds the permit in order to assure continued benefits of historic site protection. If the permittee drops or loses the permit, those boat days would revert back to Kirkwood-only status. If a permittee that successfully bids on the permit is allocated less than 25 Kirkwood-only boat days, then only the amount the permittee is allocated could be temporarily converted to Wild river launches above Kirkwood and only for the time period that the permittee holds the Sheep Creek Granger-Thye Permit. This redistributes the economic benefit of the access into the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section to the new permit holder, but still within the total allocation of 1,381 boat days. Over all outfitters, the total effect is the same as described for Alternative C since no new boat days would be added. The 25 boat days from Kirkwood to Wild Sheep are included in the totals described above and in the Tables III-6 and Table III-7 for Luther.

Under all alternatives, secondary season boat days are not limited and will not affect outfitter's ability to grow and would not affect gross revenue from the secondary season. Potential shifts of use into the secondary season could result for Alternative A from continued increasing use in the primary season and for Alternatives B and C from limiting use in the primary season providing an additional source of revenue to outfitters. Limiting boat days in Alternatives B and C does not reduce Koch RN's boat days, gross revenue, and flexibility to deliver the mail once a week, because they are allocated 120 boat days in Alternative B and 118 boat days in Alternative C and need 32 boat days (one day upriver and one day downriver) to deliver the mail. The nonmotorized period (Monday through Wednesday) does not affect the boat days or gross revenue for their contract because they travel upriver on Wednesday, stay overnight at Copper Creek Resort (below Kirkwood), and deliver mail above Kirkwood on Thursday which is open for motorized craft. Refer to the summary of gross revenue and Table III-9 in a section later in this chapter for a description of the effects to gross revenue from the allocation of total boat days.

Table III-[illegible]
A[illegible]cation of Use
Primary Season
(Boat Days)

Outfitter	ALTERNATIVE A Total	ALTERNATIVE A 5/22 - 6/30 Scenic	ALTERNATIVE A 5/22 - 6/30 Kirk-wood	ALTERNATIVE A 5/22 - 6/30 Wild	ALTERNATIVE A 7/1 - 9/10 Scenic	ALTERNATIVE A 7/1 - 9/10 Kirk-wood	ALTERNATIVE A 7/1 - 9/10 Wild	ALTERNATIVE B Total	ALTERNATIVE B 5/22 - 6/30 Scenic	ALTERNATIVE B 5/22 - 6/30 Kirk-wood	ALTERNATIVE B 5/22 - 6/30 Wild	ALTERNATIVE B 7/1 - 9/10 Scenic	ALTERNATIVE B 7/1 - 9/10 Kirk-wood	ALTERNATIVE B 7/1 - 9/10 Wild	ALTERNATIVE C Total	ALTERNATIVE C 5/22 - 6/30 Kirk-wood	ALTERNATIVE C 5/22 - 6/30 Wild	ALTERNATIVE C 7/1 - 9/10 Kirk-wood	ALTERNATIVE C 7/1 - 9/10 Wild	93-94 Actual Use Avg. Total
Hells Canyon Creek:																				
Armacost	387	-	-	63 (34)*	-	-	188 (102)*	224	-	-	40 (40)*	-	-	48 (96)*	397	-	40 (99)*	-	74 (184)*	405
Cache Creek 1:																				
Koch HBE	228	31	-	38	71	1	87	222	39	-	40	72	24	47	224	45	34	86	59	224
Koch IRN	62	3	-	14	9	-	36	78	9	-	10	30	6	23	85	19	13	33	20	137
Koch RN	111	3	1	29	6	1	71	120	21	-	21	39	14	25	118	25	17	44	32	33
Luther	131	1	-	38	2	-	80	139	25	-	26	44	18	26	139	19	29	37	54	126
Cache Creek 2:																				
Albioucq	75	1	-	18	2	1	53	73	12	-	12	25	8	18	85	19	12	35	19	97
Odegaard	50	-	1	12	-	3	34	58	10	-	9	19	9	11	65	22	9	38	16	42
Riddle	37	-	-	-	1	2	34	39	7	-	9	12	3	8	43	7	-	24	12	40
Taylor	64	2	-	16	5	-	41	65	10	-	11	22	8	13	85	20	11	37	17	52
Cache Creek 3:																				
Anderson	4	-	-	1	-	-	3	6	1	-	1	2	-	2	6	1	1	2	2	2
Bentz	8	1	-	2	2	-	3	11	2	-	2	4	1	2	11	2	2	4	3	8
Bream	6	1	-	-	3	-	2	7	2	-	1	2	-	2	7	1	1	3	2	12
Eddins	5	-	-	2	1	-	2	6	3	-	3	-	-	-	6	1	1	2	2	8
Lamm	52	23	-	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Maxwell	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	1	-	1	1	-	1	4	-	-	2	2	2
Zapffe	4	1	-	2	-	-	1	6	1	-	1	2	-	2	6	1	1	2	2	25
Pittsburg:																				
Cook	20	4	-	4	6	1	5	24	6	-	4	6	4	4	31	7	4	14	6	43
Whitten	30	1	2	4	4	7	12	31	2	-	3	13	2	11	40	9	4	18	9	43
Woods	7	-	-	1	1	-	5	7	3	-	3	1	-	-	9	2	1	4	2	19
TOTALS:	1283	72	4	278 (34)	143	16	770 (102)	1120 (+88 "Spec." = 1,208)	154	-	237 (40)	294	96	339 (96)	1,381	200	279 (99)	385	517 (184)	1,324

* Armacost days from Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep are included in totals for "Wild" column in parenthesis. Other "Wild" days can go to Pittsburg Landing.
"88 Special Launches" under Alternative B would be split among the three Pittsburg outfitters.

Table III-7
Allocation of Use
(Change In Primary Season Boat Days)
Compared to Base Period

	ALTERNATIVE A (+/- Boat Days from Base Period)							ALTERNATIVE B (+/- Boat Days from Alternative A)							ALTERNATIVE C (+/- Boat Days from Alternative A)					93-94 Actual Use Avg.
Outfitter	Total	5/22 - 6/30			7/1 - 9/10			Total	5/22 - 6/30			7/1 - 9/10			Total	5/22 - 9/10		7/1 - 9/10		Total
		Scenic	Kirk-wood	Wild	Scenic	Kirk-wood	Wild		Scenic	Kirk-wood	Wild	Scenic	Kirk-wood	Wild		Kirk-wood	Wild	Kirk-wood	Wild	
Hells Canyon Creek:																				
Armacost	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-163	-	-	-23 (6)	-	-	-140 (-6)	10	-	-23 (65)	-	-114 (82)	18
Cache Creek 1:																				
Koch HBE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-6	8	-	2	1	23	-40	-4	14	-4	14	-28	-4
Koch JRN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	6	-	-4	21	6	-13	23	16	-1	24	-16	75
Koch RN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	16	-	-8	33	13	-46	7	21	-12	37	-39	78
Luther	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	24	-	-12	42	18	-64	8	18	-9	35	-36	-5
Cache Creek 2:																				
Albouoq	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-2	11	-	-6	23	5	-35	10	18	-6	32	-34	12
Odegaard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	10	-1	-3	19	-6	-23	35	21	-3	35	-18	-8
Riddle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	7	-	9	11	1	-26	6	7	-	21	-22	3
Taylor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	-	-5	17	9	-28	21	18	-5	32	-24	-12
Cache Creek 3:																				
Anderson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	-	-	2	-	-1	2	1	-	2	-1	-2
Bentz	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	-	-	2	1	-1	3	1	-	2	-	-
Breem	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	-	1	-1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	6
Eddins	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	-	1	-1	-	-2	1	1	-1	1	-	3
Lamm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-36
Maxwell	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	-1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	-
Zapffe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	-	-	-1	2	-	1	2	-	-1	2	1	21
Pittsburg:																				
[1]Cook	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	-	-	-	3	-1	17	3	-	7	1	23
[1]Whitten	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	-2	-1	9	-5	-1	10	6	-	7	-3	13
[1]Woods	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	3	-	2	-	-	-5	2	2	-	3	-3	12

1 Does not include 88 "Special" launches allocated to Pittsburg portal.
2 Armacost days from Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep are included in totals for "Wild" column in paranthesis. Other "Wild" days can go to Pittsburg Landing.

Timing and Duration of Nonmotorized Period

Alternative A (no-action) does not have a nonmotorized period. This alternative does not result in restrictions to existing outfitter's businesses. No effects to gross revenue are projected, however, potential economic effects to float outfitters are discussed in a section on effects to float outfitters later in this chapter.

Refer to Table III-6 for a description of boat days by section of the river for each outfitter and by portal groups. Refer to Table III-7 for a description of the change in boat days by section of the river for each outfitter and by portal group compared to the base period. The Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing (Scenic) section of the river is in the scenic river portion, and the Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood (Kirkwood), and Kirkwood to Wild Sheep (Wild) sections of the river are in the wild river portion.

Alternative B limits boat days that occur on a nonmotorized day as a result of the launch calender with destinations allowed in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section to destinations downriver of Kirkwood for the Pittsburg Landing and Cache Creek portal outfitters and upriver of Wild Sheep rapids for the Hells Canyon Creek outfitter. This change in boat days destinations has been incorporated in the change to destinations described in the previous section on the allocation of use. The nonmotorized period in Alternative B affects all eight weeks in July and August, the months that receive the highest use in the primary season. This eliminates outfitter's flexibility to schedule trips to destinations between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep for approximately 39% (24 days out of 62 days) of the busiest time of the year.

Alternative C allocates boat days on a monthly basis, rather than specific days of the month as required under Alternative B. Outfitters have greater flexibility to schedule trips around the nonmotorized period because they could schedule all of their boat days around the nonmotorized period. All boat days with destinations allowed in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section could occur in this section except on a nonmotorized day. The nonmotorized period in Alternative C affects four to five weeks out of approximately eight weeks in July and August depending on the year, the months that receive the highest use in the primary season. This eliminates outfitter's flexibility to schedule trips to destinations between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep for approximately 22% (Monday - Wednesday) of the busiest time of the year. Outfitters need to schedule trips around the nonmotorized period, but still have the flexibility to schedule trips in this section of the wild river (14 days out of 62 days).

Refer to the summary of gross revenue and Table III-9 in a section later in this chapter for a description of the effects to gross revenue from the allocation of total boat days and by section of the river.

Launch Schedule

Alternative A (no-action) allows commercial powerboat outfitters to schedule boat trips throughout the year with complete flexibility because there is no launch calender. In the base period, 72% of the boat days occurred from July to September, and 28% occurred during May and June. All outfitters used more than 50% of their primary season use during July to September.

Refer to Table III-6 for a description of primary season boat days by May to June and July to September timeframes for each outfitter and by portal groups. Refer to Table III-7 for a description of the change in primary season boat days by May to June and July to September timeframes for each outfitter and by portal group compared to the base period. The Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing (Scenic) section of the river is in the scenic river portion, and the Pittsburg Landing to Kirkwood (Kirkwood), and Kirkwood to Wild Sheep (Wild) sections of the river are in the wild river portion.

Alternative B assigns specific boat days to each outfitter with a launch calender prior to the beginning of the primary season. The daily launch calendar changes the proportion of boat days to 36% in May to June and 64% in July to September, a 22% increase in the early part of the primary season and a 16% reduction in the latter part of the season compared to the base period. Refer to Appendix B for specific operating guidelines for the daily launch calender.

Nine outfitters increase or maintain their number of days in the July to September period. Increases range from Koch RN (3%) to Maxwell and Zapffe (100%). Other outfitters increase boat days in July to maintains the same number of boat days in the July to September period compared to the base period.

Ten outfitters decrease their number of boat days in the July to September period. The largest decrease occurs to Eddins (-100%) followed by Woods (-83%), Armacost (-50%), Riddle (-38%), Bream (-20%), Alboucq (-11%), Koch HBE (-10%), Taylor (-4%), and Luther (-2%). Lamm's temporary use permit would be eliminated, a 100% reduction in boat days and gross revenue.

Alternative C assigns eleven outfitters a number of boat days by month and seven outfitters a number of boat days for the primary season prior to the beginning of the primary season rather than on a daily basis as in Alternative B. The monthly launch calendar changes the proportion of boat days to 34% in May to June and 66% in July to September, a 34% increase in the early part of the primary season and a 3% reduction in the latter part of the season compared to the base period. Refer to Appendix C for specific operating guidelines for the monthly launch calender.

Fourteen outfitters increase or maintain their number of days in the July to September period. Increases range from Luther (+1%) to Maxwell (+300%). Other outfitters increase boat days in July to September by Koch IRN (18%), Odegaard (42%), Taylor (17%), Anderson and Eddins each (33%), Cook (67%), and Whitten (23%). Koch RN, Bentz, Bream, and Woods maintain the same number of boat days in the July to September period compared to the base period.

Five outfitters decreased their number of boat days in the July to September period. The largest decrease occurs to Armacost (-11%) followed by Koch HBE (-9%), Alboucq (-2%), and Riddle (-3%). Lamm's temporary use permit would be eliminated, a 100% reduction in boat days and gross revenue.

Under Alternative A, each outfitter has 100% flexibility to market a trip on any day of the primary season and is able to use as many boats as necessary to accommodate user demands. The fixed daily launch schedule in Alternative B provides the outfitter with no flexibility to shift launch dates within the primary season boat day allocation to accommodate trip demands, walk-in traffic, large groups, and specially arranged trips unless they trade dates with another powerboat outfitter. Alternative C provides 100% flexibility to schedule trips on all days in the primary season, except for trips between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep on the 24 non-motorized days. Flexibility in scheduling is greater than Alternative B, although the specific number of days allocated by month or season long use limit flexibility compared to Alternative A. Refer to Table III-6 for boat day allocations by outfitter.

Party Sizes For Commercial Users

Alternative A allows all outfitters day use and allows eleven outfitters overnight use at campsites on the river. Overnight party size is limited to 30. Day use party size is limited as a result of Coast Guard restrictions on individual boat capacities. During the entire base period, only Taylor had more than 24 people (41) on an overnight trip. Outfitters authorized for overnight use with their existing permit can continue to conduct trips with up to 30 people.

Alternatives B and C reduce the party size to 24 year-round for overnight use compared to Alternative A. Day use continues to be limited by Coast Guard restrictions on individual boat capacities. No change to boat days, gross revenue, or flexibility is expected because all of the outfitters except Taylor can continue to operate as they did during the base period. The effects on flexibility to Taylor are minimal because one trip does not demonstrate a major portion of this operation, and he can continue to offer overnight trips on the river and can accommodate party sizes larger than 24 at his private lodge on the lower Snake River. No change to boat days or gross revenue are projected.

Trip Duration

Alternative A allows all outfitters day use and allows eleven outfitters overnight use at campsites on the river. All outfitters will continue to operate with day use and overnight use as authorized by their existing permit. Refer to Table III-9 for a description of trip duration during the entire year in the base period for each outfitter and by portal groups, and a description of the effects of the action alternatives.

Alternatives B and C will not allow three outfitters who used river campsites during the base period to use campsites overnight. This affects 3% of Alboucq's total boat days, 9% of Bentz's total boat days, and 5% of Bream's total boat days compared to how they operated during the base period. Bentz and Bream can

... private lodges on the Salmon River. Alboucq does not have a private lodge, but can still offer overnight trips through other private lodge owners on the river.

Alternatives B and C also eliminate overnight camping during the primary season for commercial powerboaters in the sections of the river from Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep and Kirkwood to Pittsburg Landing. Alternative B also eliminates camping from the confluence of the Salmon to the north boundary of the HCNRA. All outfitters that can have overnight camps primarily camp between Granite Rapids and Kirkwood. Limited commercial powerboat camping in the section from Kirkwood to Pittsburg Landing has been observed and reported because the sites are either inaccessible to powerboats, or within one mile of Pittsburg Landing (approximately six miles from Kirkwood). Only one overnight powerboat trip occurred in the section below the confluence during the base period. Based on the use that occurs in these sections, boat days, gross revenue, and scheduling flexibility will not be reduced by this limitation.

Changes to gross revenue are projected in the summary of gross revenue effects as a result of the allocation of boat days later in this section. Refer to Table III-9. Outfitter's flexibility to offer day use or overnight use will not change for 15 outfitters in Alternatives A and B because they do not have to change the duration of their trip compared to how they operated in the base period. The three outfitters (Alboucq, Bentz, and Bream) would lose all flexibility to offer overnight trips in river campsites on the river. They maintain 100% flexibility to offer overnight trips in private lodges along the Snake River and Salmon River.

Table III-8 Trip Duration			
Outfitter	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Hells Canyon Creek:			
Armacost	Day use only	No change	No change
Cache Creek 1:			
Koch HBE	Day use only, overnight at Copper Creek Resort	No change	No change
Koch IRN	Day use only, overnight at Copper Creek Resort	No change	No change
Koch RN	Day use only, overnight at Copper Creek Resort	No change	No change
Luther	Day use only, overnight at Sheep Creek Cabin	No change	No change
Cache Creek 2:			
Alboucq	6 overnight trips	Day use only	Day use only
Odegaard	Day & overnight use	No change	No change
Riddle	Day use, overnight at private lodge at Kirby Creek on Snake River	No change	No change
Taylor	Day & overnight use on river and at private lodge on lower Snake River	No change	No change
Cache Creek 3:			
Anderson	Day & overnight use	No change	No change
Bentz	Day use & 6 overnight trips	Day use, overnight at private lodge	Day use, overnight at private lodge
Bream	Day use & 1 overnight trip, overnight at private lodge	Day use, overnight at private lodge	Day use, can still overnight at private lodge
Eddins	Day & overnight use	No change	No change
Lamm	Day and overnight use	No permit	No permit
Maxwell	Day use only, overnight at lodge on Salmon River	No change	No change
Zapffe	Day use, overnight at private lodge on lower Snake River	No change	No change
Pittsburg Landing:			
Cook	Day use & overnight use	No change	No change
Whitten	Day & overnight use	No change	No change
Woods	Day & overnight use	No change	No change

Maximum Size (length) of Commercial Powerboats

Under Alternative A (no action), powerboat lengths is restricted by Coast Guard requirements for passenger safety, capacity, etc. Two outfitters (Koch and Luther) have used boats longer than 39.6 feet: Luther currently has a 40 ft. boat in service and a 42 ft. boat under construction that will be certificated by the Coast Guard. Koch has a two 42 ft. boats in service and a 55 ft. boat under construction that will be certificated by the Coast Guard. Outfitters will be able to build larger boats than they currently operate to increase the number of passengers per trip potentially increasing gross revenues.

Alternative B restricts powerboat length to 39.6 feet and does not affect boats currently owned by outfitters. Any powerboat currently in operation longer than 39.6 feet including the new boats under construction by Koch and Luther could continue to operate until the boats needed to be replaced. At that time, they would have to replace them with a 39.6 ft. boat which potentially reduces seating capacity. Loss of seating capacity also potentially reduces gross revenue.

Alternative C restricts powerboat length to 42 feet and does not affect boats currently owned by outfitters. This increases some outfitter's seating capacity compared to their current boat sizes (less than 39.6 feet). Koch would have to replace their new 55 ft. boat under construction with a boat 42 ft. or less reducing seating capacity, but slightly less than compared to Alternative B. Loss of seating capacity also potentially reduces gross revenue.

Launching of Inflatable Watercraft from Commercial Powerboats

In Alternative A (no action) all outfitters can continue to use inflatables as a service to floaters in conjunction with their powerboat operations. During the base period, four (Koch, Luther, Odegaard, and Anderson) outfitters reported use associated with launching inflatables. Koch launched rafts from their powerboats in conjunction with their special use float permit. Typically, Koch dropped off passengers and rafts at Rush Creek for a one-day float trip downriver to Copper Creek Resort. Luther launched passengers in rafts at Granite Creek where they floated downriver to Sheep Creek or Pittsburg. Odegaard launched inflatables on one trip in the five years of the base period. Anderson reported use, although the extent is unknown. This alternative allows for growth in this activity limited only by demand from float customers with valid float permits.

Under Alternative B, Luther's temporary float permit is eliminated. Koch's flexibility to start their float trips either multi-day or one-day from anywhere between Hells Canyon Creek and Pittsburg Landing is eliminated. They still maintain the opportunity to do one-day and multi-day float trips, but have to originate all trips at Hells Canyon Creek. They cannot use powerboats in conjunction with the float business on 24 nonmotorized days in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep river section. Float launches are not reduced, but reductions in gross revenue may occur from having to schedule trips around the nonmotorized period. Powerboats can still pick up passengers at the end of the day below Kirkwood if necessary to reach Copper Creek Resort that night. Float trips have to be coordinated with allocated powerboat days under a daily schedule. Koch (IRN and RN) have enough boat days allocated under this alternative to accommodate powerboat support for the float business. Refer to Table III-6 for boat day allocations. The effect to Odegaard of eliminating their ability to launch inflatables is less than one percent of the base period use. The effect to Anderson is undetermined because the amount of use associated with launching inflatables for Anderson is unknown.

Under Alternative C, Koch and Luther continue to operate raft trips in conjunction with their powerboat businesses as occurred during the base period, except on nonmotorized days. The nonmotorized period alternates every other week in June, July, and August of the primary season rather than eight weeks in July and August as occurs in Alternative B and has a lesser effect on allocated float launch dates that occur on nonmotorized days. Float trips have to be coordinated with boat days allocated under a flexible monthly allocation rather than a daily allocation as under Alternative B. Koch (IRN and RN) have enough boat days allocated under this alternative to accommodate powerboat support for the float business. Refer to Table III-6 for boat days allocated. The effect to Odegaard of eliminating their ability to launch inflatables is less than one percent of the base period use. The effect to Anderson is undetermined because the amount of use associated with launching inflatables for Anderson is unknown.

Gross Revenue Effects

During the base period, average annual gross revenue totalled $1,721,955 for all powerboat outfitters. All dollar values are displayed in 1996 dollars. Based on gross revenues reported by each outfitter for the entire year, from 1988 to 1995 total revenue ranged from a high of $2,219,720 in 1993 to a low of $1,238,809 in 1988. Average revenue for the period 1993-95 totalled $2,026,301. The highest year of revenue for twelve outfitters (Armacost, Koch HBE, Koch IRN, Luther, Alboucq, Odegaard, Riddle, Whitten, Woods, Bentz, Eddins, and Zapffe) was reported in the period 1993-95. The other seven (Koch RN, Taylor, Cook, Anderson, Bream, Lamm, and Maxwell) reported the highest revenue during the base period.

Six outfitters (Armacost, Koch IRN, Luther, Alboucq, Odegaard, and Bentz) reported their highest year of revenue in 1995. Individual gross revenues ranged from a low of $2,358 (Bream) to a high of $527,955 (Koch HBE) during the base period, and a low of $525 (Maxwell) to a high of $566,643 (Koch HBE) from 1993 to 1995. Gross revenues in Alternative A (no-action), will continue to fluctuate as a result of a variety of factors including business turnover, customer demands, marketing, weather conditions, river conditions, prices, individual owner's business ability, etc.

Gross revenue associated with each section of the river was determined from the amount of service days reported to destinations and price differences charge for trips to different destinations within the Cache Creek to Pittsburg, Pittsburg to Kirkwood, Kirkwood to Wild Sheep, and Wild Sheep to Hells Canyon Dam portions.

Based on outfitter brochures for the base period, the outfitters charged 25% more for a trip in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section than the Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing, the scenic section (generally downriver of Dug Bar) section. Since Kirkwood has an interpretive facility (historical museum and buildings), and is within the wild river section, an assumption was made that trips to this destination would be 15% less than a trip above Kirkwood. Armacost's revenue was adjusted in a similar manner for the Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep and Wild Sheep to Kirkwood destinations considering that trip prices differed by 50-60% between these two sections of the river. No differences in advertised prices were discernible to adjust for revenue differences between the May-June and July-September periods of the primary season. Refer to the "Calculation of Average Gross Revenue" spreadsheets in the analysis file for each outfitter for a description of average gross revenue (1988-92) for the primary and secondary seasons by section of the river by May-June and July-September time periods.

The resulting relationship between service days per boat day and revenue per service day was used to determine total gross revenue for Alternatives B and C boat day allocations. Refer to Table III-9 for a description of annual gross revenue during the base period, 1993-95, for each outfitter, and by alternative. Alternative A represents the average gross revenue during the base period. The gross revenue effects account for primary season boat days allocated, allowed destinations of the boat days (including effects from the nonmotorized period), time period of allocated boat days during the primary season, and secondary season boat days used during the base period. Comparing the total gross revenue under the alternatives to the 1988-92 and the 1993-95 average gross revenue provides a relative indication of the magnitude of change. However, the comparisons are based on averages and may not represent the highest or lowest point of the potential change in gross revenue. Also, the 1993-95 average gross revenue represents a different distribution of revenue by section of the river than examined for the base period primarily due to changes in how many trips outfitters took to each section of the river, the number of passengers and days per trip, and the prices they charged. The two points of comparison provide a range of potential effects to individual outfitters.

Alternative B decreases annual gross revenue 11% compared to the 1988-92 average to $1,536,106. Six outfitters potentially experience a greater than 10% decrease in annual gross revenue. Lamm's gross revenue decreases the most (-100%) with the elimination of his permit, followed by Armacost (-35%); Alboucq (-16%), Koch RN (-15%), Woods (-13%), and Koch IRN (-10%). Four outfitters decrease gross revenue by 7% or less (Luther), followed by Riddle (-5%), Odegaard (-4%), and Koch HBE (-1%). Nine outfitters potentially experience a gain in gross revenue; Bentz (15%), Whitten (8%), Cook and Bream (7% each), Maxwell (6%), Anderson and Taylor (5% each), Zapffe (4%), and Eddins (1%).

Compared to the 1993-95 average gross revenue, Alternative B decreases annual gross revenue by 32%. Twelve outfitters potentially experience a decrease in annual gross revenue. Lamm's gross revenue decreases the most (-100%) with the elimination of his permit, followed by Armacost (-64%); Woods (-61%), Koch IRN (-59%), Zapffe (-55%), Odegaard (-51%), Bentz (-48%), Luther (-46%), Alboucq (-38%), potentially increase gross revenue; Maxwell (228%), Anderson (218%), Bream (123%), Koch RN (45%), Taylor (40%), Cook (20%), and Koch HBE (11%).

Alternative C decreases annual gross revenue 5% compared to the 1988-92 average to $1,635,253. Four outfitters potentially experience a greater than 10% decrease in annual gross revenue. Lamm's gross revenue decreases the most (-100%) with the elimination of his permit, followed by Armacost and Koch RN (-12% each); and Woods (-11%). Three outfitters potentially decrease gross revenue by 7% or less (Koch IRN), followed by Koch HBE (-2%), and Alboucq (-1%).

Twelve outfitters potentially experience a gain in gross revenue; Odegaard (37%), Whitten (19%), Cook (17%), Bentz (16%), Taylor (9%), Bream and Anderson (7% each), Maxwell and Riddle (6% each), Anderson and Taylor (5% each), Zapffe (4%), and Eddins (3%). Luther maintain their 1988-92 average gross revenue.

Compared to the 1993-95 average gross revenue, Alternative C decreases annual gross revenue by 24%. Twelve outfitters potentially experience a decrease in annual gross revenue. Lamm's gross revenue decreases the most (-100%) with the elimination of his permit, followed by Woods (-60%); Koch IRN (-58%), Zapffe (-55%), Armacost (-51%), Bentz (-47%), Luther (-42%), Odegaard (-30%), Alboucq (-27%), Riddle (-10%), Whitten (-7%), and Eddins (-6%). Seven outfitters potentially experience a gain in gross revenue; Maxwell (228%), Anderson (223%), Bream (123%), Koch RN (49%), Taylor (44%), Cook (31%), and Koch HBE (10%).

The changes in gross revenue described from comparing Alternatives B and C gross revenue to the 1993-95 average gross revenue are probably overstated due to trends displayed in Table II-2. For example, considering the change in prices and trip destinations that have occurred for Armacost since the base period, Alternative B reduces gross revenue by 31% when compared to the 1993-95 average (instead of 64% shown for the base period analysis). Alternative C reduces gross revenue by 6% when compared to the 1993-95 average (instead of the 51% shown for the base period analysis).

The gross revenue effects described for Alternatives B and C assume all primary season boat days allocated are used based on the average yearly increase in commercial powerboat use of 6.1% from 1982 to 1992 (FEIS IV-114). The effects assume secondary season boat days remains constant with the level achieved during the base period. Secondary season use has actually increased an average of 22% yearly in the six years since 1988. Actual boat levels used depend on a variety of factors, including consumer preferences and disposable income levels, outfitter marketing ability, weather, and water flow levels.

The gross revenue effects between the alternatives and the base period differ primarily from the reductions in the allocated boat days in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section, and from increases or decreases in the total amount of allocated use for each outfitter. Refer to the previous section on the allocation of boat days effects and Table III-6.

In Alternative B, assuming none of the outfitters sold any allocated boat days in the Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing river section) or to Kirkwood above the number they historically used in the scenic section, but sold all of the boat days above Kirkwood, annual gross revenue totals $1,258,486, a 27% decrease from the base period and a 61% decrease from the 1993-95 period. Effects to individual outfitters range from a high of -48% to Alboucq to a increase of 7% for Bream. Compared to 1993-95, individual effects could range from a high of -71% to Odegaard to an increase of 224% for Maxwell. In Alternative C, the decreases in potential gross revenue could be less since any allocated boat day from a scenic river portal can continue into the wild river to Kirkwood, and since all outfitters get more wild boat days than under Alternative B except Riddle and Whitten, who get five boat days and one boat day less, respectively.

Additional gross revenue effects to individual lodge owners beyond those accounted for by restricting boat days are not anticipated in the near future and unknown in the long-term. In the short-term, lodge owners maintain the capability to market their services to other outfitters and private users. In the long-term, limiting future growth in boat days for outfitters has the potential to reduce future growth for lodge owners.

Refer to Table III-9 for a description of annual gross revenue during the base period, 1993-95, for each outfitter, and alternative. Alternative A represents the average gross revenue during the base period.

Table III-9
Summary of Annual Gross Revenue Effects (1996$)
(Commercial Powerboats)

Portal Outfitter	Base Period Alternative A	Average Gross Revenue 1993-95	Alternative B	Percent Change from Base Period	Percent change from 1993-95	Alternative C	Percent Change from Base Period	Percent Change from 1993-1995	No New Market Oppor-tunities	Percent Change from Base Period	Percent Change from 1993-1995
HELLS CANYON DAM											
Armacost	$144,961	$260,019	$93,509	-35%	-64%	$128,059	-12%	-51%	$93,508	-35%	-64%
CACHE CREEK #1											
Koch HBE	$434,595	$388,642	$428,952	-1%	11%	$425,960	-2%	10%	$393,296	-10%	2%
Koch IRN	$159,787	$350,776	$143,128	-10%	-59%	$148,177	-7%	-58%	$117,490	-25%	-67%
Koch BN	$224,482	$131,957	$191,220	-15%	45%	$197,161	-12%	49%	$160,914	-28%	22%
Luther	$172,961	$295,084	$160,330	-7%	-46%	$172,430	0%	-42%	$92,181	-47%	-69%
Total:	$991,825	$1,164,460	$923,630	-7%	-26%	$943,748	-5%	-23%	$763,881	-23%	-52%
CACHE CREEK #2											
Alboucq	$76,879	$104,269	$64,617	-16%	-38%	$75,864	-1%	-27%	$40,232	-48%	-61%
Odegaard	$31,819	$62,018	$30,422	-4%	-51%	$43,473	37%	-30%	$17,816	-44%	-71%
Riddle	$66,817	$78,682	$63,190	-5%	-20%	$70,753	6%	-10%	$45,793	-31%	-42%
Taylor	$166,983	$125,881	$176,031	5%	40%	$181,875	9%	44%	$124,211	-26%	-1%
Total:	$342,498	$370,745	$334,260	-2%	-11%	$371,965	9%	0%	$228,052	-33%	-63%
CACHE CREEK #3											
Anderson	$10,104	$3,342	$10,623	5%	218%	$10,793	7%	223%	$9,349	-7%	180%
Bentz	$9,700	$21,450	$11,123	15%	-48%	$11,262	16%	-47%	$8,850	-9%	-59%
Bream	$4,034	$1,938	$4,330	7%	123%	$4,330	7%	123%	$4,330	7%	123%
Eddins	$7,121	$7,830	$7,170	1%	-8%	$7,346	3%	-6%	$6,583	-8%	-16%
Lamm	$67,382	$12,872	$0	-100%	-100%	$0	-100%	-100%	$0	-100%	-100%
Maxwell	$42,341	$13,675	$44,826	6%	228%	$44,902	6%	228%	$44,253	5%	224%
Zaplle	$41,868	$96,482	$43,515	4%	-55%	$43,653	4%	-55%	$42,455	1%	-56%
Total:	$182,550	$157,589	$121,584	-33%	-30%	$122,286	-33%	-29%	$115,620	-37%	-36%
PITTSBURG LANDING											
Cook	$25,202	$22,444	$26,841	7%	20%	$29,479	17%	31%	$24,579	-2%	10%
Whitten	$28,435	$36,614	$30,613	8%	-16%	$33,948	19%	-7%	$27,269	-4%	-26%
Woods	$6,484	$14,431	$5,669	-13%	-61%	$5,748	-11%	-60%	$5,376	-17%	-63%
Total:	$60,121	$73,489	$63,123	5%	-16%	$69,175	15%	-6%	$57,224	-5%	-28%
TOTAL:	$1,721,955	$2,026,301	$1,536,106	-11%	-32%	$1,635,253	-5%	-24%	$1,258,486	-27%	-61%

1. "No new market opportunity" means outfitter would not sell new scenic trips from boat days that were moved from the wild section to the scenic section under Alternative B.
2. Individual outfitter figures are from "Calculation of Gross Revenue" spreadsheets for each powerboat outfitter.

ASSESSMENT OF POWERBOAT BUSINESSES CAPABILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGE

Revenue impacts short-term and long-term business health. In the short-term, a decrease in revenue can place a business at risk if the business cannot mitigate or weather these losses. The longer-term effect may be a decrease in capability to adapt to future change. For these reasons, it is important to assess the capacity of individual outfitters to adapt to decreases in gross revenue due to changes in operations described in the alternatives. It is also important to understand that a rigorous determination of individual business viability is not possible due to the private nature of each businesses financial records. Primary season gross revenue per service day is therefore used as a proxy to assess the potential of each outfitter to adjust to changes in gross revenue.

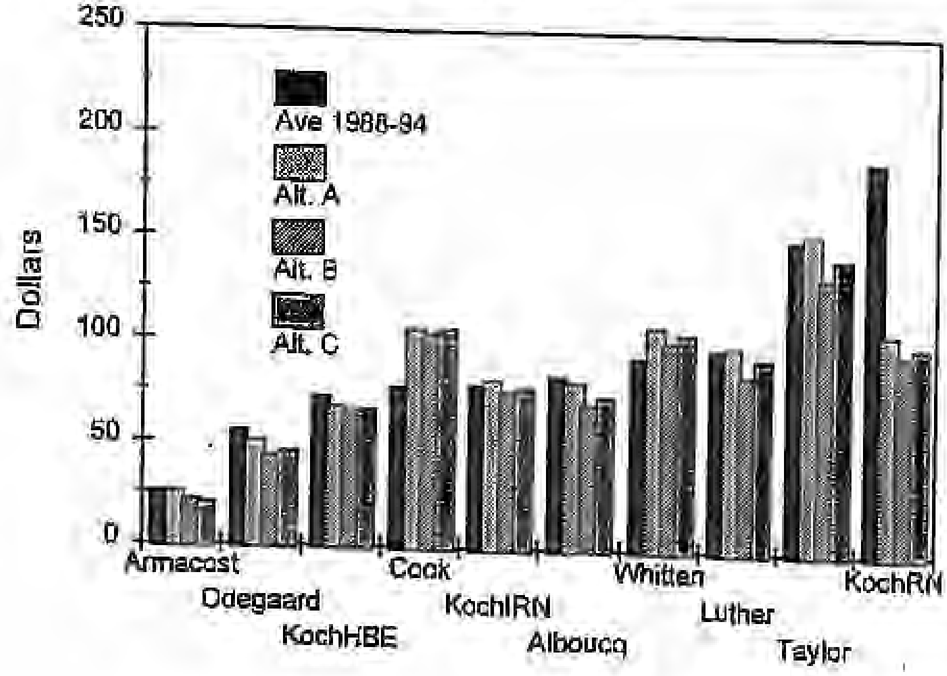
This proxy is based on the assumption that outfitters who earn a higher ratio of revenue to service day compared to other outfitters have less ability mitigate loss of revenue by increasing prices due to competition. Their business health is at more risk since they may have less capability to adapt to changes relative to the other outfitters.

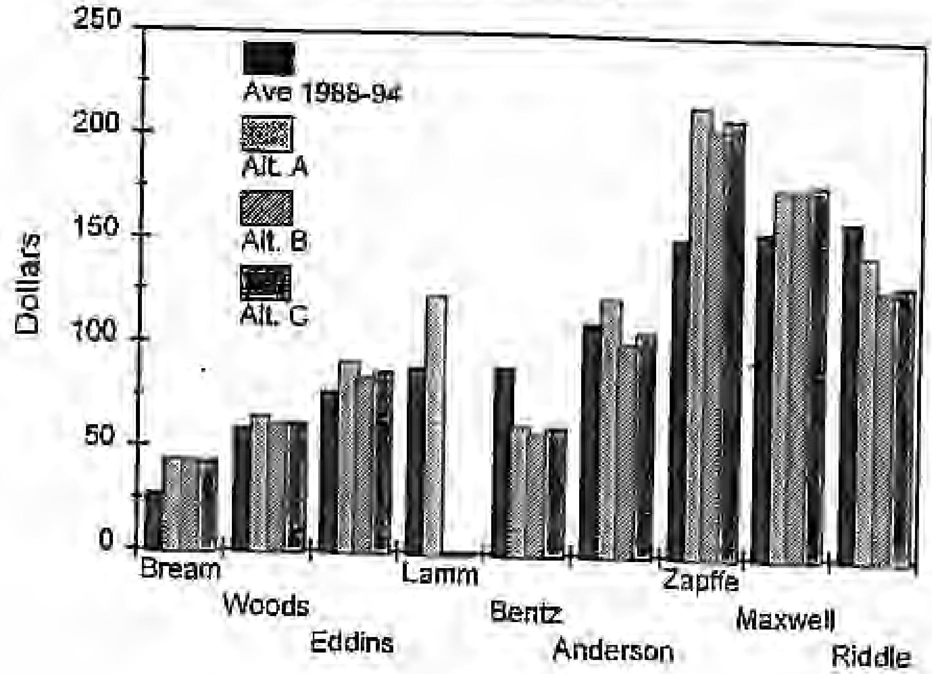
The 19 outfitters are grouped according to the primary type of service offered, scenic tours or fishing for analysis and display purposes. The scenic group consists of ten businesses; Alboucq, Armacost, Cook, Koch HBE, Koch IRN, Koch RN, Luther, Odegaard, Taylor, and Whitten. Armacost is included in this group, however, they are not truly comparable to the rest of the outfitters since they operate from Hells Canyon Dam downriver. The fishing group consists of nine businesses; Anderson, Bentz, Bream, Eddins, Lamm, Maxwell, Riddle, Woods, and Zapffe.

The revenue per service day is analyzed for each outfitter for the base period and for the 1993-94 period. The combined average of the two time periods is considered to reduce the variability in ownership, use, revenue, weather factors, river conditions, etc. occurring over the years.

Based on the index of revenue to service days, outfitters with higher ratios potentially have less capability to mitigate the decreased revenue effects of the alternatives. The outfitters with low ratios appear able to increase prices and remain competitive. The alternatives are then analyzed to determine potential short and longer-term impacts to the outfitter's capabilities to adapt to changes in their revenue per service day. Figures III-1 (Fishing Group Revenue Per Service Day) to III-2 (Scenic Group Revenue for Service Days) display the results of this analysis.

Figure III-2 Fishing Group Revenue Per Service Day





1994. Alternative A displays the revenue per service day derived from the base period of 1988 to 1992. Differences in the 1988 to 1994 average and Alternative A reveal the changes in revenue per service day realized during the 1993 to 1994 period. Compared to the 1988 to 1994 average, a shorter Alternative A bar means that either a lower price per service day or more service days were achieved during 1993 and 1994. A taller bar for Alternative A means the opposite. Alternative B and C are compared to Alternative A. Differences in bar heights are the result of changing the number of boat days combined with shifts in destinations on the river as a result of the action alternatives.

Compared to Alternative A, Alternatives B and C reduce revenue per service day for all outfitters except for a slight increase in Alternative C for Maxwell. The decreases for Alternative B range between 0% and 17% and the decreases under Alternative B are generally less that 10% except for Armacost who has a decrease of 20%.

Within the scenic group for the years 1988 to 1994, Whitten, Luther, Taylor, and Koch RN have generated the highest revenue per service day. Using this index as a proxy for adaptability to decreases in revenue, these businesses are least capable of mitigating alternative changes by raising price. In Alternative B, Luther and Taylor have a the second largest decreases (14%) in revenue per service day in this group. In Alternative C, Luther, Taylor, and Koch RN show decreases of 6%, 8%, and 6%, respectively. Cook, under all alternatives could be considered less capable of adapting to change, however, this company incurs the least decreases in revenue per service day under the action alternatives. It should be noted that use reporting fluctuates between the three Koch businesses which creates varied results for their average revenue per service day.

The fishing group for the years 1988 to 1994 has Anderson, Zapffe, Maxwell, and Riddle generating the highest revenue per service day. These businesses are least capable of mitigating alternative changes by raising price. In Alternative B, Anderson and Riddle have the largest decreases (17% and 12%, respectively) in revenue per service day in this group. In Alternative C, Anderson and Riddle also have the largest decreases in the fishing group (13% and 10%, respectively). Note that Lamm's temporary permit has been terminated under the action alternatives.

In the longer-term, those businesses that generally have higher revenue per service day ratios do not change their relative position with respect to the other outfitters. The outfitters that are least capable to adapt presently will remain so into the foreseeable future. What is not known is the relationship of business health to continued growth in boat days into the future. The businesses that are heavily dependent on expansion, with respect to boat days, may find it very difficult to adapt to the limits imposed under Alternatives B and C.

SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC EFFECTS

Refer to Table III-13 at the end of this Chapter for a summary of changes to boat days, total gross revenue, and scheduling flexibility by outfitter for each alternative.

... COMMERCIAL FLOAT OUTFITTERS

There are 16 floatboat outfitters (14 priority use and 2 temporary use) permitted by the Forest Service to operate on the HCNRA portion of the Snake River. In addition, there are 35 float outfitters permitted by the BLM to operate on the Lower Salmon River and the lower portion of the Snake River below the confluence of the Snake and the Salmon rivers.

The outfitters permitted by the Forest Service are grouped below by multi-day and one-day float trips as follows:

Multi-Day	One-Day
Oars-Dories (Wendt)	Hells Canyon Adventures (Armacost)
Davis Whitewater Expeditions (Davis)	Snake River Adventures (Luther)
River Odysseys West (ROW) (Grubb)	
Canyon Outfitters, Inc. (Hauptman)	
Idaho Afloat (Howard)	
Hughes River Expeditions, Inc. (Hughes)	
Heller Bar Excursions (Koch B&F)	
Northwest Voyageurs (Peavey)	
Peer's Snake River Rafting (Peer)	
Oregon Trail Adventures (Porfily)	
Hells Canyon Adventures Raft (Randle)	
Freewater (Steele)	
Steen's Wilderness Adventures (Steen)	
Holiday River Expedition of Idaho (Stewart)	

All trips except Koch's and Luther's originate at Hells Canyon Creek. During the base period, Koch and Luther started many of their trips in the wild river in conjunction with their jetboat operations.

Each outfitter offers a specific range of services. For detailed information by outfitter, refer to the historical summary of float businesses in Appendix A and the "Outfitter Narratives" contained in the analysis file.

The following discussion of effects uses the outfitter's last name instead of the registered business name for clarity.

RECENT TRENDS IN COMMERCIAL FLOAT BUSINESSES

Several factors were evaluated to determine trends in individual business and overall industry operations since the base period (See Table III-10). The two-year average of 1993 and 1994 use and revenue is used as a reference point since this is the most complete recent information. Much of the data used in this analysis is estimated from the relationship between total gross revenue and primary season use figures. Since information on launches, passengers, and craft numbers is available only for the primary season, and gross revenue is available only for the total season, the actual ratios are overstated by the proportion of revenue received in the secondary season. However, the trends are valid.

Table III-10
Primary Season Gross Revenue, Float Launch, and Passenger Trends (Base Period Average 1988-92 Compared to Two-Year Average 1993-94) (Commercial Float Outfitters)

Outfitter	Launches Percent Change	Revenue Percent Change	Revenue/ Launch Percent Change	Passengers Percent Change	Revenue/ Passenger Percent Change	Craft/launch Percent Change	Trip Days Percent Change	Ownership Turnover
Multi-day Trips:								
Wendt	-35%	-60%	-37%	-65%	14%	-3%	-17%	2
Davis	-13%	19%	36%	0%	19%	28%	14%	1
Grubb	18%	41%	19%	30%	8%	28%	-11%	3
Hauptman	-6%	-87%	-2%	22%	-25%	89%	0%	3
Howard	0%	-1%	-1%	-37%	58%	-17%	-14%	2
Hughes	18%	54%	31%	57%	-2%	72%	0%	1
Koch B&F	-69%	-43%	83%	-44%	2%	540%	0%	2
Peavey	-33%	18%	76%	0%	18%	36%	0%	2
Peer	140%	-38%	-74%	498%	-90%	58%	-50%	2
Portily	17%	-13%	-25%	1%	-14%	12%	-33%	4
Randle	-63%	-7%	148%	-39%	53%	1467%	-20%	2
Steele	-50%	-44%	11%	-48%	6%	0%	-9%	2
Steen	33%	78%	33%	65%	7%	55%	0%	1
Stewart	7%	79%	67%	56%	15%	22%	5%	2
One-day Trips:								
Armacost 1-day	27%	105%	62%	71%	20%	10%	0%	1
Luther 1-day	-63%	-89%	-70%	-91%	20%	-11%	0%	0
TOTALS	-12%	15%	30%	13%	1%	61%	-13%	30

Eight outfitters have increased or maintained the number of launches used ranging from 7% to 140% since the base period. Decreases in the number of launches used range from -13% to -69%. Across all owners, launches have decreased by 12%. This decrease in launches should be considered in light of the overall 13% increase in passengers. Ten outfitter have increased or maintained the number of passengers ranging from 1% to 498% since the base period. Decreases in the number of passengers range from -37% to -91%.

Seven out of sixteen outfitters have experienced an increase in total gross revenue ranging from 18% to 105% since the base period. Decreases in total gross revenue range from -1% to -89%. Changes in overall revenue may be due to a combination of factors including changes in number of trips, trip lengths, passengers, prices, discounts, services supplied, marketing efforts, weather, size of boats, river conditions, and numerous other elements.

Changes in ownership, type and duration of trips, services provided, prices, boat sizes, etc., is extremely variable between outfitters. However, the amount of revenue earned per passenger day (one person per day or part of the day on the river) provides a reasonable measure for comparing each business's performance to the base period. Twelve of the businesses have increased their revenue per passenger day since the base period ranging from 2% to 58%. The remaining four businesses have decreased the amount of revenue earned per service day ranging from -2% to -90%.

Over the entire commercial float industry group, total gross revenue and primary season passengers have increased by 15% and 13%, respectively, resulting in a 16% increase in revenue per passenger day compared to the base period. As noted above, float launches have actually decreased over the same period by -12%.

Four of the float outfitters have operated continually since the early 1980's. During the base period, float outfitter businesses changed ownership five times. More recently, outfitter businesses have changed ownership another five times.

EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVES TO FLOAT OUTFITTERS

Refer to Chapter II for a detailed description of the operational limits for Alternative A (no action) and Alternatives B and C (action alternatives). The following sections describe direct and indirect effects to commercial float outfitters.

Launch Locations for Commercial Floatcraft and Areas of Operation

Alternative A allows all float outfitters to launch from Hells Canyon Creek, Pittsburg Landing, and Dug Bar during the primary and secondary seasons. All float outfitters launched from Hells Canyon Creek during the base period except Koch B&F and Luther who launched one-day float trips between Wild Sheep and Kirkwood in conjunction with their powerboat operations and overnight stays at Copper Creek Resort and Sheep Creek Cabin, respectively. Steele's business launched one float trip from Pittsburg Landing.

Alternative B limits launch locations to Hells Canyon Creek in the primary season, but does not limit locations in the secondary season. Establishing a single launch location limits outfitter's flexibility for launching trips from a different portal, but no economic impacts to outfitter's gross revenue are expected compared to Alternative A because all outfitters (except Koch B&F, Armacost, and Luther) can launch from their usual launch point. Koch B&F will need to move the origin of their trips from the area of Rush Creek upriver to Hells Canyon Creek. This does not eliminate any float launches or associated gross revenue because they can still use the same number of launches from the dam. It does limit their flexibility to launch below Hells Canyon Dam to accommodate one-day trips and reach Copper Creek Resort in the same day. Luther and Armacost will not have a permit, eliminating their float launches and associated gross revenue. The effect to Steele is minimal since the only trip occurred during the base period.

Alternative C allows all outfitters including Koch, Armacost, and Luther to launch float trips from anywhere upstream from Pittsburg Landing in the primary season with no restrictions in the secondary season. Designating launch locations does not reduce outfitters float launches or areas of operation or gross revenue because all commercial float outfitters can continue to launch from the location they primarily use (upriver of Pittsburg Landing).

Refer to the previous section on effects of launching inflatable watercraft from commercial powerboats for further discussion of effects from limiting launch locations to Koch B&F, Armacost, and Luther. Refer to the following section on the effects of the nonmotorized period to outfitters who operate in conjunction with their commercial powerboat permit.

Maximum and Minimum Numbers of Commercial Float Outfitters at Specific Portals

Alternative A allows for 16 commercial float permits which are all currently filled including two temporary use permits. Alternative B eliminates the two temporary use permits (Armacost and Luther), eliminating their total launches and gross revenue associated with these operations. The maximum number of permits total 14. Armacost's float launches and gross revenue will be eliminated from the Hells Canyon Creek portal. Luther's float launches and gross revenue will be eliminated from their float trips that operate in conjunction with their powerboat operations which originates passengers from the Cache Creek portal. Alternative C maintains all float permits (16) including the two temporary permits. No changes to float launches, gross revenue, or scheduling flexibility will occur from establishing minimum and maximum numbers of permits because outfitters can continue to launch from the portal they primarily launch from compared to Alternative A.

Allocation of Use (float launches)

In Alternative A (no-action), outfitters can continue to operate multi-day trips within their initial allocation of two launches per day with a specific launch calender for 224 total commercial launches during the primary season. The one vacant permit will continue to provide 14 additional launches to the commercial pool dates for scheduling flexibility. During the base period, actual primary season launches averaged 217. Two outfitters averaged more launches than they were allocated (Randle and Koch B&F). The extra launches occurred when unused launches in the pool were picked up or trips were conducted downstream of Rush Creek where reservations were not required (Koch). Randle's use occurred during the base period by another owner (Armacost) whose permit was used primarily to conduct one-day trips. The one-day float outfitters can continue to operate.

Alternatives B and C continue to limit commercial launches at the same level as Alternative A. The vacant permit will be split between private users (6 launches) and commercial users (6 launches) based on historical allocations of use between the two user groups. Individual outfitters can continue to operate within their allocated launches with the exception of Armacost and Luther whose one-day permits are eliminated. Refer to Chapter II and Appendix B and Appendix C for description of launch allocations for each outfitter. Randle's current use is not reduced compared to his allocation. Koch B&F has to rely on the unused commercial and private launches in the pool for two additional launches they used in the base period (16). Splitting the vacant permit reduces the total number of dates in the commercial portion of the pool for flexibility to schedule trips. The effect on float launches, gross revenue, and flexibility is minimal considering that 20% of commercial float launches were unused in 1992 and 27% were unused in 1995 providing on average three to four additional vacant launches per week. In the 1993-94 period, all outfitters were operating at or below their allocated launches.

Timing and Duration of Nonmotorized Period

Alternative A (no-action) does not have a nonmotorized period. Float outfitters will not have the flexibility to market a trip for a nonmotorized experience on the Snake River.

Alternative B and C allow for a three-day nonmotorized period providing float outfitters the opportunity to market this type of trip experience on the Snake River. This may or may not affect the number of trips, passengers, days on the river, and subsequent gross revenue depending on a variety of factors including each outfitter's marketing ability, business investment, debt load, weather, and river flows.

The nonmotorized period eliminates float outfitters ability to use jetback services to Hells Canyon Creek if they end their trip on a nonmotorized day. Nine outfitters reported using jetbacks to the dam for the majority or at least some of their trips during the base period. Average trip lengths for multi-day outfitters varies from 2-6 days. Outfitters may have to shorten or lengthen their trips to coincide with a motorized day for jetbacks to the dam. Outfitters will have to arrange ground transportation for shuttling customers back to Hells Canyon Dam or bring their gear and vehicles to the take-out point for trips ending on a nonmotorized day. Based on the number of days and launches in the primary season and the total number of nonmotorized days, a maximum of 22% of the float launches may be affected. Changes to gross revenue due to expenses for ground transportation and loss of jetback services and flexibility will occur for both float and powerboat outfitters to accommodate trips around the nonmotorized period.

Flexibility for both float and powerboat outfitters to schedule jetbacks around the nonmotorized period will be less in Alternative B than in Alternative C because powerboat outfitters will have to schedule jetbacks on specific days allocated to them rather than have flexibility to accommodate jetbacks with a certain number of days per month as needed by float outfitters. Alternative C also allocates more boat days than Alternative B providing greater flexibility for scheduling jetbacks. Powerboat outfitters who provide jetouts to locations downriver of Kirkwood will be affected since all float trips end below Kirkwood (the end of the nonmotorized section). Refer to the previous section on effects to commercial powerboat outfitters from limiting launching of inflatable watercraft for a further discussion of the effects on float outfitters who use their powerboat permit in conjunction with their float trips.

In Alternative C, the one-day float outfitters (Armacost and Luther) lose the flexibility to launch float trips every other day from Monday through Wednesday (nonmotorized period). However, they gain flexibility to schedule trips every other day Thursday through Sunday on nonmotorized weeks as long as there are unused launches on those dates from the pool. Between the two outfitters, one launch per week is eliminated during the nonmotorized weeks. During the motorized weeks, they can launch seven days a week if use is available. Launches and gross revenue will be further reduced and eventually eliminated when all launches are used by commercial multi-day and private floaters and no excess capacity exists in the pool. Refer to the previous discussion on allocation of float launches for description of unused float launches.

Launch Schedule

All float outfitters continue to operate under a limited daily use schedule as occurred in the base period in all alternatives. The two temporary use permits (Luther and Armacost) are eliminated under Alternative B eliminated associated float launches and gross revenue. Alternative C allows Luther and Armacost to operate with unused launches from the pool on four days of the week during the nonmotorized weeks and seven days per week on motorized weeks as compared to five days during the base period. Each outfitter has the flexibility to increase the number of float launches and gross revenue compared to their actual use during the base period. Although the number of available launches from the pool varies daily, the lowest year of unused launches was 1992 with 112 (20% of total private and commercial). Approximately 27% of commercial float launches were unused in 1995.

Party Size for Commercial Users

Alternative A (no-action) allows float outfitters to operate trips with up to 30 passengers. Actual use reports for ten outfitters (Wendt, Grubb, Hauptman, Howard, Hughes, Peavey, Porfily, Randle, Steen, and Stewart) showed trips with between 24 to 35 passengers during the base period.

Alternative B and C reduce party size to 24 people including guides. Gross revenue is potentially reduced from reducing the number of passengers for the ten individual outfitters who had large groups during the base period. Gross revenue effects from the loss of passengers ranges from -1% to -7% compared to the base period. Limitations to party size potentially reduce gross revenue by 5-7% for Wendt, Howard, Peavey, and Porfily and by 1-4% for Grubb, Hauptman, Hughes, Randle, Steen, and Stewart. Refer to the summary of gross revenue effects later in this chapter for more discussion.

Maximum Number of Commercial Floatcraft per Party

Alternative A (no-action) allows float outfitters to operate trips with up to 30 craft of any valid type (raft, drift, kayak, inflatable, canoe, etc.). Actual use reports for six outfitters (Wendt, Davis, Hauptman, Howard, Hughes, and Porfily) showed trips with between 10 to 17 craft during the base period. All craft type on trips with more than eight craft in a party were one-person inflatables except for Porfily who had an average of 11 rafts on some trips under a previous owner who specialized in row-your-own kayak trips.

Alternatives B and C reduce the maximum number of craft to eight per party. Gross revenue is potentially reduced from reducing the number of craft for the six individual outfitters who had large groups during the base period. Gross revenue effects from the loss of craft range from -1% to -13% compared to the base period. Porfily has the greatest potential effect to gross revenue (-13%) because his craft over the eight were rafts and held more passengers. However, the effect to Porfily is overestimated because Porfily does primarily offers multi-day raft trips compared to the previous owner who did primarily row-your-own trips that required several craft during the base period. The other five outfitters have a potential gross revenue effect of less than three percent because the inflatables only held one person on average.

Use of Kickers on Commercial Floatcraft in the Wild River

Alternative A (no-action) allows float outfitters to use kickers (outboard motors) in any section of the river to help propel rafts downriver in slack water or against headwinds. Five outfitters reported using kickers on their cargo rafts and for emergency evacuation purposes when necessary. Three of the outfitters (Randle, Hughes, and Howard) have used them in the wild section of the river.

Alternatives B and C eliminate kickers and prevent the three outfitters from using kickers in the wild river section year-round. All outfitters can continue to use kickers in the scenic section year-round. The three outfitters have to potentially buy smaller or lower profile rafts to accommodate their cargo and still float to Pittsburg Landing in relatively the same amount of time. The size and cost of rafts varies depending on the equipment already available to the outfitter, the numbers of passengers on the trip, and the conditions such as high winds and emergency needs that required the use of kickers.

Management and Coordination of Commercial Salmon River Floaters

Alternative A (no-action) allows lower Salmon River commercial floaters with party sizes up to 30 passengers and crew to continue to camp anywhere below the confluence of the Snake and Salmon Rivers. Any trip can include more than eight craft per party.

Alternatives B and C require commercial float trips entering the Snake River from the Lower Salmon River with more than 24 people to camp within the first mile below the confluence. Other options to camping exist such as obtaining a jetout to Heller Bar to complete the trip in the same day, or using kickers to reach Bear Bar 12 miles downriver (first camp location off the HCNRA). This takes several hours from the confluence.

commercial float trips entering the Snake River from the Lower Salmon River have to meet the eight craft per party limit. Over the last three years (1993-95), eight to ten companies out of 35 Lower Salmon River outfitters had an average party size between 18-24 (including guides). Two of these companies had years with an average party size of 26, and one company had an average party size of 30 in one year. Average number of passengers per party (including guides) for all Salmon River outfitters permitted to operate on the Snake River has been 15 for the last three years. The average numbers of craft are not available for these outfitters.

Assuming the average number of craft per trip for the Snake River outfitters is comparable to the Salmon River outfitters, and the average number of people per craft (3), these outfitters may have had some trips with 9-10 total craft. Limiting craft per party to eight primarily affects outfitters that accommodate groups larger than 24 people and outfitters that do row-your-own kayak trips if they continue onto the Snake River. Row-your-own trips generally have one person per inflatable kayak or 1-2 people per raft and require additional guides in kayaks or rafts for assistance through rapids as a safety precaution.

These companies may have to reconfigure their trips to meet the craft limit of eight. Some outfitters currently use larger rafts to accommodate the same number of people in the groups, tie rafts together or into pod formations upon reaching the confluence and motor out with a kicker, complete the trip at the confluence, take a jetout to Heller Bar off the HCNRA or upriver to Pittsburg Landing. If the row-your-own kayak companies wanted to continue their trip on the Snake River, they have to buy 2-3 additional rafts (approximately $3,000 - $6,500 each) possibly an outboard motor to carry the deflated kayaks and extra passengers who were in the rafts from the confluence downriver. This requires hiring 2-3 additional guides at a cost of approximately $100/day per guide for an average four day trip.

Snake River powerboat outfitters have historically provided jetout services to Heller Bar and jetback services to Pittsburg Landing for the Lower Salmon outfitters. This service can continue within allocated boat days for each outfitter. Additional scheduling and coordination may be required with the powerboat outfitters to find one that can accommodate their trip dates within their allocation. Whether powerboat outfitters continue this service due to limitations on their boat days is unknown. The allocated boat days provide 8 commercial powerboat launches per day under Alternative B and 8.8 commercial powerboat launches per day in Alternative C in this section of the river providing the opportunity for all of the powerboat outfitters except Armacost to accommodate jetouts. Float outfitters can also continue to float to the HCNRA boundary and have unlimited access to jetouts at that point.

Gross Revenue Effects

During the base period, average annual gross revenue totalled $884,634 for all float outfitters. Total revenue ranged from a high of $1,194,394 in 1995 to a low of $759,758 in 1988. Average revenue for the period 1993-95 totalled $1,069,578. The highest year of revenue for eight outfitters (Davis, Grubb, Hughes, Peavey, Peer, Steen, Stewart, and Armacost) was reported in the period 1993-95. The other eight (Wendt, Hauptman, Howard, Koch B&F, Porfily, Randle, Steele, and Luther) reported the highest revenue during the base period.

Five outfitters (Davis, Grubb, Hughes, Peavey, and Porfily) reported their highest year of revenue in 1995. Individual gross revenues ranged from a low of $1,031 (Luther) to a high of $185,201 (Hughes) during the base period, and a low of $458 (Luther) to a high of $264,901 (Hughes) from 1993 to 1995. Under Alternative A (no-action), gross revenues will continue to fluctuate as a result of a variety of factors including business turnover, customer demands, marketing, weather conditions, river conditions, prices, individual owner's business ability, etc.

Gross revenues were reported for the entire year by each outfitter. Assuming the greater proportion of passengers and days spent on the river occurred in the primary season, gross revenue associated with each primary season launch, passenger, and passenger day was determined for each outfitter. Approximately 16 launches was recorded per year in the secondary season during the base period.

The resulting relationship between revenue per launch, revenue per passenger, and revenue per craft was used to determine total gross revenue for Alternatives B and C. Refer to Table III-11 for a description of annual gross revenue during the base period, 1993-95, for each outfitter, and alternative. Alternative A represents average gross revenue during the base period. The gross revenue effects account for primary season launches used historically, the total launches allocated, the effects of limiting party sizes to 24, and the effects of limiting the number of craft to eight. Comparing the total gross revenue under the alternatives to the 1988-92 and the 1993-95 average gross revenue provides a relative indication of the highest or lowest point of the potential change in gross revenue. Also, the 1993-95 average gross revenue represents a different relationship between revenue, launches, passengers, and craft numbers than examined for the base period primarily due to changes in how many trips outfitters took to each section of the river, the number of passengers and days per trip, and the prices they charged. The two points of comparison provide a range of potential effects to individual outfitters.

Alternatives B and C annual gross revenue totals $812,972 and $844,288, an 8% and 5% decrease from the base period, respectively. All sixteen outfitters potentially experience a decrease in annual gross revenue. Armacost's and Luther's gross revenue decreases the most (-100%) with the elimination of their one-day permits under Alternative B. Other decreases potentially occur as follows: Porfily (-20%), Wendt (-8%), Hughes (-7%), Howard (-6%), Hauptman and Peavey (-5%), Steen (-4%), Randle (-3%), Grubb (-2%), Davis and Stewart (-1%). Koch B&F, Peer, and Steele maintain the same level of gross revenue.

Compared to the 1993-95 average gross revenue, under Alternatives B and C, annual gross revenue decreases by 24% and 21%, respectively. Eleven outfitters potentially experience a decrease in annual gross revenue. Armacost and Luther's gross revenue decreases the most (-100%) with the elimination of their permits under Alternative B, followed by Steen (-49%), Hughes (-43%), Grubb (-43%), Stewart (-38%), Peavey (-34%), Davis (-28%), Hauptman (-7%), Porfily (-6%), and Howard (-3%).

The gross revenue effects described for Alternatives B and C assume the average primary season float launches actually used during the base period (1988-92) will continue to be used. However, all outfitters have decreased or increased the number of launches they've used compared to 1993-94 as described previously in the trend analysis. The gross revenue effects assume secondary season launches remain constant with the level achieved during the base period. Data is unavailable on secondary season use to determine any trend. Actual float launches used depends on a variety of factors, including consumer preferences and disposable income levels, outfitter marketing ability, weather, and water flow levels.

In Alternatives B and C, assuming all of the outfitters could sell every allocated float launch at the 1993-94 average revenue per launch, the annual gross revenue would total $1,285,756, a 45% increase from the base period and a 20% increase from the 1993-95 period. Effects to individual outfitters could range from a high of 138% to Davis to a decrease of 27% for Peer compared to the base period. Compared to 1993-95, individual effects could range from a high of 273% to Koch B&F to a decrease of 11 % for Grubb. The gross revenue effects do not include any launches potentially gained from the commercial pool which tends to narrow the range of effects described. Some outfitters show a decrease in gross revenue if they used all of their launches because they earned less revenue per launch in the 1993-94 period as compared to the base period.

The economic analysis file contains further details and descriptions of economic effects and assumptions for each outfitter.

Table III-11
Summary of Annual Gross Revenue Effects (1996$)
(Commercial Float Outfitters)

Outfitter	Base Period Average Alt. A	Average Gross Revenue 1993-95	Percent change from Base Period	Percent change from 1993-95	Gross Revenue Alt. B (1)	Percent change from Base Period	Percent change from 1993-95	Gross Revenue Alt. C (1)	Percent change from Base Period	Percent change from 1993-95	Gross Revenue Alt. A if All Launches Used (2)	Percent change from Base Period	Percent change from 1993-95
Multi-day Trips:													
Chang	$91,574	$51,808	0%	-43%	$84,113	-8%	62%	$84,113	-8%	62%	$72,964	-20%	41%
Davis	$23,309	$32,249	0%	38%	$23,106	-1%	-28%	$23,106	-1%	-28%	$55,407	138%	72%
Grubb	$81,822	$139,903	0%	71%	$80,003	-2%	-43%	$80,003	-2%	-43%	$123,870	51%	-11%
Hauptman	$125,489	$129,105	0%	3%	$119,625	-5%	-7%	$119,625	-5%	-7%	$151,697	21%	17%
Howard	$66,688	$64,924	0%	-3%	$62,974	-6%	-3%	$62,974	-6%	-3%	$84,160	26%	30%
Hughes	$156,283	$255,368	0%	63%	$145,452	-7%	-43%	$145,452	-7%	-43%	$252,631	62%	-1%
Koch B&F	$27,211	$11,716	0%	-57%	$27,211	0%	132%	$27,211	0%	132%	$43,684	61%	273%
Peavey	$49,934	$71,625	0%	43%	$47,437	-5%	-34%	$47,437	-5%	-34%	$102,694	106%	43%
Peer	$21,433	$14,655	0%	-32%	$21,433	0%	46%	$21,433	0%	46%	$15,580	-27%	6%
Portfily	$18,580	$15,905	0%	-14%	$14,909	-20%	-6%	$14,909	-20%	-6%	$32,510	75%	104%
Randle	$57,502	$39,176	0%	-32%	$55,617	-3%	42%	$55,617	-3%	42%	$62,391	9%	59%
Steele	$32,059	$17,859	0%	-44%	$32,059	0%	80%	$32,059	0%	80%	$50,005	56%	180%
Steen	$31,371	$59,119	0%	88%	$30,063	-4%	-49%	$30,063	-4%	-49%	$64,973	107%	10%
Stewart	$69,854	$112,033	0%	60%	$68,970	-1%	-38%	$68,970	-1%	-38%	$116,783	67%	4%
One-day Trips:													
Armacost 1 dy	$27,244	$53,675	0%	97%	$0	-100%	-100%	$27,244	0%	-49%	$55,948	105%	4%
Luther 1 dy	$4,072	$458	0%	-89%	$0	-100%	-100%	44,072	0%	789%	$458	-89%	-0%
TOTALS:	$884,834	$1,069,578	0%	21%	$812,972	-8%	-24%	$844,288	-5%	-21%	$1,285,756	45%	20%

1. Based on 1988-92 average revenue per launch and average number of launches used during the base period.
2. Based on 1993-94 average revenue per launch and total number of launches allocated.

The alternative's impacts on the short-term and long-term business health of the commercial floatboat industry can be assessed by looking at the ability of the industry to maintain or expand existing revenues given the imposed limitations. This analysis looks at the effects of the alternatives on each outfitter and the available capacity in unused launch dates. Table III-12 identifies the percent changes in passengers, number of craft, and decreases in launches by outfitter. The available capacity for additional float trips to mitigate the effects of the alternatives is also displayed by comparing the number of launches available to actual use in the base period and the 1993 to 1994 average.

TABLE III-12
IMPACTS OF ACTION ALTERNATIVES ON FLOAT OUTFITTERS

Outfitter	Alt. B & C Passengers Change	Alt B & C Floatcraft Change	Alt B Only Launch Change	Alt B & C Base-Period Unused Capacity	Alt B & C 1993-94 Unused Capacity
Multi-day Trips					
Wendt	-7%	-1%		21%	50%
Davis		-1%		43%	50%
Grubb	-2%			21%	7%
Hauptman	-2%	-3%		19%	24%
Howard	-5%	-1%		21%	21%
Hughes	-4%	-3%		19%	5%
Koch B&F				-14%	64%
Peavey	-5%			14%	43%
Peer				64%	14%
Porfily	-7%	-13%		57%	50%
Randle	-3%			29%	14%
Steele				29%	64%
Steen	-4%			36%	14%
Stewart	-1%			0%	-7%
One-day Trips					
Armacost			-100%	21%	0%
Luther			-100%	79%	92%

The alternatives appear to offer most multi-day outfitters the capability to add launches within present capacity limits in order to mitigate reductions due to limits on the number of float craft and party size. It also appears that most have the ability to experience growth into the foreseeable future. The exception to this group are Hughes and Stewart. If the changes for Hughes are cumulative, then the unused capacity of the 1993 to 1994 period will be completely filled. This business could incur actual reductions in gross revenue and have no capacity for growth. Stewart is operating at the launch limit so that reductions in gross revenue are likely and growth within this business is not possible. Note that negative numbers in capacity reflect where outfitters have picked up unused launches from the pool in addition to their allocation (Stewart) or ran trips below Rush Creek where float launches were not limited (Koch).

Armacost and Luther, under Alternative B lose the temporary permits and all business associated with the permits. Alternative C effects vary and are dependent on capacity not used by other commercial and private parties. For Armacost the best result is limited growth and the worst result is that all available launch dates are used by other commercial and private parties. Armacost loses this business activity. Luther has the capacity to expand the business under the most positive outcome, and like Armacost, lose all one-day float trips under the worst outcome. It is likely that Armacost will see this business activity erode over time. Luther can expand in the near future and then lose this business activity later. Based on float launch utilization trends, it is likely that there will be some level of temporary one-day float trips that will continue in the short-term (refer to Table III-10).

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

These potential impacts on Luther, Armacost, and Koch can be additive to the losses in revenue from the powerboat business activity. The analysis for Luther and Koch showed reduced capability to adapt to changes to the power boat limitations; however, the float business only generates about 2% of Luther's total gross revenue and 3% of Koch's total gross revenue. While the analysis showed Armacost was better in adapting to change, the loss of the floatboat activity combined with the losses in powerboat gross revenues approaches a 50% loss in average gross revenue compared to the base period under Alternative B, and a 25% loss over time under Alternative C.

SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC EFFECTS

Refer to Table III-13 below for a summary of changes to boat days and launches, total gross revenue, and scheduling flexibility by outfitter for each alternative.

Table III-13
Summary of Economic Effects
Changes to Boat Days/Launches, Gross Revenue, and Scheduling Flexibility

Outfitter	Alternative A			Alternative B			Alternative C		
Commercial Powerboat	**Average Boat Days/ Launches**	**Average Gross Revenues**	**Scheduling Flexibility**	**Change in Boat Days/ Launches**	**Change in Gross Revenues**	**Scheduling Flexibility**	**Change in Boat Days/ Launches**	**Change in Gross Revenues**	**Schedu Flexibi**
Armacost	387	$144,961	H	-163	-35%	L	10	-12%	M
Koch HBE	228	$434,595	H	-6	-1%	L	-4	-2%	M
Koch IRN	62	$159,787	H	16	-10%	L	23	-7%	M
Koch RN	111	$224,482	H	9	-15%	L	7	-12%	M
Luther	131	$172,961	H	8	-7%	L	8	0%	M
Alboucq	75	$76,878	H	-2	-16%	L	10	-1%	M
Odegaard	50	$31,818	H	6	-4%	L	35	37%	M
Riddle	37	$66,817	H	2	-5%	L	6	8%	M
Taylor	64	$166,983	H	1	5%	L	21	9%	M
Anderson	4	$10,184	H	2	5%	L	2	7%	M
Bentz	8	$9,700	H	3	15%	L	3	16%	M
Bream	6	$4,034	H	1	7%	L	1	7%	M
Eddins	5	$7,121	H	1	1%	L	1	3%	M
Lamm	52	$67,382	H	-52	-100%	-	-52	-100%	-
Maxwell	2	$42,541	H	2	6%	L	2	6%	M
Zaplle	4	$41,868	H	2	4%	L	2	4%	M
Cook	20	$25,202	H	4	7%	L	11	17%	M
Whitten	30	$28,435	H	1	8%	L	10	19%	M
Woods	7	$6,484	H	-	-13%	L	2	-11%	M
Totals:	1,283	$1,721,955	H	-75	-11%	L	98	-5%	M
Commercial Float									
Wendt	11	$91,574	H	-	-8%	L	-	-8%	
Davis	8	$23,309	H	-	-1%	L	-	-1%	M
Grubb	11	$81,622	H	-	-2%	L	-	-2%	M
Haupiman	17	$125,489	H	-	-5%	L	-	-5%	M
Howard	11	$66,888	H	-	-6%	L	-	-6%	M
Hughes	17	$156,283	H	-	-7%	L	-	-7%	M
Koch B&F	16	$27,211	H	-	-	L	-	-	M
Peavey	12	$49,934	H	-	-5%	L	-	-5%	M
Peer	5	$21,433	H	-	-	L	-	-	M
Portily	6	$18,590	H	-	-20%	L	-	-20%	M
Randle	32	$57,502	H	-	-3%	L	-	-3%	M
Steele	10	$32,059	H	-	-	L	-	-	M
Steen	9	$31,871	H	-	-4%	L	-	-4%	M
Stewart	14	$69,854	H	-	-1%	L	-	-1%	M
Armacost	30	$27,244	H	-30	-100%	-	-	-	M
Luther	8	$4,072	H	-8	-100%	-	-	-	M
Totals:	217	$884,634	H	-38	-8%	L	-	-5%	M

(1) Alternatives B and C are compared to Alternative A (Base Period) to determine changes in boat days or float launches, gross revenue, and scheduling flexibility

(2) Scheduling Flexibility: H= High; M = Medium; L = Low

ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS ON JOBS AND INCOME IN PORTAL COMMUNITIES

The changes in revenue earned by the commercial powerboat outfitters and the changing numbers of recreationists resulting from implementation of the action alternatives also impact jobs and income. Commercial outfitters provide jobs and income directly, as well as indirectly, through their purchases of equipment and supplies. Recreationists spend money, other than outfitter guide fees, primarily on lodging, food, gas, and other retail and services purchases. The alternative effects relating to jobs and income, and on key industries are disclosed on a multiple county basis in the FEIS. A recent study funded by the Idaho State Legislature, *A Study of the Effects of Changing Federal Timber Policies on Rural Communities in Northcentral Idaho* (Robinson, et. al., 1996), provides economic impact assessment models useful for determining the effects of changes in outfitter and recreationist expenditures on the Lewiston-Clarkston and Riggins portal communities. There is no community level model for the Oxbow area, however, the Riggins model can be used to identify the relative magnitude of impacts on that area.

The Riggins community includes the changes to Cook, Whitten, and Woods; the Lewiston-Clarkston communities include changes to all of the Cache Creek portal outfitters; and the Oxbow community includes changes to Armacost.

The alternative impacts are assessed using the differences in revenue and services compared to the 1993-94 averages. The differences in outfitter gross revenue are considered changes in outfitter spending in the local communities. Recreation related effects are based on a recent survey funded by the Lolo National Forest for the Salmon River that identifies spending patterns within 40 miles of portals. Changes in service days were converted into spending changes in the local portal communities. These changes are then compared to the income and employment base for each portal community that occurred in 1994. Table III-14 and III-15 identify the jobs and income effects of the action alternatives on Riggins and Lewiston-Clarkston, respectively.

A note of caution against comparing the alternative changes in employment to the 1994 levels for the outfitter guide industry. This industry was modified in the community models based on information contained in the *Idaho Outfitter and Guides Economic Contribution to the Idaho Economy, 1993* (Leidner, et. al., 1995). The modification was done to more accurately portray changes to the river-based outfitter guide segment of the broader amusement and recreation industry. The 1994 levels contain the broader average.

Table III-14
Riggins Income and Employment Effects By Alternative
(Income is in thousands of 1994 dollars - Employment is in jobs.)

Industry	Income 1994	Income Alt B	Income Alt C	Employment 1994	Employment Alt B	Employment Alt C
Agriculture & Ag Services	774	-*	-*	72	-*	-*
Mining	1,079	-*	-*	25	-*	-*
Construction	674	-*	-*	38	-*	-*
Manufacturing	753	0	0	18	0	0
Transportation & Communications	330	-*	-*	17	-*	-*
Retail & Wholesale Trade	886	-1	-1	69	-*	-*
Finance, Ins, & Real Estate	11	-*	-*	11	-*	-*
Motels & Eating-Drinking Places	1,209	-6	-5	127	-1	-*
Outfitter Guides	480	-2	-1	44	-1	-*
Services	278	-*	-*	23	-*	-*
Government	3407	-*	-*	144	-*	-*
Total	9,881	-11	-7	588	-2	-1

* = less than $1,000
Individual entries may not sum to totals due to rounding.

The alternative impacts to the Riggins community are small with less than 1% total change in income and in jobs for the short-term. The largest impact is a -2% change to outfitter guide employment under Alternative B. The primary effect of the alternatives is a limit to growth in the tourism industries related to commercial outfitters. Support businesses that are making capital investments to accommodate future growth in the commercial powerboat business will be more severely affected.

Table III-15
Lewiston-Clarkston Income and Employment Effects By Alternative
(Income is in thousands of 1994 dollars - Employment is in jobs.)

Industry	Income 1994	Income Alt B	Income Alt C	Employment 1994	Employment Alt B	Employment Alt C
Agriculture & Ag Services	11,335	-1	-1	642	-*	-*
Mining	1,584	-*	-*	57	-*	-*
Construction	28,195	-11	-10	918	-*	-*
Manufacturing	128,020	-5	-4	3,148	-*	-*
Transportation & Communications	26,433	-7	-6	906	-*	-*
Retail & Wholesale Trade	55,871	-24	-21	3,564	-2	-2
Finance, Ins, & Real Estate	22,014	-14	-12	1,174	-1	-1
Motels & Eating-Drinking Places	12,268	-42	-34	1,262	-4	-3
Outfitter Guides	1,296	-156	-140	125	-49	-44
Services	88,052	-41	-36	4,124	-2	-2
Government	54,195	-6	-6	2,304	-*	-*
Total	429,264	-307	-270	18,226	-59	-52

* = less than $1,000.
Individual entries may not sum to totals due to rounding.

The alternative impacts to the Lewiston-Clarkston communities are small with less than 1% change in income and in jobs for the short-term. The industry that incurs large impacts is the outfitter guide industry where income is reduce by 12% under Alternative B, and 11% under Alternative C. The effects on jobs in the outfitter industry show decreases of 49 and 44 jobs in Alternative B and Alternative C, respectively. An additional effect of the alternatives is limits to growth in the tourism industries related to commercial outfitters. Similar to Riggins, support businesses that are making capital investments to accommodate future growth in the commercial powerboat business will be more severely affected.

Although a community model for the Oxbow area is not available, the Riggins model is used to simulate potential impacts. Actual impacts should generally be less since the tourism and support industry levels of development compared to Riggins are generally less. Given the changes in Armacost gross revenue and service days for the commercial powerboat business, changes in outfitter guide income is $52,000 less under Alternative B and $40,000 less under Alternative C. Outfitter jobs decrease by 14 and 10 in Alternatives B and C, respectively. Community-wide there is a potential decrease of $190,000 in income under Alternative B and $122,000 under Alternative C. Job losses are 25 and 17 for Alternatives B and C, respectively. Given the elimination of Luther's and Armacost's permits under Alternative B, the job and income effects could be higher than displayed in Table III-14 and Table III-15.

The Oxbow area (including Halfway) is likely to have additional negative impacts do to potential reductions in the floatboat business in the future as unused float launch days become less available to Armacost and Luther. These losses and the limits on future river-based outfitter guide activity affect related tourism and support industries. Due to excess capacity in float launches as displayed in Table III-10, no additional impacts to communities are portrayed for the remaining float outfitters.

References:

Leidner, Stuart R. and E. Krumpe. 1993. Idaho Outfitters and Guides Economic Contribution to the Idaho Economy. University of Idaho.

Robison, M. Henry; C.W. McKetta; and S.S. Peterson. 1996. A Study of the Effects of Changing Federal Policies on Rural Communities in North Central Idaho. University of Idaho.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

In the reasonably foreseeable future, potential effects may occur from restrictions on outfitters from management planning on the Salmon River, although the effects are not known at this time.

Resource dependent communities are already experiencing reductions in their economies due to reductions in timber supplies.

Decisions resulting from this EA could lessen economic growth in tourism associated industries (e.g. lodging on Salmon River).

Placing use restrictions and allocations on the Snake River may displace recreation use to other regional rivers.

No additional cumulative effects associated with this action have been identified.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH PLANS AND POLICIES OF OTHER JURISDICTIONS

There would be no conflicts with plans and policies of other jurisdictions which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see pages IV-139 and 140) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA. Alternatives described in this EA were reviewed for consistency with other plans and policies. All alternatives were determined to be consistent with the 1990 Resource Planning Act and the Oregon and Idaho Departments of Environmental Quality.

PROBABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED

There would be no adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see page IV-141) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

There would be no short-term uses adversely affecting long-term site productivity which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see page IV-141) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

There would be no irreversible or irretrievaable commitment of resources which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see page IV-142) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

SPECIFICALLY REQUIRED DISCLOSURES

EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVES ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT

There would be no adverse effects on threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat (see Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS page IV-143) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVES ON PRIME FARM LAND, RANGE LAND, AND FOREST LAND

Alternatives are in keeping with the intent of Secretary of Agriculture Memorandum 1827 (reference analysis file) for protection of prime farm land, rangeland, and forest land. Regardless of the alternative, the wild and scenic river corridor will be managed with a sensitivity to the effects which their management may have on prime lands, whether the prime lands lie within private or public ownership.

ENERGY REQUIREMENTS OF ALTERNATIVES

There would be no unusual energy requirements which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see page IV-143) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVES ON TREATY OR OTHER RESERVED RIGHTS OF INDIAN TRIBES AND INDIVIDUALS

There would be no adverse environmental effects on treaty rights of Native American Tribes which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see page IV-143) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVES ON CIVIL RIGHTS, WOMEN, AND MINORITIES

There would be no adverse environmental effects on civil rights, women and minorities which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see page IV-144) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVES ON WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

There would be no adverse environmental effects on wetlands and flood plains which have not already been identified in the FEIS for the Forest Plan or the Wild and Scenic Snake River Plan FEIS (see page IV-145) associated with the implementation of any alternative analyzed in this EA.

CHAPTER IV

LIST OF PREPARERS AND CONSULTANTS

LIST OF PREPARERS

Interdisciplinary Team

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Chris Kelsey	Planning Team Leader

Resource Consultants to ID Team

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APPENDIX A

COMMERCIAL OUTFITTING HISTORY ON THE SNAKE RIVER

HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF COMMERCIALLY PERMITTED FLOAT BUSINESSES ON THE SNAKE RIVER (Information current as of 6/6/96)

by Michael L. Cole
River Manager

Introduction

With the completion of Hells Canyon Dam and road in 1967, access to the southern end of the Snake River below the dam became concentrated at a single location. Recreational use of the Snake River started to increase and commercial use of National Forest lands and waters downstream from the dam was taking place that required management and authorization. The most logical location that could easily administer this use was from the Pine Ranger District office in Halfway, Oregon. The Forest Service identified the need to issue Special Use Permits for commercial outfitting that involved use of National Forest lands for launching trips and overnight camping, and issued the first permits (for commercial powerboating between Hells Canyon Dam and Wild Sheep Rapid) in 1970 as a method of determining the demand for commercial recreational services in the area.

In the spring of 1973, commercial float outfitters, including some which were already licensed by the State of Idaho to operate on the Snake River, sponsored a float trip to meet with Forest Service officials to discuss appropriate commercial float use levels. This was an outgrowth of limitations on commercial use that had been imposed earlier by the Forest Service on the Middle Fork and Main Salmon Rivers. The trip was organized by Jim Campbell, a commercial float outfitter.

Earlier in the year, the Forest Service had made a decision to accept applications for Special Use Permits for commercial floating until June 1, 1973. Following the June 1, 1973 deadline for applications, the Forest Supervisors of the Wallowa-Whitman, Payette and Nez Perce National Forests, placed a moratorium on issuance of any additional outfitter-guide float permits on the river until completion of a Snake River Management Plan.

By the end of 1973, all commercial float businesses who had met the June 1 deadline (18) were placed under Special Use Permit, administered by the Pine Ranger District of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest (one of these outfitters, Riddle, was actually placed under permit in 1972 due to the need to authorize campsite developments at Oregon Hole that he used for commercial powerboat and float use).

During 1973 the Forest Service stationed personnel at the launch site below Hells Canyon Dam to monitor river use and issue trip permits to all floaters, including non-limiting permits to private floaters. Commercial floaters launched according to a coordinated linear, launch calendar where no more than 5 commercial launches per day were allowed during the summer season.

Effective with the 1975 float season, each outfitter was required to make a minimum of three (3) commercial trips per year to validate their Special Use Permit in order to qualify for a SUP in the following year. Also in 1975, outfitters were assigned to a launch calendar in groups set up on an eight day turnaround, effectively limiting the maximum daily number of commercial float trips on the river.

On December 31, 1975, the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Act was passed.

On 7/8/76, a document titled An Interim Recreation Management Plan for the Wild and Scenic River Corridor, Hells Canyon of the Snake River was approved by the Forest Supervisors of the Nez Perce, Payette and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests. The plan included the following guidelines:

a) If a permitted outfitter goes out of business his use will not be allocated, i.e., permitted use will be reduced by one (in a meeting with Snake River outfitters in McCall, Idaho on April 13, 1977, Pine District Ranger Denny Holthus informed them that, under the Interim Management Plan, if an action resulted in forfeiture of a permit, he would treat this the same as going out of business).

b) No more than 18 commercial floaters will be permitted during the interim period. A list of commercial outfitters included with the 1978 revised Interim Management Plan listed 17 commercial float outfitters. One of the original 18 had already forfeited his Special Use Permit in 1977 as a result of non-use in 1976. Denial of his application was in process in the spring of 1977 following guidelines in the original Interim Management Plan.

c) Continuation of the 55%-45% ratio of private/commercial launches with 5 launches per day maximum (the 5 launches per day were based on ramp capacity at Hells Canyon Creek and numbers of campsites within the first day's float from the ramp). The launch ratio was based on a total of 18 outfitters with three outfitters each assigned to groups 1 and 2 and two outfitters each assigned to groups 3 through 8 on an eight day turn around. On the first two days there were 3 commercial, 2 private launches. This changed to 3 private and 2 commercial on days 6 through 8 of the eight day turnaround. The percentage was determined on the total available private/commercial launches over an 8 day period (22 private launches/18 commercial launches = 40 launches or 5 per day).

   (The target level for commercial use was 16 permits, providing a 60:40 private/commercial ratio. This came to roughly a 50:50 split in terms of numbers of people because of the larger commercial party sizes. The 8 day turn-around was based on most trips going to Heller Bar in 6 days. This gave outfitters 2 days to re-supply and rest before the start of a new trip. It also spread the starting days so that an outfitter never launched on the same day of the week. In the 1970's few trips took out at Pittsburg, particularly due to poor road conditions. With the trend in shorter trips, improvements to the Pittsburg Road in the 1990's and the availability of jetback service, this pattern of use has changed dramatically.)

d) Begin a non-commercial reservation system in December, 1976 with applications accepted on a first come basis beginning on December 1 each year.

In 1977, a reservation system for both private and commercial river users was implemented during the control period (May 21st through September 9th). A maximum of five launches per day for all floaters (commercial and private) was implemented from Hells Canyon Creek. (A 1978 Visitor Use Report prepared by Forest Service river staff stationed at Hells Canyon Creek indicates that the reservation system may not have actually been implemented until August 1, 1977. The exact date the reservation system was implemented is unclear from the record).

In August, 1977, additional Interim Management Guidelines (Plan) for HCNRA were finalized. This plan was revised on April 14, 1978 and documented as the Interim Management Plan for the Hells Canyon NRA, with revisions approved by the three Forest Supervisors in June, 1978. The Revised Interim Management Plan retained the direction from the 7/8/76 Plan and included the following which had been in effect since 1975:

a) Continued the 1975 requirement of a minimum of three trips per year for commercial floaters to retain their special use permit.

In 1979 the float allocation changed to a 60%-40% ratio of private/commercial as a result of a reduction in the number of commercial float permits down to 16 through attrition following guidelines in the Interim Management Plan. This change was officially displayed on the 1980 launch schedule which was sent out on 6/8/79 (launch schedules were sent out the year prior in order for outfitters to know which dates they would have for booking purposes). No more than 2 commercial launches per day on an eight day turnaround were necessary in order to accommodate all remaining outfitters.

On May 23, 1981, the Record of Decision for the FEIS for Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Comprehensive Management Plan was signed by the Chief of the Forest Service, R. Max Peterson. Direction for commercial float use was to issue a maximum of 16 special use permits for commercial floatboat operations and a maximum of two special use permits for one-day float trips. This direction was not changed by Crowell's 1983 decision which affirmed the 60%-40% allocation split between private/commercial users.

At the time of Peterson's 1981 decision there were only 15 commercial float outfitters in business. The 16th commercial float opportunity, which had been forfeited for failure of the permit holder to run three commercial trips in 1980, was not filled. On June 1, 1981 these launches became available for use by other outfitters on a first-come, first served basis.

The Chief's 4/30/82 decision stated that "Regulations for floatboat use will continue in accord with requirements adopted in 1978." One of those interim management decisions in 1978 was that use would not be allocated if an outfitter went out of business. His decision further stated that "Commercial permit reduction from the 1981 level is expected to occur through normal permit relinquishment and cancellation due to noncompliance or nonuse." Crowell's decision in 1983 did not modify this part of the Chief's decision, therefore allowing reductions of commercial permits to occur without a requirement for their reissuance.

As a result, the launch dates from the vacant permit slot were included in a commercial pool system beginning in 1982 following discussions with Snake River outfitters in order to provide more flexibility for the outfitters to book trips.

In 1989, a bid prospectus was issued offering two temporary use commercial float permits for one-day float trips and these opportunities were subsequently filled. One of these permits began operations in 1990, the other in 1991.

In 1994, the business associated with one of the float permits was sold to two existing Snake River float outfitters, with the launches allocated to the permit divided equally between the two businesses, effectively retiring the permit and reducing the total number of float permits to 14, while increasing the number of allocated launches to each of the purchasers by 50%.

INDIVIDUAL FLOAT BUSINESS HISTORY

OUTFITTER - BRET ARMACOST
BUSINESS - HELLS CANYON ADVENTURES II, INC. (temporary use permit, limited to one-day trips only)

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 6/21/91 to Gary Armacost who operated as Hells Canyon Adventures, Inc., an Idaho corporation formed in 1983. On November 21, 1989, Canyon Outfitters, Inc. was selected as a successful applicant on a bid prospectus for a temporary Special Use Permit to conduct commercial one-day float trips between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing. The company subsequently withdrew their proposal on January 2, 1991 as a result of their anticipated purchase of Idaho Afloat #2 for business expansion purposes. The one-day float Special Use Permit was subsequently awarded to Hells Canyon Adventures, Inc. which ran trips from 1991 through the 1992 season. Gary Armacost sold the business to his son, Bret Armacost, in 1993.

As part of the conditions identified in the original prospectus, the use associated with this Special Use Permit has always been issued with temporary use only on a yearly basis. A change in this status is dependent upon a final decision in the Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter Environmental Assessment concerning whether or not this activity will continue to be an authorized use on the Snake River.

OUTFITTER - JIM CAMPBELL
BUSINESS - WILDERNESS RANCHES, INC./ SHEPP RANCH (closed file)

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 6/21/73 to Jim Campbell. The business operated under the name Wilderness Ranches, Inc., incorporated in Idaho on 4/25/73 and was associated with operation of the Shepp Ranch on the Salmon River. Special Use Permits were issued to this corporation or an associated business from 1973 through 1978.

On 5/7/76, Wilderness Ranches, Inc., absorbed another business operated by Campbell known as Wilderness Encounters, Inc., incorporated in Idaho on 3/9/70. Also on 5/7/76, immediately following the merger of these two corporations, an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation of Wilderness Ranches, Inc. changed the corporate name back to Wilderness Encounters, Inc. However, even though Wilderness Encounters, Inc. already held a Special Use Permit for commercial floating, the Forest Service determined that a separate commercial float permit could still be issued to Shepp Ranch since there were still two separate business operations associated with the corporation (Shepp Ranch operations and river business operations) and Campbell was still involved with both operations. As a result, at the request of Campbell, a Special Use Permit was issued to Shepp Ranch on 6/7/77 for the business formerly permitted as Wilderness Ranches, Inc.

A Special Use Permit dated 5/23/78 was issued to Campbell, and inadvertently listed Wilderness Ranches, Inc./Shepp Ranch due to a clerical error. On 11/7/78 the Forest Service met with Campbell concerning the change in ownership to Carl Russell. A letter from Campbell's attorney dated 12/5/78 stated that the corporation was sold to Carl Russell of Okemos, Michigan on 12/30/77. However, the Forest Service was not informed of the sale of business resulting in the 1978 permit being issued to Campbell.

On 5/7/79, Campbell conveyed all permittee rights back to the Forest Service pending issuance of a Special Use Permit to Russell. There is no record of a Special Use Permit issued to Russell for this business. However, Russell is named in Forest Service records listing permitted Snake River Outfitters for 1979, 1980 and 1981 under the name of Wilderness Encounters, Inc. Since Russell purchased all the assets of Wilderness Encounters, Inc., it included the operations associated with this permit. As a result, Russell was reissued one permit under Wilderness Encounters, Inc. to conduct all float business on the Snake River. This permit was then retired since it could not be re-issued due to the moratorium in effect and the direction in the Interim Management Plan for Hells Canyon.

OUTFITTER - LYLE DAVIS
BUSINESS - DAVIS WHITEWATER EXPEDITIONS

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 05/31/73 to ECHO, The Wilderness Company, Inc. which was operated by Dick Linford. The corporation was formed in California on October 29, 1971. ECHO operated from 1973 through the 1985 season. In 1986 the business was sold to Lyle Davis.

OUTFITTER - PETER H. GRUBB
BUSINESS - ROW (RIVER ODYSSEYS WEST)

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 10/5/73 to Eldon Handy who operated the business as Salmon River Expeditions, Inc. In a letter to the Forest Service dated 4/11/73, Handy stated that he had a float "...license from the State of Idaho for 3 years to operate in the Hells Canyon area." An assumption is that these 3 years were prior to 1973. Handy sold the business to Wally and Myrna Beamer on March 1, 1977. The Beamers operated float trips under the name Beamer's Heller Bar Excursions from 1977 through the 1979 season. The business was sold on 11/8/79 to Salmon River Challenge, a partnership of Gerald Kooyers and Stephen Carmichael. Kooyers operated the business from 1980 through the 1985 season. The business was sold to Peter Grubb on December 20, 1985.

OUTFITTER - GEORGE and LYNETTE HAUPTMAN
BUSINESS - CANYON OUTFITTERS, INC.

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 7/10/73 to Vladimir Kovalik of Pacific Grove, California who operated the business as Wilderness World, Inc. Kovalik operated the business from 1973 through the 1977 season although Forest Service records indicate that Kovalik did not run any trips in 1973. In 1978 the business was sold to Rocky Mountain River Tours, Inc., an Idaho corporation operated by David Mills. Mills operated the business from 1978 through the 1980 season at which time he sold the business to Dan Simmons and George Hauptman who operated under the name Oregon River Outfitters, Inc., an Oregon corporation formed on 11/20/80. Hauptman had started guiding in Oregon on the North Oregon coastal rivers, Rogue River and Deschutes River in 1976. Prior to the 1983 season, the corporation purchased Hauptman's interest in the business and Simmons operated the business independently. On March 27, 1984, Hauptman purchased the business from Simmons and began operations under the name Canyon Outfitters, Inc., an Oregon corporation formed on 4/25/84.

On November 21, 1989, Canyon Outfitters, Inc. was selected as a successful applicant on a bid prospectus for another Special Use Permit for commercial one-day float trips between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing. However, the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board selected Hells Canyon Adventures, Inc. for the one day float license to go with the Forest Service permit. The one-day float Special Use Permit was subsequently awarded to Hells Canyon Adventures, Inc. Hauptman subsequently purchased Idaho Afloat #2 for business expansion.

On November 22, 1994, with approval of the Forest Service, Hauptman sold 50% of a separate business which he owned (known as Canyon Outfitters, Inc. #2 which was the former Idaho Afloat #2 business) to Hughes River Expeditions, Inc. and absorbed the remaining 50% into Canyon Outfitters, Inc. This effectively increased the launch allocation for Canyon Outfitters, Inc. by 50%.

OUTFITTER - GEORGE AND LYNETTE HAUPTMAN
BUSINESS - CANYON OUTFITTERS, INC. #2 (closed file)

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 8/1/73 to James Katz dba Katz River Tours. At the request of Katz, the name of the business was changed to James Henry River Journeys when the Special Use Permit was reissued in 1974 and was referred to by this latter name in all use documentation for 1973. The business was sold to Scott Fasken dba Idaho Afloat on 11/15/87. Since Fasken already owned a separate business under the name Idaho Afloat, this business became known as Idaho Afloat #2 in order to distinguish the two permits apart.

Fasken sold the business to George and Lynette Hauptman on April 4, 1991. Since the Hauptmans also owned another business (Canyon Outfitters, Inc.), this business became known as Canyon Outfitters, Inc. #2 in order to distinguish the two businesses separately. On November 22, 1994, with approval of the Forest Service, Hauptman sold 50% of this business to Hughes River Expeditions, Inc. and absorbed the remaining 50% into the Canyon Outfitters, Inc. Special Use Permit. As a result, this Special Use Permit was permanently retired.

OUTFITTER - BRUCE and JEANNE HOWARD
BUSINESS - IDAHO AFLOAT

Summary: This business was originally started by Dr. Omer Drury and records indicate that it may be the oldest commercial float business in Hells Canyon. Drury operated a commercial float business known as Drury Family on the Snake River prior to the requirement for Forest Service Special Use Permits. A letter from Drury to the Forest Service dated 4/11/80 stated that "...we started floating in 1960..." using a "...power boat as an auxiliary in connection with our float trips." Available records indicate that Drury ran two commercial trips on the Snake River in 1971.

The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued to Drury on 6/28/73 and he continued to operate the business until selling to Scott Fasken on May 5, 1986. Pending final approval of the sale and transfer of licenses and permits, Drury operated the business until the Special Use Permit was issued to Fasken on August 28, 1986. Fasken operated the business as Idaho Afloat through the 1992 season. Due to Fasken's purchase of an additional float business in 1987, this business was also referred to as Idaho Afloat #1. The business was purchased by the Howards on June 15, 1993.

OUTFITTER - JERRY HUGHES
BUSINESS - HUGHES RIVER EXPEDITIONS, INC.

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 9/27/73 to Elwood Masoner dba Whitewater Adventures. This business appears to be one of the older float businesses in Hells Canyon. A letter dated May 30, 1973 from Masoner to the Forest Service stated that he had "...20 years floating experience on Idaho rivers" and that he was licensed by the State of Idaho for Hells Canyon. However, Masoner was in non-use status in 1973 and 1974, reporting that he did not run any trips due to bad weather. As a result of several outfitters failing to use their Special Use Permits, a letter to all float outfitters dated February 21, 1975 implemented a policy requiring a minimum of three commercial float trips per season beginning in 1975 to validate each outfitter's Special Use Permit.

Masoner validated his Special Use Permit in 1975 and 1976 by running the required trips. During the time that Elwood Masoner held the permit, it appears that he transferred ownership of the business to his son, Kenny Masoner. On 2/3/77, Kenny Masoner sold the Hells Canyon business to Jerry Hughes. The present business was incorporated in the State of Idaho on December 31, 1987.

On November 22, 1994, with approval of the Forest Service, Hughes purchased 50% of a business owned by George and Lynette Hauptman known as Canyon Outfitters, Inc. #2. This purchase effectively increased the launch allocation for Hughes River Expeditions, Inc. by 50%. The remaining 50% of the business was retained by the Hauptmans and absorbed into a separate business which they owned, resulting in the permanent retirement of the Special Use Permit issued to Canyon Outfitters, Inc. #2.

OUTFITTER - JILL KOCH
BUSINESS - HELLER BAR BOAT & FLOAT

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business as issued on 6/20/73 to Dr. Lute Jerstad who operated under the name of Lute Jerstad Adventures, Inc. Jerstad operated the business from 1973 through 1987. On May 23, 1988 he sold the business to Wally and Myrna Beamer who operated the business as Beamer's Heller Bar Boat and Float from 1988 through the 1993 float season. The business was sold to Jill Koch on September 30, 1993.

OUTFITTER - JODEE LUTHER
BUSINESS - ADVENTURES AFLOAT (inactive temporary use permit - one-day float trips only)

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 11/21/89 (for the 1990 season) to Jodee Luther, the Designated Agent for Adventures Afloat. The business was a partnership between Mike and Jodee Luther and Scott Fasken. In 1989, the partnership was selected as a successful applicant on a bid prospectus for a Special Use Permit to conduct commercial one-day float trips between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing. In 1991, Luthers acquired the partnership interest of Fasken. Luther continued to operate the business through the 1993 float season.

Luther did not apply for a permit in 1994 or 1995, suspending their one-day float operations. The business questioned the feasibility of putting any additional investment in time or equipment in the business due to upcoming changes in river management. The 1994 FEIS for the Snake River indicated that permits for one-day float businesses would not be renewed.

This position of the Forest Service resulted in Luther's appeal of the Record of Decision for the Snake River Recreation Management Plan. Although a stay of the decision that was granted on 2/14/95 stated that implementation would not take place until 9/15/95, a final decision on their appeal did not occur until 7/20/95. The final decision required additional economic analysis for all Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permits before making a new decision. Since this is not their primary Outfitter-Guide business on the river, this latest decision still does not assure them that it is a financially sound decision to make additional time and financial investment in the business.

As part of the conditions identified in the original prospectus, the use associated with this Special Use Permit has always been issued with temporary use only on a yearly basis.

A change in this status is dependent upon a final decision in the Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter Environmental Assessment concerning whether or not this activity will continue to be an authorized use on the Snake River.

OUTFITTER - STANTON MILLER
BUSINESS - PRIMITIVE AREA FLOAT TRIPS (closed file)

Summary: Records indicate that this outfitter claimed to have operated commercially on the river in 1972. The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 6/28/73, however Miller did not run any trips in 1973. As a result of several outfitters failing to use their Special Use Permits in 1973 and 1974, a letter to all float outfitters dated February 21, 1975 implemented a policy requiring a minimum of three commercial float trips per season beginning in 1975 to validate each outfitter's Special Use Permit. Miller failed to run any trips in 1976 and the Special Use Permit was forfeited.

OUTFITTER - JEFF PEAVEY
BUSINESS - NORTHWEST VOYAGEURS

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 7/16/73 to Joe Tonsmeire who operated as Wilderness River Outfitters. The business was incorporated in Idaho on 3/7/74 under the name Wilderness River Outfitters and Trail Expeditions, Inc. The business was sold to Bill Bender on 5/27/83 who operated under the name of Northwest Voyageurs, LTD., incorporated in Idaho on 1/19/81. Bender operated from 1983 through the 1986 season. He sold to Jeff Peavey on 10/31/86. As a result of the sale, the business changed from a corporation to a sole proprietorship while retaining the business name recognition.

OUTFITTER - DARRYL PEER
BUSINESS - PEER'S SNAKE RIVER RAFTING

Summary: This business was started by Hank Miller in 1973 following his three year partnership (1970-1972) with Jim Campbell in Wilderness Encounters, Inc. The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 6/12/73 to Hank Miller operating as Idaho Adventures, Inc. The business was originally incorporated in Idaho as Wilderness Waterways, Inc. on 1/30/73. A Certificate of Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation was filed with the State on 3/5/73, changing the corporate name to Idaho Adventures, Inc. The business operated on the river from 1973 through the 1988 float season.

On October 20, 1988, the stockholders of the corporation voted to liquidate the corporation and have the assets transferred to the partnership of Hank Miller and Gary Moser dba Idaho Adventures. This partnership managed the business through the 1989 season. In 1990, Gary and Paula Moser purchased the assets and interest of the majority partner, Hank Miller, and formed Moser's Idaho Adventures River Trips. They operated this business in 1990 and 1991 before selling the business to Darryl Peer on April 13, 1992.

OUTFITTER - LENARD PORFILY and JOHN HARRIS
BUSINESS - OREGON TRAIL ADVENTURES, INC

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 6/8/73 to Mike Carey dba Whitewater Guide Trips of Portland, Oregon. A letter dated 3/30/73 from Carey to the Forest Service alluded that Carey had operated commercial float trips in Hells Canyon prior to 1973 mentioning that, at that time, he was the Northwest Regional Director of the Oregon Guides and Packers. Carey had non-use in 1974. As a result of this problem among several outfitters in 1973 and 1974, a letter dated February 21, 1975 was sent to all float outfitters implementing a policy requiring a minimum of three commercial float trips per season beginning in 1975 to validate each outfitter's Special Use Permit.

Carey sold the business to Ken Warren of Portland, Oregon on April 10, 1979 who operated the business as Ken Warren Outdoors. The business was incorporated in Oregon on 8/4/80 and became Ken Warren Outdoors, LTD. On November 12, 1980, Minute Maid Distributors of Oregon, Inc. purchased the business and became the sole shareholders of the common stock in Ken Warren Outdoors, LTD. Ken Warren worked as an employee in the operation of the permitted business. On 6/1/82, Ken and Jan Warren purchased back all the common stock of the Ken Warren Outdoors, LTD. from Minute Maid Distributors of Oregon, Inc. On July 18, 1989 the business was sold to Lenard Porfily and John Harris of LaGrande, Oregon. The business currently operates as Oregon Trail Adventures, Inc., an Oregon corporation formed on 8/16/89.

OUTFITTER - GEOFF RANDLE
BUSINESS - HCA RAFT

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued in 1973 to James Zanelli who operated as Hells Canyon Navigation Company, Inc. Forest Service documents indicate that Zanelli ran float trips prior to the requirement for Special Use Permits for float trips, with 5 commercial float trips recorded in 1971. Records provided for 1970 state "Three outfitters are licensed from the Oregon side to provide charter trips down the rivers as far as Wild Sheep Rapids for fishing and sightseeing. One of the outfitters is equipped to run the river on a large raft as a five-day float trip to Grande Ronde road-end..." Additional documentation identifies one of the three outfitters that were permitted in 1970 as Zanelli who was the largest outfitter at the site. Hells Canyon Dam and the road to the launch site were completed in 1967. Both Zanelli's float and power-boat operation from that site probably started sometime between 1968 and 1970.

The business was purchased from the Zanelli Estate in 1983 by Gary Armacost who operated as Hells Canyon Adventures, Inc., an Idaho corporation formed on April 20, 1983. Gary Armacost operated the float business from 1983 through the 1992 season. In 1993, Gary Armacost sold the float business to the partnership of his son, Kurt Armacost, and Geoff Randle who operated the business as Hells Canyon Adventures, Raft (HCA RAFT) in 1993. On May 17, 1994, Randle purchased the partnership interest of Kurt Armacost and became a sole proprietorship operating under the same business name.

OUTFITTER - CARL RUSSELL
BUSINESS - WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS, INC. (closed file)

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 6/14/73 to Jim Campbell who operated as Wilderness Encounters, Inc., incorporated in Idaho on 3/9/70. Hank Miller, who later started Idaho Adventures, Inc., was a co-owner with Campbell. In a letter dated 9/4/73 from Miller to the Forest Service, Miller indicated that the business had been operating in Hells Canyon starting in 1970 before Special Use Permits were required for commercial floating. Forest Service records indicate that the business conducted 7 commercial float trips in 1971 and it is listed as a Snake River business on Forest Service use reports from 1973 through 1980. Special Use Permits were issued to the business from 1973 through 1978.

On 5/7/76, the business was absorbed by Wilderness Ranches, Inc., incorporated in Idaho on 4/25/73. Also on 5/7/76, immediately following the merger of these two corporations, an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation of Wilderness Ranches, Inc. changed the corporate name back to Wilderness Encounters, Inc.

A Special Use Permit dated 5/23/78 was issued to Campbell operating as Wilderness Encounters, Inc. On 11/7/78 the Forest Service met with Campbell concerning the change in ownership to Carl Russell. A letter from Campbell's attorney dated 12/5/78 states that the corporation was sold to Carl Russell of Okemos, Michigan on 12/30/77. However, the Forest Service was not informed of the sale of business resulting in the 1978 permit being issued to Campbell.

On 5/7/79, Campbell conveyed all permittee rights back to the Forest Service pending issuance of a Special Use Permit to Russell who continued to do business as Wilderness Encounters, Inc. There is no record of the Special Use Permits that were issued to Russell, although their issuance was confirmed by Art Seamans, the Assistant Area Ranger for HCNRA in 1980-81. Russell is listed as a permitted Snake River Outfitter in Forest Service records for 1979 and 1980 and there is documentation of use by Wilderness Encounters, Inc. through the 1980 float season. The documentation of Russell's use in 1980 shows only 2 trips. According to Seamans, Russell forfeited the Special Use Permit in 1981 by failing to validate the permit by running a minimum of 3 commercial trips in 1980.

OUTFITTER - DAVID STEELE
BUSINESS - FREEWATER

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 7/11/73 to Jim Walker of Enterprise, Oregon who operated under the name Snake River Packers and Outfitters. Walker operated the business from 1973 through 1986. On 2/5/87, Walker sold the business to Bob Anderson of Milton-Freewater, Oregon who operated under the name of Anderson River Adventures from 1987 through 1995. Anderson sold the business to David Steele on 8/23/95.

OUTFITTER - SHAWN STEEN
BUSINESS - STEEN'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 6/14/73 to Jay and Bob Sevy who operated as Sevy Brothers Guide Service, Inc., an Idaho corporation formed on 2/20/73. On 1/30/78, the corporation amended the name to Sevy Guide Service, Inc. The business operated from 1973 through 1982. On January 25, 1983, the business was sold to Jim Steen dba Steen's Wild River Tours. The name of the business was changed to Steen's Wilderness Adventures in 1989. Shawn Steen was named as Designated Agent for his father's business in 1995.

OUTFITTER - FROGG STEWART
BUSINESS - HOLIDAY RIVER EXPEDITIONS OF IDAHO, INC.

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued to Norman Riddle dba Snake River Outfitters on 7/11/72, one year before all float outfitters were required to obtain Special Use Permits. Norman Riddle operated the business from 1972 through 1980. In 1981 he sold the business to his son, Marty Riddle who retained the name of Snake River Outfitters and operated from 1981 through 1986. Marty Riddle sold the business to Frogg Stewart on 4/3/87 and the business is currently operated as Holiday River Expeditions of Idaho, Inc., incorporated in Utah on 2/29/80.

OUTFITTER - GEORGE WENDT
BUSINESS - OARS-DORIES, INC.

Summary: The first Special Use Permit associated with this business was issued on 06/12/73 to Martin Litton who operated under the name of Grand Canyon Dories, Inc. The corporation was formed in California on May 10, 1971. The name of the corporation was changed in 1988 to Martin Litton's Great River Journeys. The business was sold in the fall of 1988 to Curtis Chang who had been Litton's manager of Northwest operations since 1972. Chang operated the business under the name Northwest Dories, Inc. from 1989 through 1992. In February of 1993 the stock of Northwest Dories, Inc. was sold to George Wendt. The name of the corporation was changed in 1994 to OARS-DORIES, Inc. and Chang remained with the business as Manager and Managing Agent.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF COMMERCIALLY PERMITTED POWERBOAT BUSINESSES ON THE SNAKE RIVER

Information current as of 6/6/96

Introduction

Documentation of Special Use Permits involving commercial powerboating in Hells Canyon indicates that several approaches were used to place activities associated with these businesses under permit over the years.

In the 1960's, Special Use Permits were initially issued for use of land associated with overnight camps used by commercial powerboat businesses or for fuel storage for powerboats under Class D road permits rather than the actual transporting of customers on the river. Forest Service records indicate that this method of administration was in process by 1963 (it may have started on the Snake River as early as 1958), and continued into the early 1970's prior to passage of the HCNRA Act.

With the completion of Hells Canyon Dam in 1967, access to the southern end of the river became concentrated at a single location below the dam, the location could be most easily administered from the Pine Ranger District office at Halfway and commercial use of National Forest lands and waters was obviously taking place that required management and authorization.

In 1970, the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest issued the first outfitter-guide permits specific to commercial use of the river by jet boat. These three permits were issued as Forest Supervisor permits and only addressed commercial jet boat use of the river between Hells Canyon Dam and Wild Sheep Rapid. The purpose in issuing these permits was to determine the level of demand for commercial recreational services in that section of the river.

During 1973 the Forest Service stationed personnel at the launch site below Hells Canyon Dam. Also in 1972 or 1973, the Forest Service purchased its first welded aluminum jetboat and had a jet boat patrol operating from the northern boundary of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest to Granite Creek Rapid (employed by the Chesnimnus Ranger District), marking the beginning of a regular presence on the river that could identify active commercial powerboat businesses on the river below Granite Creek Rapid. This boat was used to conduct a campsite inventory in 1974.

On August 11, 1975, the first sale of a commercial jet boat business that was under Forest Service Special Use Permit took place (PAGE-GARRIGUS). On December 31, 1975 the HCNRA Act was passed.

In 1977, the first full-time River Ranger (Stan Kiser) was hired for the HCNRA. Prior to this date, the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest had employees who did periodic river patrols by powerboat, but no one specifically assigned whose major duties were specific to administering river operations. Kiser, working out of the Pittsburg Landing area, Slate Creek Ranger District, Nez Perce National Forest, began identifying the businesses that were originating commercial jet boat services on the river below Wild Sheep Rapid.

On May 23, 1979, the Pine District Ranger was notified by the Slate Creek District Ranger of the known commercial jetboat businesses on the river. At that time, all Special Use Permits for outfitting and guiding on the Snake River were issued by the Pine Ranger District. The Pine District Ranger began notifying the identified powerboat businesses that annual Special Use Permits would be required and started placing all commercial powerboat businesses under permit. The rationale up to that time was that permits were not needed for use of the navigable river if the outfitter did not overnight camp or otherwise using National Forest lands. In 1979, the landmark decision by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in United States v. Lindsey determined that the Forest Service had the authority to regulate the area and activities within Hells Canyon.

Following the court's ruling on the Lindsey case, applicants who could furnish evidence of conducting commercial operations prior to 1979 were given preference for Special Use Permits. At that time, Special Use Permits were issued from the North Boundary of the HCNRA to Granite Creek Rapids only for outfitters operating from scenic river portals and downstream. A few commercial powerboat outfitters were actually running the stretch of river between Granite Creek Rapid and Wild Sheep Rapid at that time, but in violation of the terms of their permits. 1979 marks the first year that outfitter-guide Special Use Permits were issued that were specific to commercial use of the river by jet boats below Granite Creek Rapid.

The Pine Ranger District continued to issue Special Use Permits until 1981 when the HCNRA's Lewiston, Idaho office opened and assumed that role. The HCNRA also replaced the existing jetboat with two new jetboats in 1981 as it expanded its river management role. Also in 1981, a second decision by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of United States v. Hells Canyon Guide Service, Inc., provided further guidance from the courts concerning the regulatory authority of the Forest Service in Hells Canyon.

Direction in the 1981 Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) specified that, in addition to the two special use permits with a maximum of 3 boats that would be authorized to operate from Hells Canyon Dam, "...during the regulated season and beginning in 1982, permit 7 commercial power boats under a maximum of seven special-use permits to operate between Pittsburg Landing and the base of Rush Creek Rapid. Consider issuing additional permits to operate on the entire wild and scenic river section during the unregulated season and on the Scenic River year-round." This decision would have closed the section of river from Wild Sheep Rapid to Granite Creek for the entire control season, but the decision was placed in abeyance on appeal to the Chief of the Forest Service.

On April 29, 1982, Chief of the Forest Service R. Max Peterson's decision on appeals changed the direction in the CMP to provide that "The number of commercial powerboat permits (1981), allocations and conditions will generally be continued until better information about capacity, use trends and safety is developed." The Chief's appeal decision did away with the motorized closure between Wild Sheep and Granite, but limited commercial powerboats to 50 commercial powerboat days per week from Pittsburg to Rush Creek, and 3 commercial powerboat days per week above Rush Creek.

On April 21, 1983, Undersecretary of Agriculture John Crowell's decision on the appeal of the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the HCNRA provided that no limits would be placed on the number of daily trips by powerboats. However, Crowell specifically stated that "This decision does not change or affect the number, issuance, or terms of special use permits for commercial power and float boating operations. By the time of Crowell's decision, 18 commercial powerboat Special Use Permits had already been issued and a 19th permit was issued two months after his decision. Crowell's decision also required assignment of campsites upstream from Pittsburg Landing, placing a de-facto limit on overnight use, however this direction was never implemented due to lack of funding.

In 1984, all 19 Special Use Permits for commercial jet boating were changed to allow use from the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA to Hells Canyon Dam in compliance with the statement in Crowell's decision that no limits would be placed on the number of daily trips by powerboats. The maximum number of Special Use Permits issued for commercial powerboating on the Snake River became dependent upon the maximum number of licenses issued by the State of Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board, a license which was required to qualify for a Special Use Permit.

In 1986, one commercial powerboat permit and associated Idaho outfitting license was not reissued as a result of non-use, reducing the number of commercial powerboats to 18.

In 1990, an additional special use permit was issued to allow commercial powerboat use in the scenic river only, increasing the number of commercial powerboat permits to 19.

HISTORY OF SPECIFIC POWERBOAT SPECIAL USE PERMITS

The following is a history of powerboat businesses that have been issued permits by the Forest Service to operate commercially in Hells Canyon. There were many other businesses which operated commercially over the years in Hells Canyon before Forest Service permits were required such as McFarland, Kyle McGrady and Blue Moose Johnson. Information on these businesses was not available in Forest Service Special Use Permit records. The name listed as "outfitter" is the name of the current owner of the business.

OUTFITTER - GREG ALBOUCQ
BUSINESS - SNAKE DANCER EXCURSIONS (Current)

Summary: This business was originally owned by FLOYD HELD who began conducting powerboat excursion trips under the name of HELD'S CANYON TOURS from Clarkston, Washington to Rush Creek in 1970. HELD was issued a SUP to operate from the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA to Granite Creek Rapids on 09/13/79. HELD sold the business to GARY and ELLEN WATSON in 1985. The WATSONS continued to operate the business as HELD'S CANYON TOURS for several years before changing the name to SNAKE DANCER EXCURSIONS. They sold the business to ALBOUCQ in 1994. The permit has never lapsed.

OUTFITTER - BOB ANDERSON
BUSINESS - ANDERSON RIVER ADVENTURES (Current)

Summary: The business was originally owned by JIM WALKER and has never lapsed. Records indicate that WALKER was approved for a special use permit on 07/18/74 under the business name of SNAKE RIVER PACKERS & OUTFITTERS. The purpose of the permit was to "Transport People." The permit specifies that it superseded a permit issued in 1973. The permit indicated that commercial powerboat use was authorized in support of access to permitted fall hunting camps as far upstream as Rush Creek. This rationale was supported by WALKER'S 1974 Oregon Guide License which specified that part of his operation would be conducted with jetboats. An Environmental Analysis Report was approved on 9/25/78 which specified that the permittee would use a jet boat for 5 trips.

OUTFITTER - BRET ARMACOST
BUSINESS - HELLS CANYON ADVENTURES II, INC. (Current)

Summary: The business was originally owned by JIM ZANELLI who was issued a special use permit in 1970 for conducting outfitter-guide powerboat services between Hells Canyon Dam and Wild Sheep Rapid. This permit has never lapsed but a separate permit was issued on 08/31/79 that expanded the operation to allow powerboat use from the Northern boundary of the HCNRA to Granite Creek Rapids. The business was purchased by GARY ARMACOST (HELLS CANYON ADVENTURES, INC.) in 1983 who sold the business to his son, BRET ARMACOST, in 1993.

OUTFITTER - DARELL BENTZ
BUSINESS - INTERMOUNTAIN EXCURSIONS (current)

Summary: According to RUSTY and DARELL BENTZ, this business was started by their father, ROSS BENTZ who began operating commercially in the early 1970's. Most of his trips were 2-3 day camping trips that originated at Pittsburg Landing and travelled upstream as far as Granite Creek. This business also has historical ties to the EVERETT SPAULDING operation.

SPAULDING began commercial operations in the 1950's and may have received one of the original licenses issued by the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board when it was first formed. By the mid 1960's (approximately 1964) SPAULDING was operating commercial overnight trips from Lewiston to Riggins in conjunction with SUMMERVILLE who ran the overnight/restaurant operation on the Riggins end of the trip. SPAULDING also owned a lodge and acreage approximately one mile upstream from the mouth of Deer Creek on the Lower Salmon River. SPAULDING'S use of the Snake River above the Salmon Confluence is unknown although records indicate that he was seldom seen above Pittsburg Landing.

In 1978, DARELL BENTZ took over his father's commercial operation, built a twin engine, certificated jetboat and ran commercial trips as far upstream as Hells Canyon Dam. In 1981, DARELL BENTZ, RUSTY BENTZ and DAVE BREAM purchased SPAULDING'S business including the lodge and adjoining 140 acres of property on the Lower Salmon River from SPAULDING'S estate. They subsequently divided the property, with BREAM acquiring the outfitter business, lodge and 20 acres of the property and the BENTZ'S acquiring the remaining 120 acres. DARELL BENTZ first requested an application for a permit from the Forest Service in the fall of 1980.

OUTFITTER - DAVE BREAM
BUSINESS - S & S OUTFITTERS (current)

Summary: This business was originally part of the EVERETT SPAULDING operation. SPAULDING began commercial operations in the 1950's and may have received one of the original licenses issued by the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board when it was first formed. By the mid 1960's (approximately 1964) SPAULDING was operating commercial overnight trips from Lewiston to Riggins in conjunction with SUMMERVILLE who ran the overnight/restaurant operation on the Riggins end of the trip. SPAULDING also owned a lodge and acreage approximately one mile upstream from the mouth of Deer Creek on the Lower Salmon River. SPAULDING'S use of the Snake River above the Salmon Confluence is unknown although records indicate that he was seldom seen above Pittsburg Landing.

In 1981, DARELL BENTZ, RUSTY BENTZ and DAVE BREAM purchased SPAULDING'S business including the lodge and adjoining 140 acres of property on the Lower Salmon River from SPAULDING'S estate. They subsequently divided the property, with BREAM acquiring the outfitter business, lodge and 20 acres of the property and the BENTZ'S acquiring the remaining 120 acres. BREAM first requested an application for a permit from the Forest Service in the fall of 1980.

OUTFITTER - ED BREHMER
BUSINESS - NAME UNKNOWN (closed file)

Summary: This business was placed under SUP in 1970 and BREHMER was authorized to operate commercial powerboat trips from Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep Rapids. Information on this business is sketchy and it is not known if a SUP permit was issued in any following years. The document that described BREHMER'S operation indicated that, as of the time the document was prepared, BREHMER had not secured a SUP for 1971. BREHMER operated charter trips on weekends only. This appears to have been a short term operation in this section of river.

OUTFITTER - RICH COOK & JIM SPICKELMIRE
BUSINESS - HELLS CANYON FISHING CHARTERS (current)

Summary: This business was originally owned by JIM POWELL who operated the business as IDAHO GUIDE SERVICE, INC. POWELL contacted the Forest Service in the fall of 1979 and indicated that he was a part time commercial Jet boat outfitter who had been running 3 or 4 trips per year for about 3 1/2 years. He later indicated that he had been operating professionally on the river since about 1969. POWELL was issued a SUP to operate between the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA and Granite Creek Rapid on 02/18/81. He later sold the business to OLIN GARDNER and the permit was in non-use status in 1987 leading to permit termination in 1988. The State of Idaho subsequently issued an outfitter license to TIM JEWETT in 1988 and a new SUP was issued to JEWETT under the name of HELLS CANYON OUTFITTERS. JEWETT sold the business to COOK and SPICKELMIRE in 1990.

OUTFITTER - LEE EDDINS
BUSINESS - HIGH ROLLER EXCURSIONS (Current)

Summary: The business was originally owned by GARY SWIFT who was issued a permit on 09/04/79 to operate commercially between the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA and Granite Creek Rapids. SWIFT operated the business under the name SWIFT'S DAM TRIPS. SWIFT had been operating a commercial business for several years prior to obtaining a permit, and was one of the first outfitters that ran trips that travelled through the larger rapids on the river (Granite Creek and Wild Sheep). SWIFT sold the business to DICK BITTICK AND HAL JULIAN in 1985 and they operated the business as THE DAM BOAT:HELLS CANYON TOURS until 1989 when they sold out to B & B ENTERPRISES, INC. of Riggins, Idaho. B & B operated the business as THE DAM BOAT until 1993 when the business was sold to EDDINS.

OUTFITTER - GUS GARRIGUS
BUSINESS - HELLS CANYON GUIDE SERVICE (closed file)

Summary: This business was originally owned by RALPH PAGE who may have first operated commercially from Homestead, Oregon with an associated overnight camp at Stud Creek. The camp at Stud Creek was placed under a temporary guide camp permit on July 16, 1963 by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. Additional structures were approved by SUP in 1967. In 1970, PAGE'S operation was placed under SUP specific for powerboating between Hells Canyon Dam and Wild Sheep Rapids. Records indicate that PAGE was located at Lime Point, 12 miles above Hells Canyon Dam along the reservoir at that time. On August 11, 1975 the business was purchased by FORREST O. (Gus) GARRIGUS, JR. GARRIGUS operated commercially from Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep Rapids in 1976. No SUP was authorized for GARRIGUS to operate after the end of the 1976 season.

In 1980 an attempt was made to re-issue this permit via a bid prospectus. However, the bids submitted were not handled according to Forest Service procedures, nullifying each bid that was submitted. This effort was subsequently dropped and no new solicitation was offered by the Forest Service.

OUTFITTER - FLOYD HARVEY
BUSINESS - HELLS CANYON EXCURSIONS (closed file)

Summary: Records on this business were not readily available. According to Ashworth's book on Hells Canyon, HARVEY began operating a commercial powerboat business in Hells Canyon in 1960. In 1963 one overnight camp in Hells Canyon used by a commercial powerboater was under SUP on the Nez Perce National Forest. It is assumed that this was HARVEY'S operation at Willow Creek. Other documents confirm a camp at Willow Creek under SUP in 1964 and that it was specifically under permit to Hells Canyon Excursions in 1968. On January 31, 1974, HARVEY'S lodge at Willow Creek was destroyed by fire. With the destruction of the lodge, HARVEY operated for about another year out of Willow Creek using tents before his commercial operation ended. The lodge was under SUP issued by the Nez Perce National Forest at the time of the fire with an expiration date of 12/31/75.

OUTFITTER - HAROLD HEDRICK
BUSINESS - HAL'S CANYON TOURS (closed file)

Summary: This business was owned by HAROLD HEDRICK who may have started operating commercially about 1978. His 1979 application indicated that he was licensed by the Coast Guard to operate between Granite Creek Dam (Lower Granite) and Johnson Bar on 05/27/76. HEDRICK was issued a SUP to operate between the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA and Granite Creek Rapid on 11/20/79 and again on 02/26/80. On 05/15/81 he was issued a third permit but he requested cancellation of the permit on 08/01/81, indicating that he would not be operating during the 1981 season. In a telephone conversation on 06/29/81, HEDRICK indicated that he might be interested in operating tours below Pittsburg Landing in the future but he subsequently was never issued a SUP.

OUTFITTER - PERRY HEINECKE
BUSINESS - HELLS CANYON TOURS (closed file)

Summary: Forest Service records indicate that HEINECKE attended a meeting of Snake River Outfitters in McCall, Idaho on April 13, 1977 (prior to the requirement for powerboat Special Use Permits), signing the attendance list as representing HELLS CANYON TOURS. HEINECKE is included on the list of Forest Service permitted outfitter in 1979, however there is no record of a Forest Service Special Use folder. It appears that HEINECKE either went out of business after the 1979 season or sold the business to BUD ROGERS (if the latter occurred, the current owner is ODEGAARD). The record is not clear.

OUTFITTER - F. JAMES KOCH
BUSINESS - BEAMERS LANDING, INC. dba BEAMER'S HELLER BAR EXCURSIONS (current)

Summary: This business was originally started by HOLLIS OAKES who operated under the name HELLER BAR EXCURSIONS. HOLLIS OAKES operated commercially on the Snake and had a cabin on the Lower Salmon River about 1967, but there is no documentation on when OAKES actually began operating the business. In 1974 OAKES sold the business to WALLY and MYRNA BEAMER who operated the business as BEAMER'S HELLER BAR EXCURSIONS. In 1978 they sold their restaurant and jet boat excursion business to MIKE SWAN who continued to to operate the business under the original name of HELLER BAR EXCURSIONS. During this time records indicate that SWAN may have also purchased another commercial powerboat business owned by DICK MERRILL. Records indicate that BEAMER'S applied for and were issued a special use permit for powerboating in 1979 when the Forest Service first required Special Use Permits for commercial powerboating. Beamer's may have done this to protect their interest in the business and lodge they had sold to SWAN who was also listed as a permitted outfitter in 1970 and 1980. By 1981, records indicate that SWAN'S business had reverted back to the BEAMER'S ownership as Forest Service records list the business once again as BEAMER'S HELLER BAR EXCURSIONS and SWAN is no longer listed as a permitted outfitter. However, as a probable result of this business transaction, the BEAMER'S were issued only one Special Use Permit for their total use. They sold the business to KOCH in 1993.

OUTFITTER - F. JAMES KOCH and FRANK KOCH
BUSINESS - BEAMERS LANDING, INC. dba IDAHO RIVERS NAVIGATION (Current)

Summary: The business was originally owned by ERNIE DUCKWORTH who was issued a permit in 1979 but who had previously been operating commercially in Hells Canyon for about 5 years. DUCKWORTH's application for a SUP was denied in 1985 but a permit was issued to A & E Investments, Inc. in 1986, a business owned by DUCKWORTH. MYRNA B. RANCHES, INC. owned by WALLY and MYRNA BEAMER, bought the business in 1988 but let the permit lapse into non-use status before applying for and being issued a new SUP in August, 1990. The business was sold to the KOCH's in 1993.

OUTFITTER - F. JAMES KOCH and JILL KOCH
BUSINESS - BEAMERS LANDING, INC. dba RIVERS NAVIGATION (Current)

Summary: This is the mail boat business and is the oldest commercial powerboat business on the river. The operation of the business also includes the resort at Copper Creek that is issued under a separate Special Use Permit. DICK RIVERS began operating a commercial camp on Forest Service land at Copper Creek on July 1, 1958. Records indicate that RIVERS' operation on Forest Service land at Copper Creek was under SUP by 1963 if not before. This permit has never lapsed and RIVERS was issued a permit specifically for jet boat use from the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA to Granite Creek Rapids on September 9, 1979. RIVERS sold the business to WALLY and MYRNA BEAMER in 1982 who retained the business name of RIVERS NAVIGATION. The KOCH's purchased the business from BEAMERS in 1993.

OUTFITTER - GERALD KOOYERS
BUSINESS - SALMON RIVER CHALLENGE (closed file)

Summary: This business was purchased from BRUCE OAKES in 1979 prior to the issuance of permits by the Forest Service. The first SUP was issued to the HAVLAH GROUP of which KOOYERS was a partner. A SUP was issued to the HAVLAH GROUP on 11/09/79. In 1980 the name was changed to SALMON RIVER CHALLENGE. The permit was in non-use status in 1983, 1984 and 1985 and the business was no longer permitted to operate on the HCNRA as of 04/14/86.

OUTFITTER - ALAN LAMM
BUSINESS - MAINSTREAM OUTDOOR ADVENTURES, INC. (current)

Summary: This business was originally owned by RON MOORE who was issued a SUP under the name of R-M OUTFITTERS on 08/17/90. MOORE had obtained a vacant Idaho Outfitter's License in 1988 and had operated downriver of the HCNRA boundary several years before he applied for a SUP. The SUP permit was issued for annual use only pending a final decision on river use as part of Snake River planning effort. The Idaho license and SUP were valid from the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA to Pittsburg Landing only. He subsequently sold the business to RICK and GAYLE DOYLE on 08/28/90. The business was incorporated in September, 1991 at which time ALAN LAMM became a stockholder in the corporation. LAMM became the sole stockholder in the corporation in 1993.

OUTFITTER - MIKE AND JODEE LUTHER
BUSINESS - SNAKE RIVER ADVENTURES (current)

Summary: This business was started by the LUTHER'S as MIKE'S CANYON TOURS in 1980. LUTHER was issued a SUP on 07/08/81 to operate from the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA to Granite Creek Rapid. In 1983 the LUTHERS moved to Alaska and let the Idaho license and their SUP lapse. In 1984-1985 they moved back to the area and MIKE LUTHER worked for other outfitters. In 1985, the LUTHERS purchased an Idaho Outfitters License that was in non-use status (BOB SMITH) and were issued a SUP in 1986 under the name of SNAKE RIVER ADVENTURES which has not lapsed. No record of outfitting prior to 1979.

OUTFITTER - JAMES MAXWELL and ROBERT PAYNE, JR.
BUSINESS - THREE RIVERS OUTFITTERS (current)

Summary: The original owner of this business, BOB GREGG, was first issued a SUP on 10/02/79 to operate from the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA to Granite Creek Rapids. GREGG indicated that he had commercially operated a jet boat on the Snake River for 11 years prior to 1979 and had a lodge at the mouth of Deer Creek on the Lower Salmon River. GREGG operated the business as a partnership with MARVIN TWILEGAR beginning in 1987 and they sold the business to MAXWELL (subject to ADA Public Law 101-336 as disabled) and PAYNE as partners in 1994.

OUTFITTER - ALAN (Butch) and DEBRA ODEGAARD
BUSINESS - RIVER QUEST EXCURSIONS (current)

Summary: This business was originally started by LOREN ROGERS as BUD'S CANYON TOURS but operated as ERNIE'S CANYON TOURS (ERNIE DUCKWORTH) beginning in 1979. ROGERS was issued a SUP on 02/10/80 to operate between the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA and Granite Creek Rapids. ROGERS later sold the business to CHARLES McDANIELS who operated the business under SUP as HELLS CANYON CHALLENGE. McDANIELS later sold the business and the company incorporated under the name of HELLS CANYON CHALLENGE, INC., owned by DAN SWORD, GARY ARMACOST and STEVE ZANELLI. In 1993 the business was sold to the ODEGAARDS.

OUTFITTER - NORMAN and EDIE RIDDLE
BUSINESS - SNAKE RIVER OUTFITTERS (current)

Summary: This business is one of the oldest operations on the river and is associated with a lodge on private land at Kirby Creek. The first record of a SUP being issued to NORMAN RIDDLE, SNAKE RIVER OUTFITTERS, was for maintaining a 1,250 gallon boat fuel storage site under a Class D Road permit along the edge of the Snake River at Pittsburg Landing that was issued on 06/05/73. A SUP specific to powerboating was issued to RIDDLE on 08/31/79 and has not lapsed. Riddle began fishing and boating the lower Snake River in the early 1950's and powerboated to the bottom of Rush Creek Rapid for the first time in 1963. He first worked commercially on the river as a professional guide for FLOYD HARVEY. He started his own outfitting business in 1970 following acquisition of the property at Kirby Creek. In 1976, Riddle constructed the first welded aluminum jetboat in the canyon that had an onboard toilet room.

OUTFITTER - REED TAYLOR
BUSINESS - TWO RIVER TOURS, INC. dba COUGAR COUNTRY LODGE (current)

Summary: This business was originally owned by STEVE WIEBER who began operating commercial powerboat trips about 1975 as THE HAPPY HOOKER. WIEBER was issued a SUP on 01/15/81 to operate from the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA to Granite Creek Rapids. WIEBER later changed the name to HAPPY HOOKER EXCURSIONS and, when the business subsequently changed from a sole proprietorship to a corporation, the name changed to COUGAR COUNTRY LODGE, INC. TAYLOR purchased the corporation in 1994. The permit has not lapsed.

OUTFITTER - SAM WHITTEN
BUSINESS - RIVER ADVENTURES, LTD. (current)

Summary: This business was originally owned by MARK HINKLEY AND SAM WHITTEN. The business was issued a SUP to operate between the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA and Granite Creek Rapids on 06/10/83. There is no Forest Service record of prior outfitting on the river. HINKLEY is no longer involved in the business. The permit has never lapsed.

OUTFITTER - NOLAN F. WOODS
BUSINESS - RED WOODS OUTFITTER (current)

Summary: This business was originally owned by WOODS who was issued a SUP to operate between the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA and Granite Creek Rapids on 01/18/83. No record of prior outfitting on the river. Although a permit was issued and valid for 1985, Woods reported no use for that year, and therefore, the permit was in non-use status in 1985.

OUTFITTER - CARL R. (SKIP) ZAPFFE & MIKE SMITH
BUSINESS - Z & S OUTFITTERS

Summary: This business was originally owned by SKIP ZAPPFE who began operating commercially as WHITEWATER FISHING TRIPS on the Snake River, possibly as early as 1961. On April 26, 1977, ZAPFFE received a letter (not a SUP) from the Forest Service giving him permission to conduct power boat fishing trips from private property above the Grande Ronde River on the Idaho side of the Snake River. On 04/08/80 a permit was issued to the business to operate between the Northern Boundary of the HCNRA and Granite Creek Rapids. In 1991 the business was incorporated as Z & S OUTFITTERS. The permit has never lapsed.

Powerboat Outfitters Requiring Permit Administration in 1975-76						
NAME	1975	1976	1st SUP*	TYPE	USE	TRIPS****
Garrigus	YES	YES	1975	O/G	***	NA
Harvey	YES	NO	1963**	Camp	***	NA
Page	YES	NO	1963**	O/G	***	NA
Riddle	YES	YES	1963**	Fuel	NA	NA
Rivers	YES	YES	1963	Camp	***	NA
Walker	YES	YES	1973	Camp	***	NA
Zanelli	YES	YES	1970	O/G	***	NA

NA - Not available

* The year listed is the year in which there is some type of record or document available that indicates a Special Use Permit was issued. There is a possibility that permits could have been issued in earlier years for Harvey (1960) and Rivers (1958) based on the year they began commercial operations in Hells Canyon and the fact that their operations were land based (camps). Information is based on records at the Clarkston Office of the HCNRA.

** 1963 combined use for Page, Harvey and Rivers was 750 people, 3,000 visitor days. This accounted for the largest single user group (commercial powerboat) in the canyon. Source: High Mountain Sheep Impact Report. March 1965.

***	Garrigus	1975 - 206 people, 286 service days
		1976 - NA
	Page	1963-1969 - NA
		1970 - NA
		1971 - NA
		1972 - NA
		1973 - NA
		1974 - NA
		1975 - 48 people, 108 service days
	Rivers	1963-1969 - NA
		1970 - NA
		1971 - NA
		1972 - NA
		1973 - 612 people, 1379 service days
		1974 - 577 people, 1214 service days
		1975 - 728 people, 1551 service days
		1976 - 706 people, 1545 service days

Walker — Powerboat use was in support of fall hunting camps as follows:
1973 - 15 people, 114 service days
1974 - 45 people, 98 service days
1975 - 39 people, 90 service days
1976 - 49 people, 156 service days

Zanelli — 1970 - NA but documentation indicates that Zanelli had the largest volume of business at Hells Canyon Creek of the 3 original powerboat outfitter permittees when the permits were first issued there in 1970.

1971 - 605 people, 605 service days	(Scenic tours only - 5/15/71 to 09/04/71)
1972 - 885 people, 885 service day	(Scenic tours only - 5/26/72 to 10/25/72)
1973 - 808 people, 808 service days	(Scenic tours only - 5/22/73 to 10/25/73)
1974 - 873 people, 873 service days	(Scenic tours only - 5/14/74 to 09/30/74)
1975 - 993 people, 993 service days	(Scenic tours only - 5/13/75 to 10/17/75)
1976 - 1389 people, 1389 service days	(Includes all uses - 1/25/76 to 12/28/76)

In addition to Scenic Tours, Zanelli conducted fishing trips, transported backpackers to the trailhead on the Idaho side of the river, provided drop camp service, etc. As a result, the total use figures for Zanelli are low for 1971 through 1975 since they only include his Scenic Tours and do not include the entire calendar years. A more detailed review of use records would be necessary to determine additional use that should be included for those years.

**** Trip information Is Not Available. Number of individual powerboat trips were not required to be reported during these years. Numbers of boats per outfitter and passenger capacity varied with each outfitter.

Commercial Powerboat Use Reported by the Chesnimnus R.D. in 1975.

The following use is based on reported observations of permitted and non-permitted commercial powerboaters by the Chesnimnus Ranger District Boat Operator from May 15, 1975 to October 24, 1975. Use was calculated in man use days at that time.

OUTFITTER	MAN USE DAYS	STATUS
Beamer	2000	no permit
Held	853	no permit
Riddle	785	fuel permit
Rivers	2093	camp permit
Spaulding	900	no permit
Tippet	98	no permit
Walker	360	camp permit

APPENDIX B

ALTERNATIVE B

OUTFITTER AND GUIDE OPERATING GUIDELINES

These guidelines establish the method of managing river outfitter-guide operations within the entire Snake River corridor.

COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT ALLOCATION

The allocation of commercial powerboat use was analyzed based upon the following common elements:

1. Determination of a level of access that would address both historic use, recent use based upon the average daily numbers of commercial powerboat entries into the river corridor and additional launches into the scenic river to mitigate loss of opportunity in the wild river.

2. Existing priority use assignments (which is a level of use assigned to an outfitter) based upon guidelines developed by the Forest Service in cooperation with national outfitter organizations (including the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association and the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board) and other federal land management agencies. This number (currently expressed as service days) reflects the order of priority in determining which outfitters will retain their use of a limited resource in the event reductions in use are necessary. It is related to the level of past business activity.

3. The average of the highest two out of five years (1988-1992) of total commercial powerboat boat days for each outfitter (priority use guidelines applied to launches).

4. The five-year average of use for each outfitter during the years 1988-1992.

5. The number of existing commercial powerboat permits (19).

6. The number of commercial powerboat businesses operating from each portal.

7. Historic records of use for each outfitter's business during the years 1988-1992 comparing the following:

    a. Primary type of business (day or overnight). This element would reflect total trip length and identify any dependence on overnight camping.

    b. Season of use (primary, secondary or both). This would indicate the level of dependence on use of the area of operation to conduct business during a particular time of year.

    c. Primary areas of operation within the river corridor and base of operations used by each outfitter or the outfitter from whom the

Business was purchased if a change of ownership occurred between 1988 and 1992.

d. Number of boats used per trip.

8. Availability of lodging on the Snake River for overnight use in lieu of camping overnight. The investment in lodging is considered to be a business decision that will benefit the outfitter and becomes a major component in marketing overnight trips. This is not an available option for all outfitters, especially those with smaller operations. For this reason, the opportunity for outfitters to lodge overnight guests in lieu of camping would be viewed as having a positive environmental effect on the river resources by reducing impacts at campsites and reducing competition for campsites. As a result, outfitters with commercial lodging available as part of their operation generally would not be considered for allocation of overnight camping within the river corridor. This would include outfitters who have Granger-Thye Permits allowing overnight use of government owned buildings. An exception would be made if an outfitter's use records reflected a substantial amount of their business between 1988 and 1992 was dependent upon use of campsites for overnight trips and their lodging facilities were on private land located outside of the NRA boundary.

The objectives of these guidelines would be to manage commercial powerboat outfitters within their primary areas of operation, trip length and allocate use in the primary season based upon their historic operations. There would also be a need to assure commercial outfitter services operating on National Forest served the purpose of providing a public service available at all portals. Development of a launch calendar for commercial powerboats would assure the number of boats entering the river on a daily basis did not exceed guidelines established in the Recreation Plan.

Benefits of these objectives would result in the ability to reduce on-river encounters with other users and reduce competition for overnight camping with a subsequent reduction in impacts to campsites. Outfitters would continue to provide a public service to visitors. This would maintain the viability of the commercial outfitting industry in Hells Canyon with the least disruption as possible to outfitters while protecting and enhancing ORV's within the river corridor.

Areas of Operation

The first objective of managing commercial powerboat use would be to limit commercial powerboat operations for each outfitter to their primary area of operation. The Recreation Plan limits the maximum number of commercial powerboat permits on the Snake River to 19. Areas of operation would be applicable on a year round basis. Periodically, a portion of the area of operation will not be available for motorized use as a result of the non-motorized periods in the wild river. Based upon analysis of areas of operation, commercial powerboat permits would be changed as follows in regard to authorized areas of operation;

Dam down river to Pittsburg
Armacost #l (1)

Northern Boundary of HCNRA up river to Hells Canyon Dam
Bentz
Luther
Riddle
Odegaard
Taylor (2)

Northern Boundary of HCNRA up river to the Bottom of Granite Creek Rapid
Bream
Cook
Eddins
Whitten
Woods
Zapffe

Northe Boundary of HCNRA up river to the bottom of Rush Creek Rapid Alboucq
Anderson
Koch - Heller Bar Excursions
Koch - Idaho Rivers Navigation
Koch - Rivers Navigation
Maxwell

(1) The existing single permit allowing use of two boats would be split into two, one-boat permits at the option of the permit holder. Refer to the section Powerboat Operations Based at Hells Canyon Creek for more information concerning this option.
(2) This business changed ownership between the FEIS and the EA. In the FEIS this business was listed as Wieber.
(3) This business changed ownership between the FEIS and the EA. In the FEIS this business was listed as Watson.

Trip Duration

The second objective of these guidelines would be to manage commercial powerboat outfitters' trip duration, primarily determined on two factors: their historic record of overnight camping activity and whether or not they have other overnight lodging facilities available for their customers. Outfitters who met all of the following criteria would be assigned an allocation for overnight camping in the river corridor:

- Those who have historically offered a substantial number of overnight camping trips with guide services to clients.
- Those who do not have lodging facilities under permit from the Forest Service.

- Those who do not have lodging facilities on private land in the following areas:
  - On the Snake River within the HCNRA
  - On the Lower Salmon River and primarily accessed from the Snake River

Outfitters who may purchase existing businesses in the future or outfitters whose opportunity for overnight lodging was no longer available due to sale of business, loss of overnight lodging opportunity, sale of private land, etc. would be considered for an overnight camping allocation only if the business had a prior history of offering overnight camping or overnight lodging accommodations on the Snake River.

Overnight camping by commercial powerboat outfitters would not be allowed below the mouth of the Salmon during the primary season except at sites which may become available through issuance of a Granger-Thye Permit. All river-based outfitters would be eligible to bid on any future prospectus for Granger-Thye Permits. This type of fee permit would allow an outfitter to use government owned buildings for overnight lodging of guests. This would also allow outfitters with day use only allocations an opportunity to offer overnight trips.

All overnight trips on the Snake River require the use of consecutive boat days, regardless of whether the overnight trip is at a lodge or river campsite for all days that a boat stays with the trip.

Drop camps would remain a business opportunity for all outfitters year round and would be subject to the management requirements pertaining to drop camps as described in the Recreation Management Plan.

Based on an analysis of these factors, commercial powerboat permits would be changed as follows:

Day-Use Only Permits	**Day-Use and Overnight Camping(7)**
Alboucq (1)	Anderson
Armacost	Eddins
Bentz (2)	Cook
Bream (2)	Odegaard
Koch-Heller Bar (3)	Taylor
Koch-Idaho Rivers Nav (3)	Whitten
Koch-Rivers Nav (3)	Woods
Luther (4)	
Maxwell (2)	
Riddle (5)	
Zapffe (6)	

(1) Could overnight at another outfitter's lodge within the canyon.
(2) Could overnight on their private land on the Lower Salmon River.
(3) Could overnight at Copper Creek (under Forest Service Permit).

(4) The outfitter that held the Forest Service Permit for Sheep Creek could overnight at that location. The permit is currently held by Luther.
(5) Could overnight on their private inholding on the Snake River.
(6) Could overnight on their private land downstream from the HCNRA boundary.
(7) Overnight trips require the use of consecutive boat days. Some of these outfitters also have access to lodges on private land downstream from the HCNRA boundary where they could overnight.

Assignment of Use

A third objective would be to determine the amount of use that should be assigned to each outfitter.

Based on an analysis of historic use, a method was developed to establish the number and frequency of daily boat trips to be allocated to each outfitter operating from scenic river portals during the primary season. Allocation of boat days were determined in consideration of the following:

Maximum length of the primary season at time of plan implementation (May 22 through September 10)

- A maximum of 8 commercial launches per day originating in the scenic river (Pittsburg Landing and downstream). An additional 88 boat days identified as part of the use cap in the FEIS involve a separate allocation and will be discussed later in this document.

- Boat days based upon priority use

- Boat days based upon a five year boat day average

- Credit for historic trip length

- Credit for number of boats used per trip

The years used to determine the priority for assigning boat days to each outfitter were 1988-1992, the primary years of growth in passenger capacity. The order of priority was based on historic boat day activity of each outfitter during the primary season only. The unit of measure for the allocation would be in boat days where one commercial powerboat entering the HCNRA would equate to one boat day for each day of the trip. Outfitters who had not developed substantial use prior to the end of the 1992 primary season would have limited opportunity for primary season access. The following is a description of how the commercial powerboat boat days were calculated:

> The maximum primary season at the time of plan implementation was used to determine the total number of days available to distribute use. Based upon the maximum primary season from May 22 thru September 10, this was equal to 112 days.
>
> A total of 8 boats per day originating in the Scenic River (Cache Creek, Dug

Bar or Pittsburg) X 112 days provides the opportunity for 896 boat days throughout the primary season. Of these 8 boat days, 4 (one half) would be authorized to also operate in the Wild River each day. (The other two wild river boat days would be allocated to Hells Canyon Creek for travel in the Wild River. In addition, there would be a special allocation of one commercial powerboat launch per day between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood. Allocation and management of these launches is discussed later in this document).

Initial allocations of use were based upon boat days. Boat days were considered to be the most accurate representation of past use since consideration is made for both the total number of boats used during a trip and the total duration of a trip (i.e., overnight trips) as reported by outfitters on annual use reports. As a result, use for each outfitter was calculated based upon boat days. As a general rule, boat day allocations reflect actual use of the river for outfitters who operate more than one boat per day or those who run overnight trips. Boat days credit each outfitter with the maximum possible number of boats that they operated each year. Identifying maximum historic use based upon boat days then allows direct correlation of boat days to launches (i.e., 1 boat day- 1 launch).

In order for qualified outfitters to be able to offer overnight trips, outfitter boat days were assigned to the maximum practical extent in 3 day blocks of time. This would allow for overnight trips up to three days in length as well as one or two day trips and would provide outfitters who qualified for overnight trips to have some discretion in planning the length of a trip, i.e., 1, 2 or 3 day trip. Overnight use would create no cumulative increase in total use in the river corridor since each block of time was assigned per boat per outfitter.

Two factors were reviewed to determine how to distribute the total number of 8 daily scenic river boat days among the existing outfitters. The final allocation of boat days was a combined average of each outfitter's priority use and their 5 year average, using 1988-1992 as the base years for boat day analysis. This provided equal weight and consideration of both factors as follows:

5 year average - credit for consistent performance over time which demonstrates how well a business is providing continual service to the public.

Priority Use - meets the obligation of the agency to the outfitting industry by considering Forest Service guidelines that were developed with industry involvement.

The average number of boat days determined through this process was then reduced by 1% to account for the difference in the average length of the regulated season for each year from 1988-1992 under the existing CMP (114 days) with the new initial maximum primary season length in the FEIS (112 days). This provided a preliminary assignment of boat days to each outfitter that totaled 972 boat days , requiring an allocation reduction of 7.8% for each outfitter. This is not a reduction in actual use but a reduction in the inflated use level created by the application of the priority use factor. The reduction allowed distribution of total outfitter use to meet the maximum allocation of 896 boat days in a 112 day primary season, which is still greater than actual average use levels for the base period.

Since only 4 of the 8 boats per day would be authorized to continue a trip into the Wild River, boat days allocated per outfitter were divided to distribute use equally. This would allow all outfitters an equal opportunity for access, with 1/2 of their use assigned for operation in both the wild and scenic river on a single trip and 1/2 of their use assigned to use in the Scenic River only.

Boat day access for Armacost was based on the maximum use of 2 boats in the water at Hells Canyon Creek and one trip for each boat for each day of the 112 day primary season.

The following is the final allocation of outfitter use based upon this boat day distribution in order of outfitter priority and, with the exception of Armacost, includes any changes to the each outfitter's boat day allocation as a result of verification of each outfitter's use per the Regional Forester's appeal decision:

OUTFITTER	TOTAL BOAT DAY ALLOCATION	LAUNCH SUBGROUP WILD AND SCENIC	LAUNCH SUBGROUP SCENIC ONLY
ARMACOST	224	224 (1)	0
KOCH-HBE	222	111	111
LUTHER	139	70	69
KOCH-RN	120	60	60
KOCK-IRN	78	39	39
ALBOUCQ	73	37	36
TAYLOR	65	33	32
ODEGAARD	58	29	29
RIDDLE	39	19	20
WHITTEN	31	16	15
COOK	24	12	12
BENTZ	11	5	6
WOODS	7	3	4
BREAM	7	3	4
ANDERSON	6	3	3
EDDINS	6	3	3
ZAPFFE	6	3	3
MAXWELL	4	2	2
SPECIAL (2)	88	88	0
TOTAL	1,208	760	448

(1) Limited to 88 for the entire wild and scenic river within area of of operation, and 136 from Hells Canyon Dam to the top of Wild Sheep only to account for the 24 non-motorized days per season.

(2) The following outfitters would have a special allocation (total of 88 boat days) of one confirmed launch every three days for day use only on a revolving basis for access from Pittsburg to Kirkwood Historic Ranch only during the primary season to address economic impacts to Idaho County:

Whitten
Cook
Woods

These special launches are in addition to any other launches assigned to each outfitter and are not available on days when the non-motorized period is in effect upstream from Kirkwood (Monday through Wednesday from the second Monday in July through the Wednesday prior to Labor Day).

Daily Allocation of Commercial Powerboat Launches
A fifth objective would be to implement a daily launch calendar for commercial powerboaters.

The method for allocating daily launches for commercial powerboaters would be managed under a system similar to that used for commercial floaters which has operated successfully for many years. Under this type of launch allocation system, outfitters are assigned to specific launch groups with a specific number of assigned launch dates that can be used for advertising and scheduling trips in advance. In addition, outfitters have the ability to trade dates with other outfitters. The calendar would be managed by the Forest Service to assure compliance with the daily use allocations for powerboaters in different sections of the river. All available boat days allocated to outfitters would be assigned to specific dates.

The daily launch allocation for outfitters originating trips in the scenic river (Cache Creek and Pittsburg Landing) was developed as follows:

Outfitters were assigned to 4 launch groups, with each group containing 224 launches. Within each launch group, each outfitter's allocation was assigned to 2 subgroups of 112 launches each, with one subgroup authorizing travel in both the wild and scenic river and the other subgroup authorizing travel in the scenic river only.

Each outfitter was then assigned a specific number of 3 day blocks of launches in each subgroup based upon their individual use allocation.

The 112 day primary season was split in half between July 16 and July 17. Outfitter use was assigned proportionately between the first and second halves of the season. Use was also assigned in order of priority based upon each outfitter's volume of use, i.e., largest outfitters use assigned first, and smallest outfitters last. This approach reflects the significant service to the public provided by the larger outfitters and the limited amount of service to the public provided by the smaller outfitters. Use was assigned outwards from July 16th forward to May 22 and from July 17th out to September 10. Use was assigned in 3 day blocks of time for each outfitter, with any leftover days not divisible by 3 being assigned on the fringes of the season in blocks of 1 or 2 days.

Minor adjustments were made only if use could not be distributed in a consistent pattern of 3 day blocks of launches for an outfitter, if an adjustment was to the benefit of a larger outfitter, or if an adjustment allowed an outfitter with a smaller allocation to have launches on consecutive days. If the primary season is extended, the same pattern for commercial power groups will continue on the Commercial Powerboat Launch Calendar for all dates between May 1 and October 1, inclusive.

The following is the final launch schedule assignment for outfitters on the Snake River who originate their trips from scenic river portals:

COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT LAUNCH CALENDAR A
All Scenic River Portals
Launch Groups 1 and 2

224 Days Launch Group 1	224 Days Launch Group 2
Koch-Heller Bar Koch-Rivers Nav	Koch- Rivers Nav Koch-Id Riv Nav Cook-HC Fish Ch Anderson-AR Adv

	224 DAYS LAUNCH GROUP 1		**224 DAYS LAUNCH GROUP 2**	
MONTH & DAY	**112 DAYS W&S LAUNCH**	**112 DAYS SCENIC ONLY**	**112 DAYS W&S LAUNCH**	**112 DAYS SCENIC ONLY**
MAY 22	Koch-RN	Koch-RN	Koch-RN	Koch-RN
23	Koch-HB	Koch-HB	RN	RN
24	Thru	Thru	Koch-IRN	Koch-RN
25	9/10	9/10	IRN	RN
26	|	|	IRN	RN
27	|	|	RN	IRN
28	V	V	RN	IRN
20			RN	IRN
30			IRN	RN
31			IRN	RN
JUNE 1			IRN	RN
2			RN	Cook
3			RN	Cook
4			RN	Cook
5			IRN	RN
6			IRN	RN
7			IRN	RN
8			RN	IRN
8			RN	IRN
10			RN	IRN

JUNE 11			IRN	RN
12			IRN	RN
13			IRN	RN
14			RN	IRN
15			RN	IRN
16			RN	IRN
17			Cook	RN
18			Cook	RN
19			Cook	RN
20			RN	Anderson
21			RN	Anderson
22	Koch-HB	Koch-HB	RN	Anderson
23	Thru	Thru	IRN	RN
24	9/10	9/10	IRN	RN
25	|	|	IRN	RN
26	|	|	RN	Cook
27	V	V	RN	Cook
28			RN	Cook
29			IRN	RN
30			IRN	RN
JULY 1			IRN	RN
2			RN	IRN
3			RN	IRN
4			RN	IRN
5			IRN	RN
6			IRN	RN
* 7			IRN	RN
* 8			RN	IRN
*9			RN	IRN
10			RN	IRN
11			Cook	RN
12			Cook	RN
13			Cook	RN
*14			RN	IRN
*15			RN	IRN
*16			RN	IRN
17			RN	IRN
18			RN	IRN
19			RN	IRN
20			IRN	RN
*21			IRN	RN
*22			IRN	RN
*23			RN	Cook
24			RN	Cook
25			RN	Cook
26			IRN	RN
27			IRN	RN
*28			IRN	RN
*29			RN	IRN
*30			RN	IRN
31			RN	IRN

AUGUST 1			Cook	RN
2			Cook	RN
3			Cook	RN
*4			RN	IRN
*5			RN	IRN
*6			RN	IRN
7			IRN	RN
8			IRN	RN
9			IRN	RN
10			RN	IRN
*11			RN	IRN
*12			RN	IRN
*13			Anderson	RN
14			Anderson	RN
15	Koch-HB	Koch-HB	Anderson	RN
16	Thru	Thru	RN	Cook
17	9/10	9/10	RN	Cook
*18	|	|	RN	Cook
*19	|	|	IRN	RN
*20	V	V	IRN	RN
21			IRN	RN
22			RN	IRN
23			RN	IRN
24			RN	IRN
*25			Cook	RN
*26			Cook	RN
*27			Cook	RN
28			IRN	RN
29			IRN	RN
30			IRN	RN
31			RN	IRN
SEPTEMBER 1			RN	IRN
2			RN	IRN
3			IRN	RN
4			IRN	RN
5			IRN	RN
6			RN	IRN
7			RN	IRN
8			RN	IRN
9	Koch- HB	Koch-HB	RN	RN
10	Koch-HB	Koch-HB	RN	RN

* 1997 NON-MOTORIZED DATES.
USE IS NOT AUTHORIZED
UPSTREAM FROM KIRKWOOD HISTORIC
RANCH ON NON-MOTORIZED DATES.

COMMERCIAL POYERBOAT LAUNCH CALENDAR
All Scenic River Portals
Launch Groups 3 and 4

224 Days
Launch Group 3
Luther-SR Adven
Alboucq-S Dancer
Maxwell-3 Rivers
Koch-River Nav .
Taylor-Cougar Ctry
Whitten-R. Adven.
Riddle-SR Outftrs.
Bentz-Intermtn.
Eddins-High Roller

224 Days
Launch Group 4
Taylor-Cougar Ctry
Odegaard-River Quest
Riddle-SR Outftrs
Whitten-R Adven.
Bentz-Intermtn.
Zapffe-Z&S Outfitter
Woods-RY Outfitter
Bream-S&S Outfitters
Eddins-High Roller
Maxwell-3 Rivers

224 DAYS
LAUNCH GROUP 3

224 DAYS
LAUNCH GROUP 4

MONTH & DAY	112 DAYS W&S LAUNCH	112 DAYS SCENIC ONLY	112 DAYS W&S LAUNCH	112 DAYS SCENIC ONLY
MAY 22	Alboucq	Luther	Eddins	Odegaard
23	Whitten	Luther	Eddins	Odegaard
24	Luther	Whitten	Riddle	Bream
25	Luther	Riddle	Riddle	Bream
26	Luther	Bentz	Riddle	Bream
27	Luther	Luther	Riddle	Bentz
28	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Bentz
29	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Eddins
30	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Eddins
31	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Eddins
JUNE 1	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Riddle
2	Luther	Alboucq	Woods	Riddle
3	Luther	Alboucq	Woods	Riddle
4	Luther	Alboucq	Woods	Riddle
5	Alboucq	Luther	Whitten	Odegaard
6	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
7	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
8	Luther	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
9	Luther	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
10	Luther	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
11	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Taylor
12	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Whitten
13	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Whitten

JUNE 14	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
15	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
16	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
17	Luther	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
18	Luther	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
19	Luther	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
20	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
21	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
22	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
23	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Woods
24	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Woods
25	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Woods
26	Luther	Luther	Bentz	Taylor
27	Luther	Luther	Bentz	Taylor
28	Luther	Koch-RN	Maxwell	Taylor
29	Maxwell	Luther	Riddle	Odegaard
30	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Odegaard
JULY 1	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Odegaard
2	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Whitten
3	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Whitten
4	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Whitten
5	Luther	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
6	Luther	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
*7	Luther	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
*8	Luther	Alboucq	Whitten	Riddle
*9	Luther	Alboucq	Whitten	Riddle
10	Luther	Alboucq	Whitten	Riddle
11	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
12	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
13	Alboucq	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
*14	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Taylor
*15	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Taylor
*16	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Taylor
17	Alboucq	Luther	Riddle	Whitten
18	Alboucq	Luther	Riddle	Whitten
19	Alboucq	Luther	Riddle	Whitten
20	Luther	Alboucq	Taylor	Odegaard
*21	Luther	Alboucq	Taylor	Odegaard
*22	Luther	Alboucq	Taylor	Odegaard
*23	Alboucq	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
24	Alboucq	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
25	Alboucq	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
26	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
27	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
*28	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
*29	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Zapffe
*30	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Zapffe
31	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Zapffe

AUGUST 1	Alboucq	Luther	Bentz	Taylor
2	Alboucq	Luther	Bentz	Taylor
3	Koch-RN	Luther	Bentz	Taylor
*4	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Odegaard
*5	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Odegaard
*6	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Odegaard
7	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Whitten
8	Luther	Maxwell	Taylor	Whitten
9	Luther	Maxwell	Taylor	Whitten
10	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
*11	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
*12	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
*13	Luther	Alboucq	Whitten	Riddle
14	Luther	Alboucq	Whitten	Riddle
15	Luther	Alboucq	Whitten	Riddle
16	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
17	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
*18	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
*19	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
*20	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
21	Alboucq	Luther	Odegaard	Taylor
22	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Whitten
23	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Whitten
24	Luther	Alboucq	Riddle	Whitten
*25	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
*26	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
*27	Luther	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard
28	Alboucq	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
29	Alboucq	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
30	Alboucq	Luther	Whitten	Taylor
31	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
SEPTEMBER 1	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
2	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Riddle
3	Luther	Luther	Zapffe	Bentz
4	Luther	Luther	Zapffe	Bentz
5	Luther	Luther	Zapffe	Bentz
6	Alboucq	Luther	Bream	Odegaard
7	Eddins	Luther	Bream	Odegaard
8	Taylor	Luther	Bream	Odegaard
9	Luther	Taylor	Odegaard	Woods
10	Luther	Alboucq	Odegaard	Bream

* 1997 NON-MOTORIZED DATES.
USE IS NOT AUTHORIZED
UPSTREAM FROM KIRKWOOD HISTORIC
RANCH ON NON-MOTORIZED DATES.

COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT LAUNCH CALENDAR B
Pittsburg Landing - Special Allocation
Launch Group 5

The special allocation of launches at Pittsburg Landing would be identified as Launch Group 5 and assigned in order of priority based on historic use with the initial allocation of one boat per day beginning with Whitten on May 22nd, Cook on May 23rd, Woods on May 24th, Whitten on May 25th, Cook on May 26th, Woods on May 27th, etc. Launches would not be available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays when the non-motorized periods were in effect in the wild river. During these periods, the same launch rotation would continue in order to provide consistency in the schedule throughout the season but launches would not be allowed on those days.

112 Days
Launch Group 5

Whitten - R Adventures
Cook - HC Fish Ch
Woods - RW Outfitter

MONTH & DAY	PITTSBURG TO KIRKWOOD ONLY	MONTH & DAY	PITTSBURG TO KIRKWOOD ONLY
MAY 22	Whitten	JUNE 19	Cook
23	Cook	20	Woods
24	Woods	21	Whitten
25	Whitten	22	Cook
26	Cook	23	Woods
27	Woods	24	Whitten
28	Whitten	25	Cook
29	Cook	26	Woods
30	Woods	27	Whitten
31	Whitten	28	Cook
JUNE 1	Cook	29	Woods
2	Woods	30	Whitten
3	Whitten	JULY 1	Cook
4	Cook	2	Woods
5	Woods	3	Whitten
6	Whitten	4	Cook
7	Cook	5	Woods
8	Woods	6	Whitten
9	Whitten	*7	Cook
10	Cook	*8	Woods
11	Woods	*9	Whitten
12	Whitten	10	Cook
13	Cook	11	Woods
14	Woods	12	Whitten
15	Whitten	13	Cook
16	Cook	*14	Woods
17	Woods	*15	Whitten
18	Whitten	*16	Cook

MONTH & DAY	**PITTSBURG TO KIRKWOOD ONLY**
JULY 17	Woods
18	Whitten
19	Cook
20	Woods
*21	Whitten
*22	Cook
*23	Woods
24	Whitten
25	Cook
26	Woods
27	Whitten
*28	Cook
*29	Woods
*30	Whitten
31	Cook
AUGUST 1	Woods
2	Whitten
3	Cook
*4	Woods
*5	Whitten
*6	Cook
7	Woods
8	Whitten
9	Cook
10	Woods
*11	Whitten
*12	Cook
*13	Woods
14	Whitten
15	Cook
16	Woods
17	Whitten
*18	Cook
*19	Woods
*20	Whitten
21	Cook
22	Woods
23	Whitten
24	Cook
*25	Woods
*26	Whitten
*27	Cook
28	Woods
29	Whitten
30	Cook
31	Woods

MONTH & DAY	**PITTSBURG TO KIRKWOOD ONLY**
SEPTEMBER 1	Whitten
2	Cook
3	Woods
4	Whitten
5	Cook
6	Woods
7	Whitten
8	Cook
9	Woods
10	Whitten

* 1997 NON-MORTORIZED DATES
LAUNCHES ARE NOT AUTHROIZED
ON NON-MOTORIZED DATES

COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT LAUNCH CALENDAR C
Hells Canyon Creek Portal
Launch Groups 6 and 7

The commercial powerboat launches at Hells Canyon Creek would be identified as Launch Groups 6 and 7, allowing one boat per day in each launch group. Boat days would not be assigned to Launch Group 7 unless the outfitter in Launch Group 6 chose to exercise the option of selling 50% of the business, at which time, 50% of the boat day allocation would be assigned to Launch Group 7. In the interim, Launch Group 6 would allow two boat trips per day, with one trip to the top of Wild Sheep Rapid and one trip to Pittsburg Landing except on non-motorized days.

	112 DAYS (1) LAUNCH GROUP 6		112 DAYS LAUNCH GROUP 7
MONTH & DAY	**HELLS CANYON DAM TO: TOP OF WLD SHEEP PITTSBURG LANDING**		
MAY 22	Armacost		
23	Armacost		
24	Armacost		
25	Armacost		
26	Armacost		
27	Armacost		
28	Armacost		
29	Armacost		
30	Armacost		
31	Armacost		
JUNE 1	Armacost		
2	Armacost		
3	Armacost		
4	Armacost		
5	Armacost		
6	Armacost		
7	Armacost		
8	Armacost		
9	Armacost		
10	Armacost		
11	Armacost		
12	Armacost		
13	Armacost		
14	Armacost		
15	Armacost		
16	Armacost		
17	Armacost		
18	Armacost		
19	Armacost		
20	Armacost		
21	Armacost		
22	Armacost		
23	Armacost		
24	Armacost		
25	Armacost		

JUNE 26	Armacost
27	Armacost
28	Armacost
29	Armacost
30	Armacost
JULY 1	Armacost
2	Armacost
3	Armacost
4	Armacost
5	Armacost
6	Armacost
*7	Armacost
*8	Armacost
*9	Armacost
10	Armacost
11	Armacost
12	Armacost
13	Armacost
*14	Armacost
*15	Armacost
*16	Armacost
17	Armacost
18	Armacost
19	Armacost
20	Armacost
*21	Armacost
*22	Armacost
*23	Armacost
24	Armacost
25	Armacost
26	Armacost
27	Armacost
*28	Armacost
*29	Armacost
*30	Armacost
AUGUST 1	Armacost
2	Armacost
3	Armacost
*4	Armacost
*5	Armacost
*6	Armacost
7	Armacost
8	Armacost
9	Armacost
10	Armacost
*11	Armacost
*12	Armacost
*13	Armacost
14	Armacost

AUGUST 15	Armacost
16	Armacost
17	Armacost
*18	Armacost
*19	Armacost
*20	Armacost
21	Armacost
22	Armacost
23	Armacost
24	Armacost
*25	Armacost
*26	Armacost
*27	Armacost
28	Armacost
29	Armacost
30	Armacost
31	Armacost
SEPTEMBER 1	Armacost
2	Armacost
3	Armacost
4	Armacost
5	Armacost
6	Armacost
7	Armacost
8	Armacost
9	Armacost
10	Armacost

* 1997 non-motorized dates. Use is only authorized between Hells Canyon Dam and the top of Wild Sheep Rapid on non-motorized dates.

(1) 224 boat days for the permit unless permit holder exercises option to sell 50% of the business.

Changes to Launch Calendars

The commercial powerboat calendars could be adjusted in order to improve the calendars for use by outfitters. Implementation of any changes to a powerboat calendar would take place upon consensus by the commercial powerboat permittees in the launch groups affected by the adjustments and concurrence by the Forest Service that the change was manageable and met guidelines of .the River Management Plan. The primary limitation on changes to any calendar would be the requirement that any change could not affect the maximum daily allocation of boats on the river as identified in the Recreation Plan.

Trading of Launches

Trading of dates would require signed agreements between the outfitters involved and would need to meet the same requirements as trades between commercial floaters including submitting the trade agreement to the Forest Service in advance of the trip. Trades made on weekends or at other times when the Forest Service office was closed would have to be in writing, signed by each outfitter involved and hand delivered to a Forest Service officer at the portal prior to entry. A FAX copy of this agreement with signatures would be acceptable providing the original signature of the owner of the commercial boat entering the river that day was on the FAX document. A trade could not increase an outfitter's area of operation, i.e., the trade only allows access on a specific date, not access into an unauthorized section of river.

Outfitters in Launch Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 (Calendar A) could trade launch dates among themselves. A trade would not change the status of a launch that authorized use only in the scenic river, i.e., a scenic river only launch could not authorize use in the wild river. A trade would also not change the status of a permit, i.e., a day use only permittee could not offer overnight trips by trading a date with a permittee who was authorized to conduct overnight trips.

The special allocation of launches at Pittsburg (Launch Group 5, Calendar B) would not be available for use by outfitters based at other locations. These launches could only be traded among the Pittsburg-based outfitters and would' only be available for day use only.

The launches at Hells Canyon Creek (Launch Groups 6 and 7, Calendar C) would not be available for use by outfitters based at other locations. These launches could only be traded among the outfitters based at Hells Canyon Creek for day use only.

Cross-Over

In order to assure optimum availability of launches assigned for private powerboaters, there would be no cross-over system between private and commercial powerboaters to utilize vacant launches between groups.

Pool

Since all available commercial powerboat launch dates would be assigned, there would be no pool of vacant launch dates.

Number of Boats

Each outfitter is allowed boat access based on Launch Calendars A, B and C. Each entry of an outfitter's name on the calendar(s) authorizes the outfitter to be on the specified section of river with one boat on that date.

Additional boats above the daily allocation must be acquired through trade with another powerboat outfitter. Each trade would allow one additional boat per day per permit. Additional launches acquired using these methods could not be used as a basis for establishing an increase in priority use.

Total commercial boat trips per day could not exceed the maximum number of trips allowed per day as described in the Recreation Plan.

Overnight Trips

During the primary season, overnight camping trips within the river corridor (whether at a river campsite or at a lodge within the HCNRA or on the Lower Salmon) would require consecutive boat days since all commercial powerboat use would be managed by the number of daily entries into sections of the river. The maximum campsite stay length would be three days and two nights in the wild river and four days and three nights in the scenic river per campsite during the primary season for outfitters who camped. Outfitters who used commercial lodging could have stay lengths of greater duration as long as all overnight use occurred at the outfitter's facilities and the outfitter used the required number of boat days to cover each day of the trip that utilized jetboat travel.

Penalties

Commercial powerboaters often have a short window of opportunity for booking trips because of the volume of day use trips they charter. It is not uncommon for a business to book passengers the day prior to, or even the morning of a trip. As a result, there would be no penalty to outfitters if they did not use an allocated boat day.

Outfitters who exhibited a distinct pattern of non-use of allocated boat days would have their allocation reduced based upon the guidelines established for reduction of priority use. These guidelines would provide that outfitters who used less than 70% of their assigned launches in at least two out of five years would have their assigned launches reduced unless there were mitigating circumstances that were considered to be generally outside the control of the outfitter. This could include, but not be limited to adverse weather conditions, river flows or fire activity. Any launches that became available as a result of this type of action would be re-allocated to other outfitters.

Location of Powerboat Business Opportunities

A fifth objective of managing commercial powerboat use would be to provide for public access to outfitter services at all portals except Dug Bar, and to provide options in services for the public by assuring business competition through issuance of multiple commercial permits.

The following guidelines would help assure quality service to visitors by encouraging business competition for prices and services offered by outfitters, opportunities for the public to obtain commercial services at a variety of river locations, and sustained commercial viability of outfitting businesses.

Minimum and Maximum Number of Powerboat Outfitters

Location	Minimum (1)	Maximum	Number of Businesses that could move to another portal
Hells Canyon Cr	2	2 [1 existing](2)	0
Pittsburg	3	4 [3 existing]	0
Dug Bar (3)	0	0 [0 existing]	0
Cache Cr	6	14 [14 existing] (4)	1 (5)
Total	**10 (6)**	**19 (6)**	**1**

(1) Minimum numbers of outfitters are established at each site to assure continuation of services and to reduce the potential for monopolies. Numbers are based on access to the area, potential for on-site congestion, population base related to historic tourism potential and to provide business competition which will encourage quality service and options for both services and prices for customers. Once minimum permit numbers were reached at a specific location, the terms of those permits would require their operations to base at that location in order for the business to be authorized to operate within HCNRA. This would require the buyer of one of these businesses to continue to operate from the same portal as part of the terms of the permit.

(2) At the option of the permit holder, the existing single permit authorizing use of two boats could be terminated and two new permits would be issued with an equal division of the allocated boat days and one boat per permit allowed. Issuance of the existing single permit and the proposed additional permit would require basing operations at that site only for access into the HCNRA. See Powerboat Operations Based at Hells Canyon Creek for detailed information on this use.

(3) Since no powerboat business has ever been solely based at Dug Bar, and in conformance with the Draft Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Comprehensive Management Plan (1996), moving to this location for a base of operations would not be an option. However, all outfitters could pick up and drop off passengers at this location in compliance with their individual areas of operation.

(4) The 14 existing permits for Cache Creek reflect the number of existing outfitters operating from this site that hold priority use permits. If the option was exercised in footnote 5 below, the maximum number of permits at this portal would change to 13 and the minimum number of permits at the Pittsburg portal would change to 4.

(5) There is an option for one priority use business to move from Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing as a base of operations.

(6) These figures would be dependent upon voluntary combining or splitting of businesses associated with existing permits, and sale of businesses. The total of 19 maximum permits includes the existing priority use permits and the outfitter exercising the option described in footnote 2 above. If the options in footnotes 2 and 5 were exercised, the minimum total would change to 12.

Powerboat Operations Based at Hells Canyon Creek

The single commercial powerboat business at Hells Canyon Creek-which authorizes the use of two boats (currently held by Armacost) would be terminated. It would be replaced with two special use permits that authorize the use of one boat per permit. The historic volume of business associated with the single permit was recognized as the equivalent of an allocation of two boat trips per day throughout the primary season. The creation of two permits, with an allocation of one boat trip per day, would not increase the total use allocation or provide the existing outfitter with use that did not already exist at the site. Issuance of two special use permits for this use allocation would provide the following:

1. An opportunity for the existing owner to sell one business to reduce any economic impacts to his business structure as a result of the Recreation Plan. Issuance of a single permit would not allow for a portion of the above business to be sold.

2. An opportunity to eliminate the present on-site monopoly by one commercial powerboat business and to provide the possibility of a competitive business atmosphere at the launch site in the future, with a corresponding choice in services for the benefit of all visitors. This would be the result of the existing outfitter having the ability to sell one of the businesses.

3. An opportunity to manage commercial powerboat use at the site based upon the number of daily boat trips rather than assigning the number of boats allowed to be used in conducting the business.

4. Provide a minimum number of outfitters on site (2) without increasing the historic number of boats authorized to operate from that site.

5. Address economic concerns from Baker County, Oregon and Adams County, Idaho by assuring a continuation of a variety of public services from Hells Canyon Creek on a year-round basis.

Each permit would authorize use as follows:

1. Each permit would have an allocation of 50% of the total original boat days allocated in the Recreation Management Plan (56 boat days for each permit authorizing use from Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg and 56 boat days for each permit authorizing use from Hells Canyon Dam to the top of Wild Sheep Rapid). This would provide each permit holder the ability to advertise a minimum of one trip per day throughout the primary season. Allocations would be authorized on a launch calendar for Launch Groups 6 and 7, and distributed equally between the 2 outfitters on an every other day basis.

2. Areas of operation and conditions of use would be identical for both permits as follows:

    a. Year round Area of Operations - Dam to Pittsburg. The daily trip would be based on the boat day allocations and associated schedules for each permit and could be used for a variety of trip options, i.e., private or commercial jetback, all day tour, all day tour combined with a jetback, scenic tour to the top of Wild Sheep, drop camps, etc.

    b. During the non-motorized periods downstream from Wild Sheep Rapids, all trips would be limited to operations between the Dam and the top of Wild Sheep Rapids only. This would result in the conversion of 12 boat days for each outfitter, resulting in a maximum of 44 boat days for each outfitter that could travel from Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg during the primary season.

    c. Passengers could be originated from any location between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing, inclusive year round.

    d. All operations would limited to day use only, year round.

Special permit management conditions that would apply to both of these permits would include the following:

1. The existing owner of the business, upon being issued two permits, would not be required to sell one or both businesses associated with the permits. However, a condition for issuance of all future special use permits issued for that site would require that when one or both businesses were sold, both businesses could not be sold to the same business entity, an entity who would have a financial interest in both businesses at the same time as a result of the sale, or an immediate family member of the seller or purchaser. This would eliminate any future potential for a monopoly

2. The ability to trade boat days would only be implemented when there were 2 separate businesses operating from the site. Trading dates with outfitter operating from other portals would not be authorized.

3. The base of operations for both permits would be limited to Hells Canyon Creek only. Only the permits based at Hells Canyon Creek could originate passengers from locations upstream of Wild Sheep Rapid. A condition for re-issuance of permits associated with sales of businesses at this site would require the businesses to continue to operate out of Hells Canyon Creek.

Origination of Passengers

Outfitters operating out of the Scenic River can originate commercial passengers at any location downstream from Wild Sheep Rapid. The outfitter(s) based at Hells Canyon Creek is/are the only outfitter(s) authorized to originate passengers above Wild Sheep Rapid.

Summary of Outfitter Allocations During the Primary Season

Outfitter	Area of Operation	Day Use	Overnight Use	Amount of Use
Alboucq	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	Moderate
Anderson	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	Yes	Low
Armacost	Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing	Yes	No	High
Bentz	Boundary to Dam	Yes	No	Low
Bream	Boundary to Granite	Yes	No	Low
Cook	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Eddins	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	Low
Koch-HBE	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	High
Koch-IRN	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	Moderate
Koch-RN	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	High
Luther	Boundary to Dam	Yes	No	High
Maxwell	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	Low
Odegaard	Boundary to Dam	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Riddle	Boundary to Dam	Yes	No	Moderate
Taylor	Boundary to Dam	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Whitten	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Woods	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	Low
Zapffe	Boundary to Granite	Yes	No	Low

Changes in Primary Season

If monitoring the levels of use in the river corridor indicated the dates of the primary season needed to be expanded, the allocation system and method for assigning launch dates would remain the same as long as the primary season dates did not exceed the period between May 1 and October 1. If it became necessary to expand the primary season outside of these dates, a new formula would be developed to determine allocations to outfitters based upon traditional uses that normally occurred during that time period. For example, some outfitters with a low allocation of use during the primary season could have a greater number of assigned boat days after October 1 if their level of historic use was higher during the fall because their business was primarily based upon fall steelhead fishing or chukar hunting. In contrast, outfitters with a large boat day allocation in the primary season could have a smaller allocation after October 1 if their business was primarily based on one day trips during the summer months.

The determination of commercial use allocations prior to May 1 or after October 1 would be based upon a formula using monthly analysis of the percentage of days per month each outfitter launched a trip into the river corridor. This monthly boat day analysis would be based on an average of secondary season use per month for the most recent 5 year period of time for which commercial use data was available in order to prioritize commercial use by outfitter. However, any use allocation formula for this time period could not exceed the limits on commercial power boat days per day established for the primary season.

COMMERCIAL FLOAT ALLOCATION

The objective of these guidelines would be to maintain the existing allocation system for commercial floaters but with adjustments in levels of use and operating guidelines.

The existing initial allocation of two commercial launches per day would be maintained during the primary season and the existing float reservation system would remain unchanged. The following conditions, identified in the Recreation Plan would affect commercial float outfitters:

Snake River Float Outfitters

1. Maximum party size would be 24 people including guides year-round.

2. Maximum number of boats per party would be eight year-round.

3. Kickers (outboard engines) on float craft could not be used in the wild river year-round but would be allowed in the scenic river. They could be transported in the wild river if they were stored out of sight as cargo (in a duffel or closed container) where they were not readily accessible for use. They could not be mounted while being transported in the wild river, even if they were not in use.

4. During the primary season commercial float trips would originate from the Hells Canyon Creek only.

5. No special use permits would be issued specifically for conducting one- day float trips. One-day floats could still be run as part of the multi-day float allocation subject to the availability of jetbacks or ground transportation.

6. The vacant commercial float launch would be permanently retired and the launches made available would be divided between private and commercial floaters on a 60/40 split. The outfitter portion of these launches would remain available as pool dates.

7. A minimum number of ten float outfitters with priority use permits would be established on the river. This would assure adequate competition for services offered to the public, allow for some businesses to expand by purchase and consolidation of businesses. This would increase the potential for a business to conduct more trips on the river but within the total allocation, thereby providing more consistent employment opportunities for outfitter staff.

8. The maximum number of fourteen float outfitters with priority use permits would be allowed on the river, which would accommodate the existing situation. This number would be reduced to 10 through attrition and associated retirement of special use permits if businesses were bought by existing float outfitters on the river for business expansion purposes.

9. A non-motorized period would be available for float trips on Monday through Wednesday from the 2nd Monday of July through the Wednesday prior to Labor Day each year. The non-motorized area would be between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood Historic Ranch. Launches on Sunday through Wednesday would all offer a significant component of a non-motorized experience during the course of the trip. The commercial float launch schedule would provide all outfitters with an equal level of access to this non-motorized opportunity within this maximum eight week period (24 days maximum), each outfitter would have four allocated launches, one on Sunday, one on Monday, one on Tuesday and one on Wednesday. Due to total river miles involved between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood Historic Ranch, the minimum opportunity for a non-motorized experience would be a Wednesday afternoon launch and the maximum opportunity would be a Sunday afternoon launch during this time period.

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The following is the current list of commercial float outfitters authorized to operate on the Snake River under these guidelines:

Steele (1)	Peavey
Davis	Peer
Grubb	Porfily
Hauptman (2)	Randle
Howard	Steen
Hughes	Stewart
Koch	Wendt

(1) This business changed ownership between the FEIS and the EA. In the FEIS this business was listed as ANDERSON.

(2) This business changed between the FEIS and the EA. The FEIS identified this business as the holder of two special use permits. The business associated with the second permit was sold and the permit was permanently retired as a result of a 50/50 sale of the business between Hauptman's other corporation and Hughes. Launches associated with this business were evenly distributed between Hauptman's remaining permit and Hughes, and added to their previous launch allocations.

The launch reservation system for commercial floaters would operate under similar guidelines as the present allocation system with assignment of each outfitter to a commercial float group. The following is the float group assignment:

COMMERCIAL FLOAT GROUPS

Group 1
Hells Canyon Adventures, RAFT (Geoff Randle)
ROW Inc. (River Odysseys West, Inc.) (Peter Grubb)

Group 2
Heller Bar Excursions (Jim and Jill Koch)
Canyon Outfitters, Inc. & Hughes River Expeditions
(Hauptman) (Hughes)

Group 3
Freewater (Dave Steele)
Oregon Trail Adventures (Leonard Porfily)

Group 4
Peer's Snake River Rafting (Darryl Peer)
Northwest Voyageurs (Jeff Peavey)

Group 5
Davis Whitewater Expeditions (Lyle Davis)
OARS - DORIES, Inc. (George Wendt)

Group 6
Canyon Outfitters, Inc. #1 (George Hauptman)
Idaho Afloat (Bruce Howard)

Group 7
Holiday River Expeditions of Idaho, Inc. (Frogg Stewart)
A Limited Number of Commercial Pool Launches

Group 8
Steen's Wilderness Adventures (Jim Steen)
Hughes River Expeditions, Inc. (Jerry Hughes)

Each launch group would operate within a standardized commercial float launch calendar where each outfitter was assigned to a particular launch date as follows:

COMMERCIAL FLOAT LAUNCH CALENDAR
Launch Groups in Parentheses (*)

MONTH & DAY	LAUNCH GROUP	MONTH & DAY	LAUNCH GROUP	MONTH & DAY	LAUNCH GROUP
MAY 22	2	JULY 6	7	AUGUST 20	4
23	3	7	8	21	5
24	4	8	1	22	6
25	5	9	2	23	7
26	6	10	3	24	8
27	7	11	4	25	1
28	8	12	5	26	2
29	1	13	6	27	3
30	2	14	7	28	4
31	3	15	8	29	5
JUNE 1	4	16	1	30	6
2	5	17	2	31	7
3	6	18	3	SEPTEMBER 1	8
4	7	19	4	2	1
5	8	20	5	3	2
6	1	21	6	4	3
7	2	22	7	5	4
8	3	23	8	6	5
9	4	24	1	7	6
10	5	25	2	8	7
11	6	26	3	9	8
12	7	27	4	10	1
13	8	28	5	ALLOCATION IF 11	2
14	1	29	6	PRIMARY 12	3
15	2	30	7	SEASON EXPANDS 13	4
16	3	31	8	14	5
17	4	AUGUST 1	1	15	6
18	5	2	2	16	7
19	6	3	3	17	8
20	7	4	4	18	1
21	8	5	5	19	2
22	1	6	6	20	3
23	2	7	7	21	4
24	3	8	8	22	5
25	4	9	1	23	6
26	5	10	2	24	7
27	6	11	3	25	8
28	7	12	4	26	1
29	8	13	5	27	2
30	1	14	6	28	3
JULY 1	2	15	7	29	4
2	3	16	8	30	5
3	4	17	1	OCTOBER 1	6
4	5	18	2		
5	6	19	3		

If the primary season is expanded to the entire month of May, the same pattern for commercial float groups will continue on the Commercial Float Calendar the expansion of the primary season to October 1 is shown for comparison).

In addition, all commercial float outfitters would continue to be able to trade dates, obtain pool dates, cross-over between private and commercial, etc. An outfitter could also change launch groups on a yearly basis by trading with another outfitter. For example, an outfitter in Group 1 could trade for all positions on the launch calendar with an outfitter in Group 6 if both outfitters agreed to the change.

Use trend over the years indicate shorter trips have gradually reduced commercial and private float use that originates from Hells Canyon Creek and travels below Pittsburg into the scenic river (reference analysis file for use data). Currently 75% of the float trip takeouts (including split trips) leave the river at Pittsburg Landing or above (by use of commercial jetback). Twenty-five percent of the float use takeouts for trips originating at Hells Canyon Creek occurs in the scenic river or below (Heller Bar). This use in the scenic river will be Monitored on a yearly basis. If the number of commercial and private float trip takeouts for trips originating at Hells Canyon Creek exceeds 25% of total Takeouts for two out of three consecutive years, this level of use will be capped. The maximum allocation for continuation of trips below Pittsburg will be set at 25% of available launches from Hells Canyon Creek as a means of managing on-river encounters and campsite competition in the scenic river. This is in consideration of the additional float use that enters the Snake River via the Lower Salmon River.

Lower Salmon Float Outfitters Entering the Snake River
Conditions of use on operating plans for all Lower Salmon River commercial float outfitters would be changed to meet the intent of Snake River management goals in the Recreation Plan. Through the memorandum of understanding between the Forest Service and the BLM, necessary changes would be made in the operating plans for Lower Salmon commercial floaters who travel on the Snake River. The following conditions in the Recreation Plan would affect Lower Salmon commercial float outfitters:

Party Size
The maximum party size for Salmon River boaters is 30 persons. The maximum party size for Salmon River boaters who chose to camp along the Snake River within the HCNRA would be 24 persons with the following exception: Groups of up to 30 people, originating on the Salmon River could camp along the Snake River between the confluence with the Salmon River and Salmon Bar, approximately one mile downstream of the confluence.

Maximum Number of Boats Per Party
Groups originating on the Salmon River would be required to conform with the Snake River's eight boats per party limit. Prior to entering the Snake River, groups with more than eight boats would be required to use one or more of the following techniques to achiev the eight boats per party limit:

1. Boats could "raft up" or tie together. Each group of "rafted up" boats would count as a single craft.

2. Boats could be deflated and stowed, or simply lifted out of the water and 'tied on top of a larger boat. For example, a kayak out of the water and tied on top of the gear on a raft would not count towards the eight boats per party maximum.

3. For a transition period of one year (1997), groups of more than eight boats originating on the Salmon River could break up into sub-gr ups of eight or less. Sub-groups would be required to travel separately from each other and be of sufficient distance so as to remain out of sight from each other. Sub-groups could only regroup by having the first group pull in to shore. Craft would be considered pulled into shore if they were tied to shore or pulled onto the shore and unoccupied. In 1998 this transition strategy would no longer be available to parties with more than eight boats. This transition period only applies to float groups originating their trips on the Lower Salmon River.

OBJECTIVES COMMON TO ALL COMMERCIAL OUTFITTERS

Private Trips by Commercial Outfitters

The first objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters is to manage private use of the river corridor by commercial outfitters. Whenever any individual identified as a commercial outfitter or their employees/guides are on private trips, or their boats used in their commercial operations are used for private, non-commercial trips within the river corridor, each entry would require them to obtain a permit under the same guidelines for access that apply to private river users on a year-round basis. Private trips will not be reported on actual use reports submitted at the end of each year.

If boats normally used to conduct commercial outfitting services are bei g used on private trips, or if owners or employees of commercial outfitting businesses are { entering the river corridor for private trips, a manifest would be required that included the name, address, telephone number and signature of the trip leader and all passengers verifying the trip was not commercial.

Commercial Manifest

A second objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters would be to coordinate with other State and Federal agencies to assure that outfitters were meeting licensing requirements for guides and equipment. In order to accomplish this objective, a condition of each outfitter special use permit would require a manifest for each trip into the river corridor. Each manifest would list the zip code of each passenger to verify total passengers per trip and be signed by all commercial guides/employees on the trip, verifying they had the appropriate state or Coast Guard licenses to conduct guided operations. A manifest would be completed prior to the beginning of each trip year-round and presented at the portal upon entry into the river corridor.

Lower Salmon commercial float outfitters would not be required to complete a manifest for each trip.

These manifests would be used for the following purposes:

1. To verify documentation of passengers and revenues reported by outfitters at the end of the year when conducting audits of commercial businesses as required by the terms of special use permits. The manifest would not require documentation

of revenues or the names and addresses of passengers, only zip code or country of residence for each passenger.

2. To gather demographic information (zip code or country of residence) for future economic analysis.

3. To cooperate with other State and Federal agencies which license outfitters on the Snake River to assure compliance with rules and regulations pertaining to safety of passengers in regard to licensing of guides and meeting passenger capacities of commercial jetboats.

Validation of Use

A third objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters would be to assure a public service was being provided. All outfitters would be required to run a minimum of three commercial trips with paying customers during the year to validate their use. Failure to run a minimum of three commercial trips per year would be addressed through the annual performance rating.

This requirement would assure a public service was being provided and also address the need to provide a fair opportunity for access by the public within the guidelines of the Recreation Plan.

Priority Use

A fourth objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters would be to resolve the issue of priority use and how it would be assigned to all outfitters.

Priority use would be based on service days and calculated for the five year period of time ending on December 31, 1989 (reference analysis file for letter to outfitters from Area Ranger). This priority use would be honored and included on each outfitter's permit. For the two permits at Hells Canyon Creek, the priority use would be split evenly between the two permits. In accordance with FSH 2709.11, ID 2709.11-95-11, 41.53h 2, issuance of Priority Use is assigned at the discretion of the authorized officer (Area Ranger) and is dependent upon whether or not use capacity is available. No additional assignment of priority use based on service days would occur on the Snake River to provide for maximum flexibility in managing overall use. The number of launches (floaters) and boat days (powerboaters) assigned to each outfitter would be included on the face of their special use permit, but launches and boat days would not be assigned as priority use.

Since the Recreation Plan would place limitations on use for all commercial outfitting, priority use assignments for service days could only increase through purchase of an existing business and transfer of the priority use assigned to the special use permit being sold to the purchaser. The number of launches or boats available for use by each outfitter during the year accommodates existing levels of priority use currently assigned as service days for each outfitter. Any future assignments of priority use would be based upon launches (floaters) and boat days (powerboaters) at the discretion of the Area Ranger.

For any individual powerboat business, future priority use in the primary season would be limited to a maximum number of boat days into specific sections of the river based upon the yearly commercial powerboat launch calendar. Any additional use could be issued as temporary use only.

For commercial floaters, future priority use in the primary season would be limited to a maximum number of launches allowed to enter the HCNRA per season based upon the yearly commercial float launch calendar and the total number of launches per group to which each outfitter was assigned. All additional use, such as launches obtained from the pool, would be applied for and issued as temporary use only.

Priority use in the secondary season could be assigned to outfitters who specialized in outfitting during that time period only.

Business Ownership
A fifth objective of guidelines common to both types of commercial users would be to manage the number of commercial permits to assure the continuation of business competition on the river, access to outfitter services at all portals, and address consolidation of activities of outfitters for effective administration of permits in order to assure public service was being provided rather than permits held for speculation.

In order to assure quality service and distinct choices for customers, special use permits would not be issued to individuals or stockholders that owned an interest in another powerboat or float businesses operating within the Snake River corridor. Nor could individuals who owned businesses on the Snake River buy into another existing Snake River business either as a shareholder or a partner without absorbing the business being purchased, resulting in the permanent absorption of the business activities and retirement of the purchased permit. The only exception would be that a permittee could own (sole proprietorship or partnership) or purchase corporate stock in another business up to a maximum of two businesses on the river if the businesses were based at different portals. Business arrangements made prior to 1996 would be exempt from this requirement.

Existing Businesses with Multiple Permits
A single Special Use Permit could be issued to businesses holding multiple float and/or power permits at the option of the permit holders. The single permit would authorize all operations that were previously authorized by the multiple permits. A separate operating plan may be required for each business and the commercial float and power boat day schedules would include all launches and boat days authorized for all of the operations. In the event of a sale of one of the businesses, the amount of use associated with that business could be separated from the permit to allow re-issuance of a permit to the new owner. Some permits would be issued as combination float/power permits on the river, emphasizing the relationship and validity of both motorized and non-motorized uses on the river and be used as one method of addressing conflicting uses between motorized and non-motorized commercial users on the river.

Management of Outfitter Facilities on Forest Service Land as a Result of Sale of Business

Copper Creek
Copper Creek would continue to be managed under a resort special use permit issued

for a maximum of ten years per issuance. The buildings would continue to be owned by the permittee and the permit would be issued for occupancy of the land. The following conditions would apply in regard to sale of facilities:

1. The outfitter business, including the buildings associated with the resort, could only be sold to another Snake River outfitter because access to the resort requires river access associated with an existing outfitter business. The permit for occupancy of the land could be reissued to the new owner, but there would be no guarantee of reissuance as the result of a sale of business.

2. If the permittee decided to go out of business, the buildings would be removed at the expense of the permittee and the site would be naturalized.

3. The buildings could be sold to a new outfitter if they were included as part of a sale of an associated outfitting business. A permit for occupancy of the land could be reissued to the new owner, but there would be no guarantee of reissuance as the result of a sale of business.

Sheep Creek Cabin
Sheep Creek Cabin could continue to be managed under authority of a Granger-Thye permit for a maximum term of five years. The permit for use of the buildings would require the holder to maintain a valid outfitter-guide permit to remain eligible to hold the permit for Sheep Creek. Loss or termination of the outfitter permit would result in termination of the permit to occupy the buildings at Sheep Creek.

The primary purpose for issuance of this permit would be to assure maintenance of the historic structures on site as a component *ot* protection of the cultural Outstandingly Remarkable Value in the wild river corridor. At the discretion of the Forest Service, and at the end of each five year period, a prospectus would be issued and bids would be accepted from existing Snake River power and float outfitters who were licensed to conduct outfitting and guiding services in Idaho. If a sale of business occurred during the term of the permit, the following options would be available:

1. Terminate the permit and re-advertise the opportunity through issuance of a prospectus to all interested Snake River Outfitters including the new owner of the outfitting business that had been associated with the permit.

2. Terminate the permit and do not re-advertise in association with an outfitting business.

The Forest Service would not be obligated to reissue the prospectus at the end of a expired 5 year term.

Growth as a Result of Purchase for Business Expansion
The purchase of an existing business would become the main method of business expansion beyond growth made possible by filling all available seats, or acquiring larger capacity powerboats or rafts. A condition for issuance of a special use permit would require that the business purchased be absorbed into the business of the buyer. A portion of the business could not be sold at a future time. When a Snake River business was sold, the entire operation would be sold (See specific rules for operations at Hells Canyon Creek).

This method of managing sales of businesses to other Snake River outfitters would become effective for all sales of businesses occurring on o+ after January 1, 1996. An outfitter(s) would have the option of requesting this method of consolidation prior to this date.

When the above occurred, it would be viewed as a consolidation of activities and the business of the seller would be absorbed into the business the buyer, with the seller's permit being retired. The number of boats, priority use, area of operation, launch allocation, and any other conditions associated with the permit would be added to the permitted activities of the outfitter as part of the consolidation. If the purchased business allowed use in a larger area of operation, only those launches which were associated with the purchased business could utilize that area of operation. Consolidation of use would not provide for an increase in area of operation for the entire business.

Two or more Snake River outfitters could purchase a single business as long as a bona fide sale would occur, i.e., personal property changed ownership as part of the sales agreement. In this situation, the entire Snake River business would be required to be sold and the special use permit associated with that business permanently retired. Any use associated with the business being sold would be absorbed into the businesses of the buyers. The controlling factors in validating this type of sale are (1) the entire business being sold must cease to exist as a separate entity and the special use permit for the business being sold must be permanently retired upon fulfillment of the financial obligations of the purchaser as documented in the sales agreement. The permit for the business being sold would be placed in an inactive status until the financial obligations of the sale were met, at which time it would be permanently retired.

The overall effect could result in net attrition in priority use powerboat businesses from 19 down to a minimum of 10 and priority use float businesses from 14 down to minimum of 10. These minimum numbers of businesses would assure that outfitter services would continue to be located at all portals. This could or could not result in larger businesses operating on the Snake River but it would provide for business diversification, adding stability to the industry. Float/Power combination permits would also add to diversification and could further reduce the total number of businesses operating on the river to a minimum of 11.

Permits, or distinctly different portions of combination permits, i.e., float/power operations, in non-use status would have priority use reduced or the type of operations in non-use status would be terminated in accordance with Forest Service guidelines. If termination resulted, any use associated with the permit would be re-distributed proportionately among the remaining outfitters. Proportionate re-distribution would be implemented consistent with the allocation decisions found elsewhere in this document. Upon termination, the permit would not be reissued unless the minimum number of commercial permits would not be met at each portal on the river for powerboat and floatboat operations. If this occurred, a prospectus would be issued to advertise the vacant business opportunity only after appropriate environmental analysis was completed.

Specific Conditions of Sales Required for Permit Issuance

Sale of Business (General)
Portions of a business could not be sold but portions of a business could be distributed among multiple purchasers if the purchasers were also Snake River outfitters. Sale of business would include all operations conducted under authority

of the special use permit with the exception of the special launch allocation for Pittsburg based outfitters as described below.

Sale of Powerboat Business
If a business were sold to another Snake River powerboat outfitter(s), the business would be absorbed by the purchaser(s) and the boat day allocation combined with the use authorized in the special use permit(s) held by the purchaser(s). In all other sales transactions, the boat day allocation assigned to the seller would be reassigned to the buyer.

Sale of Float Business
If a business were sold to another Snake River float outfitter(s), the business would be absorbed by the purchaser(s) and combined with the use authorized in the special use permit(s) held by the purchaser(s), including assignment to an additional launch group as appropriate. In all other sales transactions, the launch allocation of the seller would be assigned to the buyer.

Sale of Hells Canyon Creek Based Powerboat Business
At the option of the permit holder, if two permits were issued for all use associated with the powerboat business based at Hells Canyon Creek, and the business associated with one of these permits was sold, the permits at this location could not be combined under joint ownership again. Under these conditions, the two businesses would have to exhibit complete operational and financial separation from each other as a condition of permit issuance and continuing operation. Both permits would be limited to operating from this location only and no other outfitter could move their operation to this location.

Sale of Pittsburg Landing Based Powerboat Business
Since the specific purpose of the special allocation of launches from Pittsburg to Kirkwood was to offset economic impacts to Idaho County, the objective would be to make certain these launches remained based at Pittsburg Landing in the event of sale of business. To meet this objective, the following conditions would apply:

- The launches in the special allocation would only be authorized for use which originated from Pittsburg Landing for trips between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood Historic Ranch.

- If one of the three existing Pittsburg based businesses were to be purchased by another Pittsburg-based outfitter, the purchaser could double their boat launches in the special allocation, running a trip two out of every three days to Kirkwood.

- The special allocation of launches would not be re-issued to a new business if the sale of business involved moving the base of operations away from Pittsburg Landing. In this situation, these launches would be reallocated to the remaining two Pittsburg-based outfitters, allowing them to each run a trip every other day.

- The special allocation of boat days at Pittsburg would be a separate system of launches and could only be traded among the Pittsburg-based outfitters.

The following are other conditions of sales of businesses that would apply to

Pittsburg Landing-based outfitters. Issuance of a Forest Service permit would be contingent upon meeting these conditions:

- A maximum of one Pittsburg-based business could be sold to another Pittsburg based business only. The remaining two businesses would be required by the terms of their permits to operate from Pittsburg Landing only.

- If there were a minimum of two Pittsburg-based outfitters, no other outfitters would be allowed to move their operation to that location. However, Pittsburg-based outfitters could purchase and absorb businesses based downstream from Cache Creek in order to increase their guaranteed number of boat days into different sections of the river.

Appendix C

Outfitter and Guide

Operating Guidelines

September 1996

Appendix C

Revised September 1996

OUTFITTER AND GUIDE OPERATING GUIDELINES

These guidelines establish the method of managing river outfitter-guide operations within the entire Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor. It is an appendix to the Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter and Guide Environmental Assessment (EA) which is tiered to the Wild and Scenic Snake River Recreation Management Plan (Snake River Plan) and its accompanying final environmental impact statement (FEIS) and record of decision (ROD).

COMMERCIAL POWERBOAT ALLOCATION

The allocation of commercial powerboat use was analyzed and allocated based upon the following common elements:

1. Determination of a level of access that would address historic and recent use. Use levels are based upon the average daily numbers of commercial powerboat entries into the river corridor and additional launches into the scenic river including access to Kirkwood Historic Ranch to mitigate reduced access opportunities in the wild river upstream from Kirkwood.

2. Existing priority use assignments (which is a level of use assigned to an outfitter) based upon guidelines developed by the Forest Service in cooperation with national outfitter organizations (including the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association and the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board) and other federal land management agencies. This number (currently expressed as service days) reflects the order of priority in determining which outfitters will retain their use of a limited resource in the event reductions in use are necessary. It is related to the level of past business activity.

3. The average of the highest two of five years' (1988-1992) total commercial powerboat boat days for each outfitter (priority use guidelines applied to launches).

4. The five-year average of use for each outfitter during the years 1988-1992.

5. The number of existing commercial powerboat permits (19).

6. The number of commercial powerboat businesses operating from each portal.

7. Historic records of use for each outfitter's business during the years 1988-1992 comparing the following:

   a. Primary type of business (day or overnight). This element reflects total trip length and identifies any dependence on overnight camping.

   b. Season of use (primary, secondary, or both). This indicates the level of dependence on use of the area of operations to conduct business during a particular time of year.

   c. Primary areas of operations within the river corridor and base of operations used by each outfitter or the outfitter from whom the business was purchased if a change of ownership occurred between 1988 and 1992.

d. Number of boats used per trip.

8. Availability of lodging on the Snake River or the contiguous Salmon River for overnight use in lieu of camping overnight. The investment in lodging is considered to be a business decision that will benefit the outfitter and becomes a major component in marketing overnight trips. This is not an available option for all outfitters, especially those with smaller operations. For this reason, the opportunity for outfitters to lodge overnight guests in lieu of camping is viewed as having a positive environmental effect on the river resources by reducing impacts at campsites and reducing competition for campsites. As a result, outfitters with commercial lodging available as part of their operation are generally not considered for allocation of overnight camping within the river corridor. This includes outfitters who have Granger-Thye permits allowing overnight use of government-owned buildings. An exception is made if an outfitter's use records reflect a substantial amount of their business between 1988 and 1992 was dependent upon use of campsites for overnight trips and their lodging facilities are on private land located outside of the HCNRA boundary.

9. Adjustments responsive to issues raised during previous appeals to the FEIS/ROD and comments received on the Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter Environmental Assessment (EA) including the following:

   Historic use of the section of the wild river between Kirkwood Historic Ranch and Wild Sheep Rapid for each outfitter's business during 1988-1995.

These guidelines have been developed to manage commercial powerboat outfitters within their area of operations and trip lengths, and to allocate use in the primary season based upon their historic operations. There is also a need to assure that commercial outfitter services operating on National Forest areas serve the purpose of providing a public service available at all portals. Use for each commercial powerboat business will be assigned in blocks of boat days within specific periods of time during the primary season. This will assure flexibility in selling and scheduling trips, service to the public throughout the season, and distribute powerboat use throughout the season to assure that total powerboat use on the river is managed to avoid the potential for peak use days.

The objectives were designed to help reduce on-river encounters with other users and reduce competition for overnight camping with a subsequent reduction in impacts to campsites. Outfitters will continue to provide a public service to visitors. The availability of a variety of outfitted services in Hells Canyon will be maintained with the least disruption possible to outfitters while protecting and enhancing ORVs within the river corridor.

Area of Operations

The first objective of managing commercial powerboat use is to limit commercial powerboat operations for each outfitter to their area of operations during the primary season only. All outfitters can operate throughout the length of the river corridor in the secondary season. If the primary season expanded based on monitoring, each outfitter's primary season area of operations will apply to the new dates.

The Snake River Plan limits the maximum number of commercial powerboat permits on the Snake River to 19. Periodically, a portion of each outfitter's area of operations will not be available for motorized use as a result of the non-motorized periods in the wild river. Based upon analysis of area of operations, commercial powerboat permits will be changed as follows in regard to authorized area of operations during the primary season:

Primary Season Area of Operations

Dam downriver to Pittsburg
Armacost [1]

Northern boundary of HCNRA upriver to Hells Canyon Dam
Bentz
Luther
Riddle
Odegaard
Taylor [2]

Northern boundary of HCNRA upriver to the bottom of Granite Creek Rapid
Bream
Cook
Eddins
Whitten
Woods
Zapffe

Northern boundary of HCNRA upriver to the bottom of Rush Creek Rapid
Alboucq [3]
Turnidge [4]
Koch - Heller Bar Excursions
Koch - Idaho Rivers Navigation
Koch - Rivers Navigation
Maxwell

1 The existing single permit allowing use of two boats can be split into two, one-boat permits at the option of the permit holder. Refer to the section **Powerboat Operations Based at Hells Canyon Creek** for more information concerning this option.

2 This business changed ownership between the FEIS and the EA. In the FEIS this business was listed as Wieber.

3 This business changed ownership between the FEIS and the EA. In the FEIS this business was listed as Watson.

4 This business changed ownership prior to the decision notice for the EA. In the FEIS and the EA this business was listed as Anderson.

Secondary Season Area of Operations

Northern boundary to Hells Canyon Dam
All permitted outfitters

Trip Duration

The second objective is to manage commercial powerboat outfitters' trip duration, primarily determined by two factors: their historic record of overnight camping activity, and whether they have other overnight lodging facilities available for their customers. Outfitters who meet all of the following criteria will be assigned an allocation for overnight camping in the river corridor:

- Those who have historically offered a substantial number of overnight camping trips within the HCNRA with guide services to clients.

- Those who do not have lodging facilities under permit from the Forest Service.

- Those who do not have lodging facilities on private land in the following areas:

    On the Snake River within the HCNRA

    On the Lower Salmon River and primarily accessed from the Snake River

Outfitters who purchase existing businesses may be considered for an overnight camping allocation if the business they purchase had a prior history of offering overnight camping or overnight lodging accommodations on the Snake River. The purchasing outfitter will need to be an outfitter whose opportunity for overnight lodging is no longer available due to sale of business, loss of overnight lodging opportunity, sale of private land, etc.

Overnight camping on public lands by commercial powerboat outfitters will not be allowed in the following sections of the river during the primary season except at sites which may become available through issuance of a Granger-Thye permit:

1) Downstream from the mouth of the Salmon (to Oregon/Washington border)
2) Between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood Historic Ranch, inclusive.
3) Between Hells Canyon Dam and the top of Wild Sheep Rapid.

All river-based outfitters will be eligible to bid on any future prospectus for Granger-Thye permits. This type of fee permit would allow an outfitter to use government-owned buildings for overnight lodging of guests. This would also allow outfitters with day use only allocations an opportunity to offer overnight trips.

All overnight trips on the Snake River require the use of consecutive boat days, regardless of whether the overnight trip is at a lodge or river campsite, for all days that a boat stays with the trip.

Drop camps will remain a business opportunity for all outfitters, year-round, and will be subject to the management requirements pertaining to drop camps as described in the Snake River Plan.

Based on an analysis of these factors, commercial powerboat permits will be changed as follows:

Day-Use Only Permits	Day-Use and Overnight Camping[7]
Armacost[1]	Turnidge
Bentz[2]	Eddins
Bream[2]	Cook
Koch-Heller Bar[3]	Odegaard
Koch-Idaho Rivers Nav[3]	Taylor
Koch-Rivers Nav[3]	Whitten
Luther[4]	Woods
Maxwell[2]	
Riddle[5]	
Alboucq[1]	
Zapffe[6]	

[1] Can overnight at another outfitter's lodge within the canyon. All outfitters will have this option.

[2] Can overnight on their private land on the Lower Salmon River.

[3] Can overnight at Copper Creek (under Forest Service permit).

[4] The outfitter that holds the Forest Service permit for Sheep Creek can overnight at that location. The permit is currently held by Luther.

[5] Can overnight on their private inholding on the Snake River.

[6] Can overnight on their private land downstream from the HCNRA boundary.

[7] Overnight trips requires the use of consecutive boat days. Some of these outfitters also have access to lodges on private land accessible by river from the HCNRA boundary where they can overnight.

Assignment of Use

A third objective is to determine the amount of use that should be assigned to each outfitter.

Based on an analysis of historic use, a method was developed to establish the number and frequency of daily boat trips to be allocated to each outfitter during the primary season. Allocation of boat days were determined in consideration of the following:

- Maximum length of the primary season (112 days) at time of plan implementation (May 22 through September 10).
- An average level of use based on a maximum of 8 commercial boats per day originating in the scenic river (Pittsburg Landing and downstream). An additional 88 boat days identified as part of the use cap in the FEIS involve a separate allocation and will be discussed later in this document.
- Boat days based upon priority use.
- Boat days based upon a five year boat day average.
- Credit for historic trip length.
- Credit for the percentage of each outfitter's historic use of the wild river upstream from Kirkwood Historic Ranch and downstream from Wild Sheep Rapid between 1988 and 1995 for determining each outfitter's boat day allocation for this section of river, as constrained by their actual base period operations.
- Credit for number of boats used per trip.

The years used to determine the priority for assigning boat days to each outfitter were 1988-1992, the primary years of growth in passenger capacity. The order of priority was based on historic boat day activity of each outfitter during the primary season only. The unit of measure for the allocation would be in boat days where one commercial powerboat entering the HCNRA equates to one boat day for each day of the trip. Outfitters who had not developed substantial use prior to the end of the 1992 primary season have limited opportunity for primary season access. The following is a description of how the commercial powerboat boat days were calculated:

The maximum primary season at the time of plan implementation was used to determine the total number of days available to distribute use. Based upon the maximum primary season from May 22 thru September 10, this equaled 112 days.

An average of eight boats per day originating in the scenic river (Cache Creek or Pittsburg) multiplied by 112 days provides the opportunity for 896 boat days throughout the primary season. Of these 8 boat days, 4 (one half) are authorized to operate between the northern boundary of the HCNRA and into the wild river as far upstream as Kirkwood Historic Ranch on a daily basis; the other 4 (one half) are authorized to operate upstream from Kirkwood Historic Ranch in the wild river on a daily basis. A separate allocation of 397 boat days was assigned to Hells Canyon Creek for travel in the wild river. In addition, the special allocation of 88 commercial power boat days, originally identified in the FEIS and part of the total powerboat use cap, would allow access between the northern boundary of the HCNRA and Kirkwood Historic Ranch. Allocation per outfitter and management of these boat days is discussed later in this document.

Initial allocations of use were based upon boat days. Boat days were considered to be the most accurate representation of past use since consideration is made for both the total number of boats used during a trip and the total duration of a trip (i.e., overnight trips) as reported by outfitters on annual use reports. As a result, use for each outfitter was calculated based upon boat days. As a general rule, boat day allocations reflect actual use of the river for outfitters who operate more than one boat per day or those who run overnight trips. Boat days credit each outfitter with the maximum possible number of boats that they operated each year. Identifying maximum historic use based upon boat days then allows direct correlation of boat days to launches (i.e., 1 boat day = 1 launch).

In order for qualified outfitters to be able to offer overnight trips, outfitter boat days were assigned in blocks of boat days within specific time periods during the primary season. This will allow flexibility for outfitters to offer overnight trips on a customized schedule, avoid non-motorized periods, and have some discretion in planning the length of a trip, i.e., one, two, or three day trips. Overnight use creates no cumulative increase in total use in the river corridor since the use of consecutive boat days is required for all overnight trips.

Two factors were reviewed to determine how to distribute the total number of eight boat days launched from scenic river portals among the existing outfitters. The final allocation of boat days was a combined average of each outfitter's priority use and their five-year average, using 1988-1992 as the base years for boat day analysis. This provided equal weight and consideration of both factors as follows:

Five-year Average	- Credit for consistent performance over time which demonstrates how well a business is providing continual service to the public.
Priority Use	- Meets the obligation of the agency to the outfitting industry by considering Forest Service guidelines that were developed with industry involvement.

The average number of boat days determined through this process was then reduced by 1% to account for the difference in the average length of the regulated season for each year from 1988-1992 under the existing CMP (114 days) with the new initial maximum primary season length in the FEIS (112 days). This provided a **Preliminary Assignment** of boat days to each outfitter that totaled 972 boat days, requiring an allocation reduction of 7.8% for each outfitter. This is not a reduction in actual use but a reduction in the inflated use level created by the application of the priority use factor. The reduction allowed distribution of total outfitter use to meet the maximum allocation of 896 boat days in a 112 day primary season, which is still greater than actual average use levels for the base period.

Since only four of the eight boats per day would be authorized to continue a trip upstream from Kirkwood Historic Ranch, boat days allocated per outfitter were initially distributed equally. This initially allocated all outfitters an equal opportunity for access, with half of their use assigned for operation in the entire scenic river and upstream as far as Kirkwood in the wild river on a single trip and half of their use assigned to the entire wild and scenic river within their primary season area of operations. In the tables and narratives to follow, which describe the **Steps in Allocation**, the sections of river where boat day use is allocated is described as:

AOW: *Area of Operations Wild River* - this reference includes both wild and scenic sections of the river within each outfitter's area of operations and is applicable to all powerboat outfitters.

WSW: *Wild Sheep Wild River*. This reference is applicable to Armacost only and refers to the section of river from Hells Canyon Dam to the top of Wild Sheep Rapid

KW: *Kirkwood Wild River*. This reference includes the river corridor from the Oregon-Washington border to Kirkwood Historic Ranch and is applicable to all outfitters except Armacost.

Steps in Allocation

The following is the initial allocation of outfitter use based upon this distribution in order of outfitter priority and includes any changes to each outfitter's boat day allocation as a result of verification of each outfitter's use per the Regional Forester's appeal decision:

Step 1 - Initial Boat Day Allocation

Outfitter	Total Boat Day Allocation	Launch Subgroup AO Wild	Launch Subgroup Kirkwood Wild
Koch-HBE	222	111	111
Luther	139	70	69
Koch-RN	120	60	60
Koch-IRN	78	39	39
Alboucq	73	37	36
Taylor	65	33	32
Odegaard	58	29	29
Riddle	39	19	20
Whittem	31	16	15
Cook	24	12	12
Bentz	11	5	6
Woods	7	3	4
Bream	7	3	4
Anderson	6	3	3
Eddins	6	3	3
Zapffe	6	3	3
Maxwell	4	2	2
TOTAL	896	448	448
Armacost	397	179	178*
TOTAL	1,293	627	626

* Wild Sheep Wild (WSW) boat days

Adjustments to Initial Boat Day Allocation

Allocation of the 88 Special Boat Days and
Supply Launches to Lodges under Forest Service Permit

In reviewing the use allocations for all outfitters, there are apparent differences in the relative sizes of outfitter businesses. The following is an analysis of these outfitting businesses in relation to size, portal of operations, and the rationale for distributing the 88 special boat days that are within the use cap. The 88 special boat days were identified as a component of the use cap in the FEIS and were originally assigned to Pittsburg-based outfitters for use between Pittsburg Landing and Kirkwood. The EA distributed these launches in a different configuration and with a different use pattern, allowing travel between the northern boundary of the HCNRA and Kirkwood.

The overall objective is to distribute the 88 boat days to those outfitters, and at those portals, that will provide the greatest benefit to the public on a continual, daily basis. A secondary objective is to support mid-size businesses in order to assure a wide range of services for visitors by maintaining large, medium, and small businesses and their associated specialized services. A third objective is to provide some type of support for each outfitter's business, regardless of the size of the business.

Outfitter Group 1

These outfitters include those businesses which have historically operated one or more boat days on a daily basis during the base years of 1988-1992. The number of boat days already allocated to these outfitters provides the potential of seven-day-per-week service to the public from the two major portals (Cache Creek and Hells Canyon Creek) which continues the historic use patterns for visitor services. The allocations assigned to these businesses exceed one boat per day, providing the ability to advertise one or more trips on a daily basis, contract for specialized services such as cruise ships and tour buses, or continue to operate specialized overnight trips in conjunction with lodges under special use permit. These businesses will not receive an increase in allocation from the 88 boat days. In order to address economic issues relative to these businesses, flexibility in use allocations was a primary concern. There is a need to provide opportunities for these businesses to run multiple boats to meet contractual commitments, provide additional boat days for transporting supplies to lodges, and acknowledge adjustments necessary to the boat day cap as a result of the review of use per the Regional Forester's appeal decision. As a result, the following changes will be made to provide additional business support and flexibility:

Armacost: All of the 88 boat days were originally intended for use downstream from Kirkwood. As a result, these boat days will not be used to address objectives for Armacost's use in the wild river since Armacost bases at Hells Canyon Creek. However, as a result of the review of use per the Regional Forester's appeal decision, a substantial adjustment has been made to his original allocation, resulting in an increase of 173 boat days. Due to the unique situation of being the only business operating from Hells Canyon Creek, Armacost will continue to be the only outfitter who can originate passengers above Wild Sheep Rapid. The division of his total boat day allocation is discussed later in this document.

Koch-HBE: Two boat days will be permanently transferred from Rivers Navigation to provide this business with a full compliment of two boats per day (222 + 2 = 224 boat days per 112 day season).

Luther: A total of four boat days will be assigned to the Sheep Creek Granger-Thye permit for supply trips to Sheep Creek, allocated based on providing an average of one boat day in each of the months of June, July, August and September. These will be non-passenger-carrying boats and, as a result, will not count in the commercial use cap. These boat days will transfer with the permit to the outfitter who is issued the Granger-Thye permit (currently issued to Luther).

Koch-RN: This business will be provided a maximum of 16 boat days for supply trips to Copper Creek, allocated based on providing an average of one boat day per week during the primary season. These boat days will become part of the Copper Creek Resort permit (currently issued to Koch-RN) and will not count in the commercial use cap since they are non-passenger-carrying trips.

Outfitter Group 2

This group of outfitters include those who have traditionally operated one-day and/or overnight fishing trips at a level below one boat per day during the primary season in the base years but at a level that represents a minimum of one-third of the days in the primary season. This group also includes the Pittsburg Landing-based outfitters aggregated as a group. With the exception of Woods, these outfitters have a level of use that is distinctly different from the outfitters in groups 1 and 3 during the base years of 1988-1992. Providing additional allocations of boat days to this group as a whole has the potential to provide the greatest benefit to visitors by assuring the continued availability of reasonably priced, one-day tours for the spontaneous market supported by transient tourists, and the continuation of overnight fishing trips. The following are the objectives in allocating additional boat days to the mid-sized outfitters:

The objective for the four largest of these mid-sized outfitters is to allocate additional boat days from the 88 launches in order of size of the outfitter from highest to lowest to provide equal boat day access for Cache Creek portal entries. This will provide a minimum level of service to the public at an average of five boat days per week per outfitter. The majority of this use has historically been tied to transient tourists involved in one-day tours.

The objective for the Pittsburg Landing portal outfitters is to allocate additional launches to them as a group to provide a minimum level of service to the public at a level of an average of five boat days per week throughout the primary season (comparable with each of the mid-sized outfitters at the Cache Creek portal). The majority of this use has historically been tied to a variety of services for the public, including one-day tours, overnight fishing trips, and jetbacks from the mouth of the Salmon River to Pittsburg. Their portion of the 88 boat days totals an additional allocation of 18 boat days, and is allocated among the three outfitters proportionately based on their historic use from 1988-1992.

The objective for Riddle is to recognize his allocation as a component of use at both Cache Creek and Pittsburg Landing, and allocate additional launches to specifically address the need for additional boat days to accommodate three-day fishing trips with one or more days of each trip spent in the wild river above Kirkwood. Riddle is the only Snake River powerboat outfitter that will be authorized to operate from both Cache Creek and Pittsburg (launch boats for commercial trips).

Additional adjustments were made to Riddle's allocation to meet his request for assignment of boat days in July, August, and September that would allow him to offer three-day fishing trips every weekend during those months. This request closely reflects the time period of his historic primary season commercial use. In order to accommodate this request, a portion of Riddle's increased allocation (derived from the 88 boat days and over and above his historic use level) that would have been assigned in May and June was transferred to the mid-sized outfitters at the Cache Creek portal as follows:

Month	AO Wild	Kirkwood Wild	Total
May	1 Koch-IRN		= 1
May		1 Koch-IRN	= 1
May	1	1 Alboucq	= 1
TOTAL	1 +	2	= 3
June	1 Alboucq		= 1
June	1 Taylor		= 1
June	1 Odegaard		= 1
June		1 Taylor	= 1
June		1 Odegaard	= 1
TOTAL	3	2	= 5
GRAND TOTAL	4 +	4	= 8

As a result, the following outfitters will have an increase in their allocation as a result of re-allocating use derived from a portion of the 88 boat days previously assigned to Riddle as follows:

Koch-IRN:	+2
Alboucq:	+2
Taylor:	+2
Odegaard:	+2
TOTAL	+8
Riddle:	-8 (4 AO Wild, 4 Kirkwood Wild)

Using these guidelines, the initial assignment of the 88 boat days will be as follows:

Cache Creek Portal:

	ORIG		88 ALLOC		FROM RIDDLE		NEW
Koch-IRN:	78	+	5	+	2	=	85
Alboucq:	73	+	10	+	2	=	85
Taylor:	65	+	18	+	2	=	85
Odegaard:	58	+	25	+	2	=	85

Cache Creek/Pittsburg Landing Portals:

	ORIG		88 ALLOC		ADJUST		NEW
Riddle:	39	+	12	-	8	=	43

Pittsburg Landing Portal:

	ORIG		88 ALLOC		NEW
Whitten:	31	+	9	=	40
Cook:	24	+	7	=	31
Woods:	7	+	2	=	9
TOTAL					80*

* Since a portion of Riddle's use originates at Pittsburg Landing, the total for the Pittsburg Landing portal is considered to be the equivalent of each of the mid-sized outfitters' allocation at Cache Creek. Riddle is the only outfitter authorized to conduct commercial operations from both Cache Creek and Pittsburg.

Outfitter Group 3

These outfitters as a group (with the exception of Woods, who is included in the outfitters at the Pittsburg Landing portal above) represent a total of 40 boat days or the equivalent of less than three boat days per week in aggregate during the primary season. This is less than 3% of the total powerboat boat day allocation for the Snake River. The largest of these small outfitters (Bentz) does not have enough boat days allocated during the base years to provide one boat day per week during the primary season. Due to the size of these businesses, there is no feasible option to increase their boat day allocation within the use cap during the primary season to provide an increased level of service to the public unless it is at the expense of mid-size outfitters (Group 2). The Group 2 outfitters have demonstrated their ability to provide a higher level of service to the public and, in general, their businesses have been actively marketed for growth over a number of years.

Historically, all of these businesses have had limited primary season use, or have operated primarily in the secondary season. Their potential for growth in the secondary season continues to be unlimited. As a result, they will not receive any additional allocation from the 88 special boat days. However, in order to effectively use their limited number of primary season boat days, they will have the advantage of being the only outfitters to be able to market their trips at any time during the primary season. This marketing option also includes Woods who would otherwise be included in this group if his use was not included with the Pittsburg Landing outfitters in Group 2.

Assignment of an allocation from the 88 boat days is in addition to the initial boat day allocation assigned to each outfitter and each boat day that is assigned will increase the outfitter's Kirkwood Wild allocation.

As a result of these changes, the following boat day allocation adjustments were made:

Step 2 - Preliminary Adjusted Boat Day Allocation

Outfitter	Total Boat Day Allocation					Launch Subgroup AO Wild					Launch Subgroup Kirkwood Wild				
	OLD		ADJ		NEW	OLD		ADJ		NEW	OLD		ADJ		NEW
Koch-HBE	222	+	2	=	224	111	+	1	=	112	111	+	1	=	112
Luther	139	+	0	=	139	70	+	0	=	70	69	+	0	=	69
Koch-RN	120	-	2	=	118	60	-	1	=	59	60	-	1	=	59
Koch-IRN	78	+	7	=	85	39	+	1	=	40	39	+	6	=	45
Alboucq	73	+	12	=	85	37	+	1	=	38	36	+	11	=	47
Taylor	65	+	20	=	85	33	+	1	=	34	32	+	19	=	51
Odegaard	58	+	27	=	85	29	+	1	=	30	29	+	26	=	55
Riddle	39	+	(12-8)	=	43	19	-	4	=	15	20	+	(12-4)	=	28
Whitten	31	+	9	=	40	16	+	0	=	16	15	+	9	=	24
Cook	24	+	7	=	31	12	+	0	=	12	12	+	7	=	19
Bentz	11	+	0	=	11	5	+	0	=	5	6	+	0	=	6
Woods	7	+	2	=	9	3	+	0	=	3	4	+	2	=	6
Bream	7	+	0	=	7	3	+	0	=	3	4	+	0	=	4
Turnidge	6	+	0	=	6	3	+	0	=	3	3	+	0	=	3
Eddins	6	+	0	=	6	3	+	0	=	3	3	+	0	=	3
Zapfle	6	+	0	=	6	3	+	0	=	3	3	+	0	=	3
Maxwell	4	+	0	=	4	2	+	0	=	2	2	+	0	=	2
Total	**896**	**+**	**88**	**=**	**984**	**448**	**+**	**0**	**=**	**448**	**448**	**+**	**88**	**=**	**536**
Armacost	397	+	0	=	397	199	+	0	=	199	198	+	0	=	198*
Total	**1,293**	**+**	**88**	**=**	**1,381**	**647**	**+**	**0**	**=**	**647**	**646**	**+**	**88**	**=**	**734**

* Wild Sheep Wild (WSW) boat days

Allocating Boat Days To Provide Access Into the Wild River Based on Percentage of Historic Use

A fourth objective is to allocate boat days in order for each outfitter to have an opportunity for access into the wild river upstream from Kirkwood-based on their percentage of historic use of that section of the wild river (downstream from Wild Sheep Rapid for Armacost only).

The FEIS/ROD authorized five commercial powerboats per day to use the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep Rapid section of the wild river on motorized days to achieve ROS objectives consistent with a semi-primitive motorized river. In addition to ROS considerations, wild river use levels were based upon three other factors:

a. commercial use patterns in the wild river.

b. the desire of the public to limit commercial use of the river corridor.

c. The comparable levels of use between private and commercial powerboaters into this section of the river, with the level of private powerboat access set at six boats per day for the wild river by the FEIS/ROD, and affirmed by the Regional Forester.

The FEIS/ROD authorized five commercial power boats per day to use the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep Rapid section of the wild river on motorized days to achieve ROS objectives consistent with a semi-primitive motorized river. With the change from a rigid launch schedule in the FEIS/ROD to a flexible launch schedule in the EA, and a further change from an average of 24 non-motorized periods in the FEIS/ROD to 21 non-motorized days in the EA, the calculations used to arrive at the formula for the five launches per day has changed. The adjustment is primarily due to changes in the number of days in the non-motorized period between the FEIS/ROD (24), the EA (average of 19) and the decision notice for the EA (21). Absent a rigid launch schedule, and in consideration of the findings of the peak use analysis, a maximum of 515 commercial boat days in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep Rapid section of the wild river will provide an average of 5.67 boats per day and still meet the levels of use contemplated by the FEIS/ROD. Use levels from Rush Creek to Granite Creek, and Granite Creek to Wild Sheep Rapid will average substantially lower than 5.67 boats per day due to limits on area of operations for all outfitters, river flows, and time period limitations on allocations per outfitter as described later in this document.

Allocation of the 515 boat days will be based on each outfitter's historic percentage of the aggregate number of boat days use of the section of the river between kirkwood and Wild Sheep Rapid from 1988-1995.

The above changes to all outfitters will result in a final adjustment to the boat day allocation as follows:

Step 3 - Final Boat Day Allocation

Outfitter	Total Boat Day Allocation	Launch Subgroup AO Wild					Launch Subgroup Kirkwood Wild				
				ADJ		FINAL			ADJ		FINAL
Koch-HBE	224	112	-	40	=	72	112	+	40	=	152
Luther*	139	70	+	0	=	70	69	-	0	=	69
Koch-RN**	118	59	-	41	=	18	59	+	41	=	100
Koch-IRN	85	40	-	5	=	35	45	+	5	=	50
Alboucq	85	38	+	15	=	53	47	-	15	=	32
Taylor	85	34	-	3	=	31	51	+	3	=	54
Odegaard	85	30	-	7	=	23	55	+	7	=	62
Riddle	43	15	+	10	=	25	28	-	10	=	18
Whitten	40	16	-	1	=	15	24	+	1	=	25
Cook	31	12	-	3	=	9	19	+	3	=	22
Bentz	11	5	-	2	=	3	6	+	2	=	8
Woods	9	3	+	4	=	7	6	-	4	=	2
Bream	7	3	-	2	=	1	4	+	2	=	6
Turnidge	6	3	-	1	=	2	3	+	1	=	4
Eddins	6	3	-	1	=	2	3	+	1	=	4
Zapffe	6	3	-	2	=	1	3	+	2	=	5
Maxwell	4	2	-	1	=	1	2	+	1	=	3
Total	**984**	**448**	**-**	**80**	**=**	**368**	**536**	**+**	**80**	**=**	**616**
Armacost***	397	199	-	52	=	147	198	+	52	=	250
Total	**1,381**	**647**	**-**	**132**	**=**	**515**	**734**	**+**	**132**	**=**	**866**

Scenic River Portal Boat Days-North Boundary to Kirkwood
984 \ 112 = 8.78 boats per day

An additional 147 boat days for Armacost could potentially travel into this section of the river on motorized days as far downstream at Pittsburg Landing, changing the average to 10.4 boats per day between Pittsburg and Kirkwood.

Hells Canyon Creek Portal Boat Days
397 / 112 = 3.54 boats per day

Hells Canyon Dam to Wild Sheep Rapid for Armacost only, including the 147 boat days that could travel further downstream. Additional boat days will be attributed to downstream outfitters with an area of operations to Hells Canyon Dam. The number of trips will vary dependent on water levels, passenger bookings, fuel costs, trip duration, etc., but it is projected to average no more than one per day on motorized days only, for an additional 93 boat days, and will change the average to 4.4 boats per day between the dam and Wild Sheep Rapid.

* Luther will be authorized four non-passenger cargo boat days to Sheep Creek.

** Koch-RN will be authorized 16 non-passenger cargo boat days to support Copper Creek.

*** The boat days shown in the Kirkwood Wild column represent Wild Sheep Wild (WSW) boat days for Armacost only.

Allocating Boat Days in Time Schedule Blocks

A fifth objective is to allocate boat days within specific time periods throughout the primary season.

The method for allocating boat days for commercial powerboats will be managed under a flexible launch system, different from the system of assigned launch dates use for commercial floaters. Commercial powerboat businesses have developed differently than commercial float businesses over time. Specifically, the majority of commercial powerboat trips are one day versus multi-day for commercial float trips. As a result, there is a greater need for flexibility in the availability of launches in order to sell trips to a transient tourist population which has provided the bulk of historic use. There is also a need to run multiple boats per outfitter on some days to accommodate contractual agreements with tour bus companies and cruise ships, and overnight fishing trips. This tourism base requires a different method of allocating use to meet customer demand, provide public service, and reduce economic effects on powerboat businesses.

In order to provide a flexible launch schedule for commercial powerboats, boat days must be distributed throughout the season to manage the potential for peaks in commercial powerboat use, particularly among larger outfitters. As a result, each outfitter's boat day allocation was distributed throughout the 112 day primary season in blocks of time, with the length of the time periods dependent on the size of the outfitter.

Distributing boat days on staggered schedules will enhance the availability of service to the public throughout each month of the primary season. The number of boat days allocated in the first block of time starting in May each year will vary based on the date of the Friday before Memorial Day, with the maximum allocation of boat days assigned to May 22 and appropriate reductions with a shorter primary season. For example, the shortest primary season is 105 days with a May 28 start date. However, since May 22-27 will become secondary season dates for that year, outfitters will have complete flexibility to sell trips on those dates since there will be no limits on use.

Outfitters will be allocated their use in blocks of boat days, with the use distributed on the following five schedules.

Step 4 - Assignment of Outfitters to Time Schedule Blocks

Group A Outfitters	Group B Outfitters	Group C Outfitters	Group D Outfitters	Group E Outfitters
Armacost* Koch-HBE Koch-RN Koch-IRN	Luther Albroucq Taylor Odegaard	Riddle Cook	Whitten	Bentz Woods Bream Turnidge Eddins Zapffe Maxwell

* If Armacost decided to divide this business, the second permit would be assigned to Group B.

Block	Group A Bi-Weekly	Group B Staggered Bi-Weekly	Group C Monthly	Group D Staggered Monthly	Group E Seasonal
1	May 22 - June 4	May 22 - May 28	May 22 - May 31	May 22 - June 15	May 22 - Sept 10
2	June 5 - June 18	May 29 - June 11	June 1 - June 30	June 16 - July 15	
3	June 19 - July 2	June 12 - June 25	July 1 - July 31	July 16 - Aug 15	
4	July 3 - July 16	June 26 - July 9	Aug 1 - Aug 31	Aug 16 - Sept 10	
5	July 17 - July 30	July 10 - July 23	Sept 1 - Sept 10		
6	July 31 - Aug 13	July 24 - Aug 6			
7	Aug 14 - Aug 27	Aug 7 - Aug 20			
8	Aug 28 - Sept 10	Aug 21 - Sept 3			
9		Sept 4 - Sept 10			

Step 5 - Assignment of Boat Days per Time Schedule Block

Group A Boat Day Schedules
(Armacost, Koch-HBE, Koch-RN, Koch-IRN)

Note: *The start date for the Block 1 time period varies from one year to the next depending on the date of the Friday before Memorial Day. In the table below, Block 1 is the Friday before Memorial Day through June 4.*

Blocks		1							2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Days in Block		14	13	12	11	10	9	8	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Start Date		5/22	5/23	5/24	5/25	5/26	5/27	5/28	6/5-6/18	6/19-7/2	7/3-7/16	7/17-7/30	7/31-8/13	8/14-8/27	8/28-9/10
Armacost	AOW*	18	17	16	14	13	12	10	18	19	18	19	18	19	18
	WSW**	31	29	27	25	22	20	18	31	31	32	31	32	31	31
Koch-HBE	AOW	9	8	8	7	6	6	5	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
	KW***	19	18	16	15	14	12	11	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
Koch-RN	AOW	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	2
	KW	12	11	10	10	9	8	7	13	12	12	13	13	13	12
Koch-IRN	AOW	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	4	5	4	4	5	5	4
	KW	6	6	5	5	4	4	3	6	6	7	7	6	6	6

* AOW is the entire Wild and Scenic Snake River limited to each outfitter's area of operation.
** WSW is the top of Wild Sheep Rapid to Hells Canyon Dam section of the Snake River.
*** KW is the Kirkwood to Cache Creek section of the Snake River.

Group B Boat Day Schedules
(Luther, Alboucq, Taylor, Odegaard)

Note: *The start date for the Block 1 time period varies from one year to the next depending on the date of the Friday before Memorial Day. In the table below, Block 1 is the Friday before Memorial Day through May 28.*

Blocks		**1**							**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
Days in Block		7	6	5	4	3	2	1	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	7
Start Date		**5/22**	**5/23**	**5/24**	**5/25**	**5/26**	**5/27**	**5/28**	**5/29-6/11**	**6/12-6/25**	**6/26-7/9**	**7/10-7/23**	**7/24-8/6**	**8/7-8/20**	**8/21-9/3**	**9/4-9/10**
Luther	AOW KW	4 4	3 3	3 3	2 2	2 2	1 1	1 1	8 9	9 8	9 9	9 9	9 9	9 9	9 8	4 4
Alboucq	AOW KW	3 2	3 2	2 1	2 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	7 4	6 4	7 4	6 4	7 4	7 4	7 4	3 2
Taylor	AOW KW	2 3	2 3	1 2	1 2	1 1	1 1	1 1	3 7	4 7	4 7	4 7	4 7	4 7	4 6	2 3
Odegaard	AOW KW	1 4	1 3	1 3	1 2	1 2	1 1	1 1	3 7	3 8	3 8	3 8	3 8	3 8	3 7	1 4

Group C Boat Day Schedules
(Riddle, Cook)

Note: *The start date for the Block 1 time period varies from one year to the next depending on the date of the Friday before Memorial Day. In the table below, Block 1 is the Friday before Memorial Day through May 31.*

Blocks		1							2	3	4	5
Days in Block		10	9	8	7	6	5	4	30	31	31	10
Start Date		5/22	5/23	5/24	5/25	5/26	5/27	5/28	June	July	August	9/1-9/10
Riddle	AOW KW	1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0	4 5	7 7	7 7	2 3
Cook	AOW KW	0 2	0 2	0 2	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	2 8	3 6	3 6	1 2

Group D Boat Day Schedules
(Whitten)

Note: *The start date for the Block 1 time period varies from one year to the next depending on the date of the Friday before Memorial Day. In the table below, Block 1 is the Friday before Memorial Day through June 15.*

Blocks		1							2	3	4
Days in Block		25	24	23	22	21	20	19	30	31	26
Start Date		5/22	5/23	5/24	5/25	5/26	5/27	5/28	6/16-7/15	7/16-8/15	8/16-9/10
Whitten	AOW KW	3 5	3 5	3 5	3 4	3 4	2 4	2 4	4 7	4 7	4 6

Group E Boat Day Schedules
(*Bentz, Woods, Bream, Turnidge, Eddins, Zapffe, Maxwell)

Note: *The start date for the Block 1 time period varies from one year to the next depending on the date of the Friday before Memorial Day.*

Block 1								
Days in Block		112	111	110	109	108	107	106
Start Date		5/22	5/23	5/24	5/25	5/26	5/27	5/28
Bentz	AOW KW	3 8	3 8	3 8	3 8	3 8	3 8	3 8
Woods	AOW KW	7 2	7 2	7 2	7 2	7 2	7 2	7 2
Bream	AOW KW	1 6	1 6	1 6	1 6	1 6	1 6	1 6
Turnidge	AOW KW	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4
Eddins	AOW KW	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4
Zapffe	AOW KW	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5
Maxwell	AOW KW	1 3	1 3	1 3	1 3	1 3	1 3	1 3

* These outfitters may use their boat days at their discretion throughout the entire primary season within their assigned allocations with the exception that AOW boat days may not be used on non-motorized days upstream from Kirkwood.

Location of Powerboat Business Opportunities and Minimum and Maximum Number of Powerboat Outfitters

A sixth objective of managing commercial powerboat use is to provide for public access to outfitter services originating at all portals except Dug Bar, and to provide options in services for the public by assuring business competition through issuance of multiple commercial permits.

The following guidelines will help assure quality service to visitors by encouraging business competition for prices and services offered by outfitters, opportunities for the public to obtain commercial services at a variety of river locations, and sustained commercial viability of outfitting businesses.

Location	Minimum[1]	Maximum	Number of Businesses that Could Move to Another Portal	
Hells Canyon Cr	2	2	(1 existing)[2]	0
Pittsburg	3	4	(3 existing)	0
Dug Bar[3]	0	0	(0 existing)	0
Cache Cr	6	14	(14 existing)[4]	1[5]
Total	10[6]	19[6]		1

1 Minimum numbers of outfitters are established at each site to assure continuation of services and to reduce the potential for monopolies. Numbers are based on access to the area, potential for on-site congestion, population base related to historic tourism potential and to provide business competition which will encourage quality service and options for both services and prices for customers. Once minimum permit numbers are reached at a specific location, the terms of those permits will require their operations to base at that location in order for the business to be authorized to operate within HCNRA. This will require the buyer of one of these businesses to continue to operate from the same portal as part of the terms of the permit.

2 At the option of the permit holder, the existing single permit authorizing use of two boats could be terminated and two new permits would be issued with an equal division of the allocated boat days and one boat per permit allowed. Issuance of the existing single permit and the proposed additional permit would require basing operations at that site only for access into the HCNRA. See **Powerboat Operations Based at Hells Canyon Creek** for detailed information on this use.

3 Since no powerboat business has ever been solely based at Dug Bar, and in conformance with the draft Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Comprehensive Management Plan (1996), moving to this location for a base of operations will not be an option. However, all outfitters can pick up and drop off passengers at this location in compliance with their individual area of operations.

4 The 14 existing permits for Cache Creek reflect the number of existing outfitters operating from this site that hold priority use permits. If the option was exercised in footnote 5 below, the maximum number of permits at this portal would change to 13 and the minimum number of permits at the Pittsburg portal would change to 4.

5 There is an option for one priority use business to move from Cache Creek to Pittsburg Landing as a base of operations.

6 These figures will be dependent upon voluntary combining or splitting of businesses associated with existing permits, and sale of businesses. The total of 19 maximum permits includes the existing priority use permits and the outfitter exercising the option described in footnote 2 above. If the options in footnotes 2 and 5 were exercised, the minimum total would change to 12.

Powerboat Operations Based at Hells Canyon Creek

The single commercial powerboat business at Hells Canyon Creek which authorizes the use of two boats (currently held by Armacost) can be terminated at the option of the permit holder. It would be replaced with two special use permits with an equal division of the original boat day allocation and each permit would authorize the use of one boat. The creation of two permits, with an equal division of the boat day allocation, would not increase the total use allocation. Issuance of two special use permits for this use allocation would provide the following:

1. An opportunity for the permit holder to sell 50% of the business to reduce any economic impacts to his business structure as a result of the Recreation Plan. (Issuance of a single permit does not allow for a portion of a business to be sold).

2. An opportunity to eliminate the present on-site monopoly by one commercial powerboat business and to provide the possibility of a competitive business atmosphere at the launch site in the future, with a corresponding choice in services for the benefit of all visitors. This would be the result of the permit holder having the flexibility to sell 50% of the business.

3. An opportunity to manage commercial powerboat use at the site based upon staggered bi-weekly schedules rather than assigning all boat days to a bi-weekly schedule.

4. Achieve the target of a minimum number of outfitters on site (two) without increasing the historic boat day allocation and maximum number of boats authorized to operate under the single permit (two).

5. Address economic concerns from Baker County, Oregon and Adams County, Idaho by assuring a continuation of a variety of public services from Hells Canyon Creek on a year-round basis.

Each permit would authorize use as follows:

1. Each permit would have an allocation of 50% of the total original boat days allocated in the Snake River Plan (397 total, with 73 AOW and 125 WSW boat days for the new permit, and 74 AOW and 125 WSW boats days assigned to the original permit). This would provide each permit holder the ability to advertise a minimum of one trip per day throughout the primary season.

2. Area of operations and conditions of use would be identical for both permits as follows:

   a. Primary Season Area of Operations - Dam to Pittsburg. The daily trip would be based on the boat day allocations and associated schedules for each permit and could be used for a variety of trip options, i.e., private or commercial jetback, all day tour, all day tour combined with a jetback, scenic tour to the top of Wild Sheep Rapid, drop camps, etc. During the secondary season, there would be no limit on area of operations.

   b. During the non-motorized periods downstream from Wild Sheep Rapid, all trips would be limited to operations between the dam and the top of Wild Sheep Rapid.

   c. Passengers could be originated from any location between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing, inclusive, during the primary season and at all river locations during the secondary season.

   d. All operations would be limited to day-use only, year-round, within the boundaries of the HCNRA.

Special permit management conditions that apply to both of these permits include the following:

1. The existing owner of the business, upon being issued two permits, would not be required to sell one or both businesses associated with the permits. However, a condition for issuance of all future special use permits issued for that site would require that when one or both businesses were sold, both businesses could not be sold to the same business entity, an entity who would have a financial interest in both businesses at the same time as a result of the sale, or an immediate family member of the seller or purchaser. This will eliminate any future potential for a monopoly.

2. The ability to trade boat days would only be implemented when there were two separate businesses operating from the site. Trading dates with outfitters operating from other portals would not be authorized.

3. The base of operations for both permits would be limited to Hells Canyon Creek only. Only the permits based at Hells Canyon Creek could originate passengers from locations upstream of Wild Sheep Rapid. A condition for re-issuance of permits associated with sales of businesses at this site will require the businesses to continue to operate out of Hells Canyon Creek.

Origination of Passengers

Outfitters operating in the scenic river can originate commercial passengers at any location downstream from Wild Sheep Rapid. The outfitter(s) based at Hells Canyon Creek is/are the only outfitter(s) authorized to originate passengers upstream from Wild Sheep Rapid.

Summary of Outfitter Allocations During the Primary Season

Outfitter	Area of Operations	Day Use	Overnight Camping	Amount of Use
Alboucq	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	MODERATE
Armacost	Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing	Yes	No	HIGH
Bentz	Boundary to Dam	Yes	No	LOW
Bream	Boundary to Granite	Yes	No	LOW
Cook	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	MODERATE
Eddins	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	LOW
Koch-HBE	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	HIGH
Koch-IRN	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	MODERATE
Koch-RN	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	HIGH
Luther	Boundary to Dam	Yes	No	HIGH
Maxwell	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	No	LOW
Odegaard	Boundary to Dam	Yes	Yes	MODERATE
Riddle	Boundary to Dam	Yes	No	MODERATE
Taylor	Boundary to Dam	Yes	Yes	MODERATE
Tumidge	Boundary to Rush Creek	Yes	Yes	LOW
Whitten	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	MODERATE
Woods	Boundary to Granite	Yes	Yes	LOW
Zapffe	Boundary to Granite	Yes	No	LOW

Changes in Boat Day Schedules

Two outfitters, if equivalent in size and operating from the same portal, may trade between Group A and Group B boat day schedules, or between Group C and Group D schedules, if the trade is agreeable to both businesses. The primary limitation on changes of this type is the requirement that any change does not affect the daily availability of service to the public throughout each month from all portals during the primary season. Outfitters in Groups A, B, C, and D may not change schedules with outfitters in Group E. However, an outfitter in Group E may request that their schedule be changed to A, B, C or D schedules.

Trading Boat Days Within the Same Time Schedule Group

Trading of dates will require signed agreements between the outfitters involved and will need to meet the same requirements as trades between commercial floaters including submitting the trade agreement to the Forest Service in advance of the trip. Trades made on weekends or at other times when the Forest Service office is closed will have to be in writing, signed by each outfitter involved, and hand delivered to a Forest Service officer at the portal prior to entry. A fax copy of this agreement with signatures will be acceptable providing the original signature of the owner of the commercial boat entering the river that day was on the faxed document. A trade cannot be used to increase an outfitter's area of operations or permanently increase the maximum number of boat days allowed in the outfitter's allocated block of boat days. A trade will only be good for the purpose of exchanging an AOW boat day for a KW boat day or vice versa.

Outfitters in all five boat day schedules can trade launch dates among themselves. A trade will not change the status of a launch that authorized use only in the KW section of the river, i.e., a Kirkwood wild launch can not authorize use in the wild river upstream from Kirkwood. A trade will not change the status of a permit, i.e., a day-use-only permittee can not offer overnight camping trips by trading a date with a permittee who is authorized to conduct overnight trips. Outfitters in Group C or D who trade boat days with outfitters in Groups A and B, will have to use the boat day within the block of time in which it was assigned to the original outfitter, i.e., a boat day must be used within the original dates (prior to trade) that it was scheduled for. Trades between outfitters in Group E will be good for any day in the primary season with the exception that AOW dates can not be used upstream from Kirkwood during non-motorized days.

The boat days allocated to the outfitter at Hells Canyon Creek can not be traded to outfitters based at other locations. These boat days can only be traded among the outfitters based at Hells Canyon Creek for day use only if the outfitter based at that site chose to exercise the option of being issued two permits and sold 50% of the business.

Cross-Over

In order to assure optimum availability of launches assigned for private powerboaters, there will be no cross-over system between private and commercial powerboaters to utilize vacant launches between groups.

Pool

Since all available commercial power boat days have been assigned, there will initially be no pool of vacant boat days. However, if powerboat outfitters decided at a later date to implement a pool, each participating business could donate boat days for creation of a common commercial powerboat pool for use among all outfitters who have contributed an equal percentage of boat days based upon the total boat day allocation of their business.

In addition, the use of boat days assigned to each outfitter will be monitored on an annual basis through use of manifests and actual use reports. Outfitters who exceed their allocated boat days per block of time will lose the equivalent number of boat days per block of time in the following primary season. These boat days will be placed in a common pool and made available to all powerboat outfitters within the limits of their area of operations and type of boat day (AOW or KW) with the exception that each outfitter who lost dates due to over use will not have access to the pool for the duration of the season.

Number of Boats

Each outfitter is allowed one boat for river access for each boat day displayed on their assigned boat day schedule. Outfitters may use more than one boat day per day up to the maximum number assigned in each block of time. Each time a boat day is used, the total number of boat days in that block of time decreases until all boat days have been used. Boat days may be used on any day within the block of time assigned with the exception that AOW boat days can not be used on non-motorized days for trips that travel between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood. Boat days that are not used within the specified block of time cannot be saved for transfer to another block of time during the primary season.

Boat days obtained through trades or a common pool will not be used as a basis for establishing an increase in area of operations, length of trip, or priority use for either AOW or KW boat days.

Overnight Trips

During the primary season, overnight camping trips within the river corridor (whether at a river campsite or at a lodge within the HCNRA or on the Lower Salmon) will require consecutive boat days since all commercial powerboat use is managed by the maximum number of boat days assigned to each outfitter per block of time and the associated amount of daily commercial powerboat use within the river corridor. The maximum campsite stay length will be three days and two nights in the wild river, and four days and three nights in the scenic river, per campsite during the primary season for outfitters who camp. Outfitters who use commercial lodging can have stay lengths of greater duration as long as all overnight use occurs at the outfitter's facilities and the outfitter is authorized to use the required number of boat days to cover each day of the trip that utilized powerboat travel. The outfitter will be responsible for using the correct type of boat days (AOW or KW) for each day of the trip.

Penalties

Commercial powerboaters often have a short window of opportunity for booking trips because of the volume of day-use trips they charter. It is not uncommon for a business to book passengers the day prior to, or even the morning of, a trip. As a result, there will be no penalty to outfitters if they did not use their full allocation of boat days per block of time.

However, outfitters who exhibited a distinct pattern of non-use of allocated boat days, either by block of time or by season, will have their allocation reduced based upon the guidelines established for reduction of priority use. Outfitters who use less than 70% of their assigned boat days in each of three consecutive years will have their assigned boat days reduced unless there are mitigating circumstances considered to be generally outside the control of the outfitter or non-use is approved in advance by the authorized Forest Officer. This could include, but is not be limited to, adverse weather conditions, river flows, or fire activity. Any boat days that become available as a result of this type of action will be placed in a common pool for use by all powerboat outfitters or re-allocated according to the proportional formulas in this document. Outfitters who exceed their assigned number of boat days in any two consecutive years will permanently lose the number of boat days equivalent to their maximum overage in either year. These boat days will be assigned to the commercial powerboat pool or re-allocated according to the proportional formulas in this document.

Changes in Primary Season

If monitoring the levels of use in the river corridor indicate the dates of the primary season need to be expanded, the allocation system and method for assigning boat days will remain the same as long as the primary season dates do not exceed the period between May 1 and October 1. This means that maximum boat day allocations from September 1 through October 1 will be equal to each outfitter's allocation in

August, and the maximum boat day allocations from May 1 through May 31 will be equal to each outfitter's allocation in June.

If it becomes necessary to expand the primary season outside of these dates, a new formula will be developed to determine allocations to outfitters based upon traditional uses that normally occurred during that time period. For example, some outfitters with a low boat day allocation during the primary season could heve a greater number of assigned boat days after October 1 if their level of historic use was higher during the fall because their business was primarily based upon fall steelhead fishing or chukar hunting. In contrast, outfitters with a large boat day allocation in the primary season could have a smaller allocation after October 1 if their business was primarily based on one-day trips during the summer months.

The determination of commercial use allocations prior to May 1 or after October 1 will be based upon a formula using monthly analysis of the percentage of days per month each outfitter launches a trip into the river corridor. This monthly boat day analysis will be based on an average of secondary season use per month for the most recent five-year period of time for which commercial use data is available in order to prioritize commercial use by outfitter. However, any use allocation formula for this time period can not exceed the limits on commercial power boat days per month established for the primary season.

COMMERCIAL FLOAT ALLOCATION

The objective of these guidelines is to maintain the existing allocation system for commercial floaters but with adjustments in levels of use and operating guidelines.

The existing initial allocation of two commercial launches per day will be maintained during the primary season and the existing float reservation system will remain unchanged. The following conditions, identified in the Snake River Plan will affect commercial float outfitters:

Snake River Float Outfitters

1. Maximum party size is 24 people including guides, year-round.

2. Maximum number of boats per party is eight craft, year-round.

3. Kickers (outboard motors) on floatcraft can not be used in the wild river, year-round, but will be allowed in the scenic river. They can be transported in the wild river if they are stored out of sight as cargo (in a duffel or closed container) where they are not readily accessible for use. They can not be mounted while being transported in the wild river, even if they are not in use.

4. During the primary season commercial float trips can originate from Hells Canyon Creek or can be launched from commercial powerboats at other locations in the wild river as long as the float party is in possession of the required permit.

5. Two special use permits will be issued specifically for conducting one-day float trips. The allocation and management of this use is described later in this section. One-day float trips can also be part of the multi-day float allocation subject to the availability of return transportation.

6. The vacant commercial float permit will be permanently retired and the 14 launches associated with the vacant permit will remain available as pool dates for use by commercial floaters with priority use permits.

7. A minimum number of ten float outfitters with priority use permits will be established for the river. This will assure adequate competition for services offered to the public, allow for some businesses to

expand by purchase and consolidation of businesses. This will increase the potential for a business to conduct more trips on the river but within the total allocation, thereby providing more consistent employment opportunities for outfitter staff.

8. A maximum number of 14 float outfitters with priority use permits will be allowed on the river, which will accommodate the existing situation. This number will be reduced to 10 through attrition and associated retirement of special use permits if businesses are bought by existing float outfitters on the river for business expansion purposes.

9. Non-motorized periods, scheduled in three day blocks of time on Monday through Wednesday will be implemented beginning on the first Monday in June, every other week, for a total of 21 days in the wild river from Wild Sheep Rapid to Kirkwood.

   Launches on Sunday through Wednesday of these weeks will offer a significant component of a non-motorized experience during the course of the trip. The commercial float launch schedule will provide float outfitters with an unequal schedule of access to this non-motorized opportunity since the number of non-motorized launches available to individual outfitters on an eight-day turnaround will vary from year to year. Due to total river miles involved between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood, the minimum opportunity for a non-motorized experience will be a Wednesday afternoon launch and the maximum opportunity will be a Sunday afternoon launch during these non-motorized periods.

The following is the current list of commercial float outfitters holding priority use permits who are authorized to operate on the Snake River under these guidelines:

Steele[1]	Peavey
Davis	Peer
Grubb	Porfily
Hauptman[2]	Randle
Howard	Steen
Hughes	Stewart
Koch	Wendt

[1]This business changed ownership between the FEIS and the EA. In the FEIS this business was listed as Anderson.

[2]This business changed between the FEIS and the EA. The FEIS identified this business as the holder of two special use permits. The business associated with the second permit was sold and the permit was permanently retired as a result of a 50/50 sale of the business to Hauptman's other corporation and Hughes. Launches associated with this business were evenly distributed between Hauptman's remaining permit and Hughes, and added to their previous launch allocations.

Launch Reservation System

The launch reservation system for commercial floaters will operate under similar guidelines as the present allocation system with assignment of each outfitter to a commercial float group. The following is the float group assignment:

Commercial Float Groups

Group 1

Hells Canyon Adventures, RAFT (Geoff Randle)
ROW Inc. (River Odysseys West, Inc.) (Peter Grubb)

Group 2

Heller Bar Excursions (Jim and Jill Koch)
Canyon Outfitters, Inc. & Hughes River Expeditions
(Hauptman) (Hughes)

Group 3

Freewater (Dave Steele)
Oregon Trail Adventures (Leonard Porfily)

Group 4

Peer's Snake River Rafting (Darryl Peer)
Northwest Voyageurs (Jeff Peavey)

Group 5

Davis Whitewater Expeditions (Lyle Davis)
OARS - DORIES, Inc. (George Wendt)

Group 6

Canyon Outfitters, Inc. (George Hauptman)
Idaho Afloat (Bruce Howard)

Group 7

Holiday River Expeditions of Idaho, Inc. (Frogg Stewart)
A Limited Number of Commercial Pool Launches

Group 8

Steen's Wilderness Adventures (Jim Steen)
Hughes River Expeditions, Inc. (Jerry Hughes)

Float Launch Calendar

Each launch group will operate within a standardized commercial float launch calendar where each outfitter was assigned to a particular launch date as follows:

Commercial Float Launch Calendar
Launch Groups in Parentheses

Month & Day		Launch Group	Month & Day		Launch Group	Month & Day		Launch Group
May	22	(2)	July	6	(7)	August	20	(4)
	23	(3)		7	(8)		21	(5)
	24	(4)		8	(1)		22	(6)
	25	(5)		9	(2)		23	(7)
	26	(6)		10	(3)		24	(8)
	27	(7)		11	(4)		25	(1)
	28	(8)		12	(5)		26	(2)
	29	(1)		13	(6)		27	(3)
	30	(2)		14	(7)		28	(4)
	31	(3)		15	(8)		29	(5)
June	1	(4)		16	(1)		30	(6)
	2	(5)		17	(2)		31	(7)
	3	(6)		18	(3)	September	1	(8)
	4	(7)		19	(4)		2	(1)
	5	(8)		20	(5)		3	(2)
	6	(1)		21	(6)		4	(3)
	7	(2)		22	(7)		5	(4)
	8	(3)		23	(8)		6	(5)
	9	(4)		24	(1)		7	(6)
	10	(5)		25	(2)		8	(7)
	11	(6)		26	(3)		9	(8)
	12	(7)		27	(4)		10	(1)
	13	(8)		28	(5)	Alloca-	11	(2)
	14	(1)		29	(6)	tions if	12	(3)
	15	(2)		30	(7)	primary	13	(4)
	16	(3)		31	(8)	season	14	(5)
	17	(4)	August	1	(1)	expands	15	(6)
	18	(5)		2	(2)		16	(7)
	19	(6)		3	(3)		17	(8)
	20	(7)		4	(4)		18	(1)
	21	(8)		5	(5)		19	(2)
	22	(1)		6	(6)		20	(3)
	23	(2)		7	(7)		21	(4)
	24	(3)		8	(8)		22	(5)
	25	(4)		9	(1)		23	(6)
	26	(5)		10	(2)		24	(7)
	27	(6)		11	(3)		25	(8)
	28	(7)		12	(4)		26	(1)
	29	(8)		13	(5)		27	(2)
	30	(1)		14	(6)		28	(3)
July	1	(2)		15	(7)		29	(4)
	2	(3)		16	(8)		30	(5)
	3	(4)		17	(1)	October	1	(6)
	4	(5)		18	(2)			
	5	(6)		19	(3)			

If the primary season expanded to May 1, the same pattern for commercial float groups will continue on the commercial float calendar with May 21 assigned to Group 1, May 20th assigned to Group 8, etc. (The extension of the primary season to October 1 is shown for comparison).

In addition, all commercial float outfitters will continue to be able to trade dates, obtain pool dates, cross-over between private and commercial, etc. An outfitter can also change launch groups on a yearly basis by trading with another outfitter. For example, an outfitter in Group 1 could trade with an outfitter in Group 6 if both outfitters agreed to the change.

Use trends over the years indicate shorter trips have gradually reduced commercial and private float use that originates from Hells Canyon Creek and travels below Pittsburg into the scenic river (reference analysis file for use data). Currently, 70% to 75% of the float trip takeouts (including split trips) leave the river at Pittsburg Landing or above (by use of commercial jetback). Twenty-five to thirty percent of the float use takeouts for trips originating at Hells Canyon Creek occur in the scenic river or below (Heller Bar).

This use in the scenic river will be monitored on a yearly basis. If the number of commercial and private float trip takeouts for trips originating at Hells Canyon Creek exceeds 30% of total takeouts for two of three consecutive years, this level of use will be capped. The maximum allocation for continuation of trips below Pittsburg Landing will be set at 30% of available launches from Hells Canyon Creek as a means of managing on-river encounters and campsite competition in the scenic river. This is in consideration of the additional float use that enters the Snake River via the Lower Salmon River.

One-Day Float Permits

Two, one-day float permits will be authorized with temporary use only from Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing and issued to the existing permit holders (Armacost and Luther) under the following conditions:

1. All float launches associated with this use must be within, not in addition to, the maximum of five float launches per day. As a result, they will only be issued to authorize temporary use since they can only utilize cancelled or unused dates representing less than 100% utilization of the total private and commercial launch calendar.

2. All launches are pre-assigned by date, but only authorized on an "as available" basis with a maximum of one launch per day (alternating day assignment) and allocated according to the following guidelines:

   a. Launches will automatically be assigned 30 days prior to launch after all private and commercial waiting lists are exhausted.

   b. One-day trips can not launch on non-motorized dates.

3. Assignment of launch dates is third priority behind filling the requests of priority use float outfitters and private floaters. One-day float permits will not have access to waiting lists.

4. Once launches are obtained, they can be traded with all other float outfitters.

5. Maximum party size of 24 (including guides) and maximum of two boats per launch.

6. Valid seven days per week throughout the primary season only, with the exception that one-day float trips can not launch on non-motorized days.

7. Permits for temporary use will only be issued to the existing permit holders and will not be reissued as the result of a sale of business or change in corporate stockholders or partners.

8. This service to the public can be maintained as long as there is excess (under-utilized) capacity in the launch schedule. If and when the demand for private and priority use meets or exceeds the seasonal launch supply, tha temporary, one-day float permits will not be reissued.

9. Any jetback support services provided with this opportunity will count against the allocated powerboat boat days for the powerboat outfitter providing the service. Jetboat support services can not be provided in the wild portion of the river between Wild Sheep Rapid and Kirkwood on a non-motorized day.

10. Trip permits are required for all authorized launches.

The following calendar will be used to pre-assign launch dates to the one-day float outfitters:

One-Day Commercial Float Pre-Assignment Calendar
Launch Groups in Parentheses
Group A - Armacost
Group B - Luther

Month & Day		Launch Group	Month & Day		Launch Group	Month & Day		Launch Group
May	22	(A)	JULY	6	(B)	August	20	(A)
	23	(B)		7	(A)		21	(B)
	24	(A)		8	(B)		22	(A)
	25	(B)		9	(A)		23	(B)
	26	(A)		10	(B)		24	(A)
	27	(B)		11	(A)		25	(B)
	28	(A)		12	(B)		26	(A)
	29	(B)		13	(A)		27	(B)
	30	(A)		14	(B)		28	(A)
	31	(B)		15	(A)		29	(B)
June	1	(A)		16	(B)		30	(A)
	2	(B)		17	(A)		31	(B)
	3	(A)		18	(B)	September	1	(A)
	4	(B)		19	(A)		2	(B)
	5	(A)		20	(B)		3	(A)
	6	(B)		21	(A)		4	(B)
	7	(A)		22	(B)		5	(A)
	8	(B)		23	(A)		6	(B)
	9	(A)		24	(B)		7	(A)
	10	(B)		25	(A)		8	(B)
	11	(A)		26	(B)		9	(A)
	12	(B)		27	(A)		10	(B)
	13	(A)		26	(B)	Alloca-	11	(A)
	14	(B)		29	(A)	tions if	12	(B)
	15	(A)		30	(B)	primary	13	(A)
	16	(B)		31	(A)	season	14	(B)
	17	(A)	August	1	(B)	expands	15	(A)
	18	(B)		2	(A)		16	(B)
	19	(A)		3	(B)		17	(A)
	20	(B)		4	(A)		18	(B)
	21	(A)		5	(B)		19	(A)
	22	(B)		6	(A)		20	(B)
	23	(A)		7	(B)		21	(A)
	24	(B)		8	(A)		22	(B)
	25	(A)		9	(B)		23	(A)
	26	(B)		10	(A)		24	(B)
	27	(A)		11	(B)		25	(A)
	28	(B)		12	(A)		26	(B)
	29	(A)		13	(B)		27	(A)
	30	(B)		14	(A)		28	(B)
July	1	(A)		15	(B)		29	(A)
	2	(B)		16	(A)		30	(B)
	3	(A)		17	(B)	October	1	(A)
	4	(B)		18	(A)			
	5	(A)		19	(B)			

If the primary season expanded to May 1, the same pattern for the launch groups will continue on the commercial float calendar with May 21 assigned to Group B, May 20th assigned to Group A, etc. (The extension of the primary season to October 1 is shown for comparison).

Lower Salmon Float Outfitters Entering the Snake River

Conditions of use on operating plans for all Lower Salmon River commercial float outfitters will be changed to meet the intent of management goals in the Snake River Plan. Through the memorandum of understanding between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, necessary changes will be made in the operating plans for Lower Salmon commercial floaters who travel on the Snake River. The following conditions in the Snake River Plan will affect Lower Salmon commercial float outfitters:

Party Size

The maximum party size for Salmon River boaters is 30 persons. The maximum party size for Salmon River boaters who chose to camp along the Snake River within the HCNRA will be 24 persons with the following exception: Groups of up to 30 people originating on the Salmon River can camp along the Snake River between the confluence with the Salmon River and Salmon Bar, approximately one mile downstream of the confluence.

Maximum Number of Boats Per Party

Groups originating on the Salmon River are required to conform with the Snake River's eight boats per party limit. Prior to entering the Snake River, groups with more than eight boats will be required to use one or more of the following techniques to achieve the eight boats per perty limit:

1. Boats could "raft up" or tie together. Each group of "rafted up" boats would count as a single craft.

2. Boats could be deflated and stowed, or simply lifted out of the water and tied on top of a larger boat. For example, a kayak out of the water and tied on top of the gear on a raft would not count towards the eight boats per party maximum.

3. For a transition period of one year (1997), groups of more than eight boats originating on the Salmon River can break up into sub-groups of eight or less. Sub-groups will be required to travel separately from each other and be of sufficient distance so as to remain out of sight from each other. Sub-groups can only regroup by having the first group pull in to shore. Craft will be considered pulled into shore if they are tied to shore or pulled onto the shore and unoccupied. In 1998 this transition strategy will no longer be available to parties with more than eight boats. This transition period only applies to float groups originating their trips on the Lower Salmon River.

OBJECTIVES COMMON TO ALL COMMERCIAL OUTFITTERS

Private Trips by Commercial Outfitters

The first objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters is to manage private use of the river corridor by commercial outfitters. Whenever any individual identified as a commercial outfitter or their employees/guides are on private trips, or their boats used in their commercial operations are used for private, non-commercial trips within the river corridor, each entry will require them to obtain a permit under the same guidelines for access that apply to private river users on a year-round basis. Private trips will not be reported on actual use reports submitted at the end of each year.

If boats normally used to conduct commercial outfitting services are being used on private trips, or if owners or employees of commercial outfitting businesses are entering the river corridor for private trips, a manifest will be required that included the name, address, telephone number and signature of the trip leader and all passengers verifying the trip was not commercial.

Commercial Manifest

A second objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters is to coordinate with other State and Federal agencies to assure that outfitters are meeting licensing requirements for guides and equipment. In order to accomplish this objective, a condition of each outfitter special use permit will require a manifest for each trip into the river corridor. Each manifest will list the zip code of each passenger to verify total passengers per trip and be signed by all commercial guides/employees on the trip, verifying they had the appropriate state or Coast Guard licenses to conduct guided operations. A manifest will be completed prior to the beginning of each trip, year-round, and presented at the portal upon entry into the river corridor.

Lower Salmon commercial float outfitters will not be required to complete a manifest for each trip.

These manifests will be used for the following purposes:

1. To verify documentation of passengers and revenues reported by outfitters at the end of the year when conducting audits of commercial businesses as required by the terms of special use permits. The manifest will not require documentation of revenues or the names and addresses of passengers, only zip code or country of residence for each passenger.

2. To gather demographic information (zip code or country of residence) for future economic analysis.

3. To cooperate with other State and Federal agencies which license outfitters on the Snake River to assure compliance with rules and regulations pertaining to safety of passengers in regard to licensing of guides and meeting passenger capacities of commercial jetboats.

Validation of Use

A third objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters is to assure a public service is being provided. All outfitters will be required to run a minimum of three commercial trips with paying customers during the year to validate their use. Failure to run a minimum of three commercial trips per year will be addressed through the annual performance rating.

This requirement will assure a public service is being provided and also address the need to provide a fair opportunity for access by the public within the guidelines of the Snake River Plan.

Priority Use

A fourth objective of guidelines common to both commercial powerboaters and floaters is to resolve the issue of priority use and how it is assigned to all outfitters.

Priority use will be based on service days and calculated for the five-year period of time ending on December 31, 1989 (reference analysis file for letter to outfitters from Area Ranger). This priority use will be honored and included on each outfitter's permit. If two permits are issued at Hells Canyon Creek in the future, the priority use assigned to the single permit will be split evenly between the two permits. In accordance with FSH 2709.11, ID 2709.11-95-11, 41.53h 2, issuance of priority use is assigned at the discretion of the authorized officer (Area Ranger) and is dependent upon whether or not use capacity is available. No additional assignment of priority use based on service days will occur on the Snake River to provide for maximum flexibility in managing overall use. The number of launches (floaters) or boat days (powerboaters) assigned to each outfitter will be included on the face of their special use permit, but neither will be assigned as priority use.

Since the Snake River Plan will place limitations on use for all commercial outfitting, priority use assignments for service days can only increase through purchase of an existing business and transfer of the priority use assigned to the special use permit being sold to the purchaser. The number of launches or boat days available for use by each outfitter during the year accommodates existing levels of priority use currently assigned as service days for each outfitter. Any future assignments of priority use will be based upon launches (floaters) and boat days (powerboaters) at the discretion of the Area Ranger.

For any individual powerboat business, future priority use in the primary season will be limited to a maximum number of boat days per block of time into specific sections of the river based upon the commercial powerboat outfitter group. Any additional use, such as boat days obtained from a common pool, will be issued as temporary use only within the block of time they were originally assigned.

For commercial floaters, future priority use in the primary season will be limited to a maximum number of launches allowed to enter the HCNRA per season based upon the yearly commercial float launch calendar and the total number of launches per group to which each outfitter was assigned. All additional use, such as launches obtained from the pool, will be issued as temporary use only.

Priority use in the secondary season can be assigned to outfitters who specialized in outfitting during that time period only.

Business Ownership

A fifth objective of guidelines common to both types of commercial users is to manage the number of commercial permits to assure the continuation of business competition on the river, access to outfitter services at all portals, and address consolidation of activities of outfitters for effective administration of permits in order to assure public service is being provided rather than permits held for speculation.

In order to assure quality service and distinct choices for customers, special use permits will not be issued to individuals or stockholders that own an interest in another powerboat or float businesses operating within the Snake River corridor. Nor can individuals who own businesses on the Snake River buy into another existing Snake River business either as a shareholder or a partner without absorbing the business being purchased, resulting in the permanent absorption of the business activities and retirement of the purchased permit. The only exception would be that a permittea can own (sole proprietorship or partnership) or purchase corporate stock in another business up to a maximum of two businesses on the river if the businesses are based at different portals. Business arrangements made prior to 1996 are exempt from this requirement.

Existing Businesses with Multiple Permits

A single special use permit can be issued to businesses holding multiple float and/or power permits at the option of the permit holders. The single permit will authorize all operations that were previously authorized by the multiple permits. A separate operating plan may be required for each business and the commercial schedules will include all launches and boat days authorized for all of the operations. In the event of a sale of one of the businesses, the amount of use associated with that business could be separated from the permit to allow re-issuance of a permit to the new owner. Some permits will be issued as combination float/power permits on the river, emphasizing the relationship and validity of both motorized and non-motorized uses on the river and be used as one method of addressing conflicting uses between motorized and non-motorized commercial users on the river.

Management of Outfitter Facilities on Forest Service Land as a Result of Sale of Business

Copper Creek

Copper Creek will continue to be managed under a resort special use permit issued for a maximum of ten years per issuance. The buildings will continue to be owned by the permittee and the permit will be issued for occupancy of the land. An annual allocation of 16 boat days will be assigned to the permit beginning with the 1998 primary season to allow non-passenger cargo trips to support operations at the lodge. These boat days will transfer with the resort permit in the event of sale.

The following conditions will apply to sale of facilities:

1. The outfitter business, including the buildings associated with the resort, can only be sold to another Snake River outfitter because access to the resort requires river access associated with an existing outfitter business. The permit for occupancy of the land can be reissued to the new owner, but there will be no guarantee of reissuance as the result of a sale of business.

2. If the permittee decided to go out of business, the buildings would be removed at the expense of the permittee and the site would be naturalized.

3. The buildings can be sold to a new outfitter if they are included as part of a sale of an associated outfitting business. A permit for occupancy of the land could be reissued to the new owner, but there is no guarantee of reissuance as the result of a sale of business.

Sheep Creek Cabin

Sheep Creek Cabin can continue to be managed under authority of a Granger-Thye permit for a maximum term of five years. The permit for use of the buildings will require the holder to maintain a valid outfitter-guide permit to remain eligible to hold the permit for Sheep Creek. Loss or termination of the outfitter permit would result in termination of the permit to occupy the buildings at Sheep Creek.

An annual allocation of four boat days would be assigned to the permit beginning with the 1997 primary season to allow non-passenger cargo trips to support operations at Sheep Creek Cabin. These boat days would transfer with the Granger-Thye permit in the event of a change in permit holders.

The primary purpose for issuance of this permit is to assure maintenance of the historic structures on-site as a component of protection of the cultural ORVs in the wild river corridor. At the discretion of the Forest Service, and at the end of each five year period, a prospectus will be issued and bids will be accepted from existing Snake River power and float outfitters who are licensed to conduct outfitting and guiding services in Idaho. If a sale of business occurred during the term of the permit, the following options would be available:

1. Terminate the permit and re-advertise the opportunity through issuance of a prospectus to all interested Snake River Outfitters including the new owner of the outfitting business that had been associated with the permit.

2. Terminate the permit and do not re-advertise in association with an outfitting business.

The Forest Service is not obligated to reissue the prospectus at the end of an expired five-year term.

Growth as a Result of Purchase for Business Expansion

The purchase of an existing business will become the main method of business expansion beyond growth made possible by filling all available seats or acquiring larger capacity powerboats or rafts. A condition for issuance of a special use permit will require that the business purchased be absorbed into the business of the buyer. A portion of the business cannot be sold at a future time. When a Snake River business is sold, the entire operation will be sold. (See specific rules for operations at Hells Canyon Creek)

This method of managing sales of businesses to other Snake River outfitters will become effective for all sales of businesses occurring on or after January 1, 1996. An outfitter(s) will have the option of requesting this method of consolidation prior to this date.

When the above occurs, it will be viewad as a consolidation of activities and the business of the seller will be absorbed into the business of the buyer, with the seller's permit being retired. The number of boats, priority use, area of operations, launch allocation, and any other conditions associated with the permit will be added to the permitted activities of the outfitter as part of the consolidation. If the purchased business allowed use in a larger area of operations, only those launches which are associated with the purchased business can utilize that area of operations. Consolidation of use would not provide for an increase in area of operations for the entire business.

Two or more Snake River outfitters could purchase a single business as long as a bona fide sale would occur, i.e., personal property changed ownership as part of the sales agreement. In this situation, the entire Snake River business would be required to be sold and the special use permit associated with that business permanently retired. Any use associated with the business being sold would be absorbed into the businesses of the buyers. The controlling factors in validating this type of sale are (1) the entire business being sold must cease to exist as a separate entity and (2) the special use permit for the business being sold must be permanently retired upon fulfillment of the financial obligations of the purchaser as documented in the sales agreement. The permit for the business being sold would be placed in an inactive status until the financial obligations of the sale were met, at which time it would be permanently retired.

The overall effect could result in net attrition in priority use powerboat businesses from 19 down to a minimum of 10 and priority use float businesses from 14 down to minimum of 10. These minimum numbers of businesses would assure that outfitter services would continue to be located at all portals. This may or may not result in larger businesses operating on the Snake River but it would provide for business diversification, adding stability to the industry. Float/Power combination permits would also add to diversification and could further reduce the total number of businesses operating on the river to a minimum of 11.

Permits, or distinctly different portions of combination permits, i.e., float/power operations, in non-use status (non-use that was not approved in advance by the Area Ranger) will have priority use reduced or the type of operations in non-use status will be terminated in accordance with Forest Service guidelines. If termination results, any use associated with the permit will be re-distributed proportionately among the remaining outfitters or placed in a pool accessible to all outfitters depending on type of use (power or float). Proportionate re-distribution would be implemented consistent with the allocation decisions found elsewhere in this document. Upon termination, the permit will not be reissued unless the minimum number of commercial permits will not be met at each portal on the river for powerboat and floatboat operations. If this occurred, a prospectus would be issued to advertise the vacant business opportunity only after appropriate environmental analysis was completed.

Specific Conditions of Sales Required for Permit Issuance

Sale of Business (General)

Portions of a business cannot be sold but portions of a business can be distributed among multiple purchasers if the purchasers are also Snake River outfitters. Sale of business will include all operations conducted under authority of the special use permit.

Sale of Powerboat Business

If a business is sold to another Snake River powerboat outfitter(s), the business will be absorbed by the purchaser(s) and the boat day allocation combined with the use authorized in the special use permit(s) held by the purchaser(s). In all other sales transactions, the boat day allocation assigned to the seller will be reassigned to the buyer.

Sale of Float Business

If a business is sold to another Snake River float outfitter(s), the business will be absorbed by the purchaser(s) and combined with the use authorized in the special use permit(s) held by the purchaser(s), including assignment to an additional launch group as appropriate. In all other sales transactions, the launch allocation of the seller would be assigned to the buyer.

Sale of Hells Canyon Creek-Based Powerboat Business

At the option of the permit holder, if two permits are issued for all use associated with the powerboat business based at Hells Canyon Creek, and the business associated with one of these permits is sold, the permits at this location could not be combined under joint ownership again. Under those conditions, the two businesses would have to exhibit complete operational and financial separation from each other as a condition of permit issuance and continuing operation. Both permits would be limited to operating from this location only and no other outfitter could move their operation to this location.

Sale of Pittsburg Landing-Based Powerboat Business

Since the specific purpose of designating a minimum number of powerboat businesses based at Pittsburg Landing is to address continued economic support to Idaho County, the objective will be to make certain these boat days remained based at Pittsburg Landing in the event of sale of business. To meet this objective, the following conditions of sale of businesses would apply to Pittsburg Landing-based outfitters. Issuance of a Forest Service permit will be contingent upon meeting these conditions:

- The three businesses currently operating at Pittsburg Landing would be required by the terms of their permits to operate the HCNRA portion of their businesses from Pittsburg Landing only and subsequent issuance of a permit upon a sale of business would be contingent upon the new owner continuing to base out of Pittsburg.

- If there were a minimum of four Pittsburg-based outfitters, no other outfitters would be allowed to move their operation to that location. However, Pittsburg-based outfitters could purchase and absorb businesses based downstream from Cache Creek or other Pittsburg Landing-based businesses in order to increase their allocation of boat days into different sections of the river.

Appendix D

Public Comments

and

Forest Service Responses

September 1996

Table of Contents

All comments in this appendix have been given a code number that corresponds to one of the coded subjects in the following list, and are assigned numeric order within the coded subject area. For example, the first comment addressing the range of alternatives is identified as Comment 101-1, the second one is Comment 101-2, etc.

Appendix D

Public Comments and Forest Service Responses

30-Day Comment Period
Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter
Environmental Assessment

Subject 101
Range of Alternatives

Comment 101-1. There are no amendments to the river plan ROD proposed in the Outfitter Environmental Assessment that would be considered improvements from the standpoint of nonmotorized recreation or protection of wilderness values.

Forest Service Response: ***The decision notice further enhances the timing and duration of the non-motorized window as a component of Alternative C. Reference comments and Forest Service responses relative to wilderness values in Appendix K of the FEIS for the Snake River Plan (pages K-50 through 54 and K-274 through 277).***

Comment 101-2. The rationale for the development of alternatives is inadequate. The OEA preferred alternative was allegedly concocted based on public comment to the proposed action. This alleged rationale raises several issues.

The OEA fails to elaborate on the details of this rationale. Does this mean that the number of comments in favor of increasing privileges to commercial jet boat operators inspired the preferred alternative? Does it mean perhaps that the compelling quality of pro-jet boat comments weighed so heavily that other comments pleading for more reasonable controls over jet boat use were deemed invalid, and were not even addressed let alone chosen as the basis for an alternative? If the answers are yes, why were the number and nature of those comments, and the reasons they were so compelling, not disclosed in the OEA?

The OEA claims that a total of 43 letters were received as a direct result of scoping. It states that 18 of the letters were from Snake River outfitters. Yet it fails to describe the distribution among nonmotorized and motorized constituencies, or the nature of the comments. Does the Forest Service not have the information or initiative to formulate its own alternatives? Does it rely on the public to create them? If so, why did the agency not include a full alternative in its DEIS for the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area CMP that was prepared by publics in cooperation with the Forest Service Planning Team? Why did the agency not incorporate the scoping comments of nonmotorized recreationists and other constituencies in formulating another action alternative to at least provide balance so that environmental and social effects could be compared between divergent alternatives? (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service identified substantive comments received during the scoping period. All of the substantive comments that were within the purpose and need for action, as defined in Chapter I, were considered by the planning team in the formulation of key issues. These substantive comments were also used in the development of alternatives, in conjunction with the planning team's expertise and management and review team, to help resolve those key issues. The public comments and identified substantive comments have been available in the analysis file for public review.***

Rationale for not including the Hells Canyon CMP Tracking Group's alternative in the DEIS for the HCNRA's Comprehensive Management Plan can be found in that document on page II-4 - 5 and within the analysis file for that planning process.

Comment 101-3. In light of the "public comment" rationale given for the only alternative in the OEA that would amend the ROD and change river management from either the existing (non) plan, and the ROD, all of the above questions must be answered. The OEA contains only one action alternative, the preferred alternative that was allegedly formulated based on "public comment." The other two alternatives reflect the existing (non) plan, and the plan outlined in the ROD. Other alternatives could and should have been developed, whether based on public comment, or developed by the Forest Service.

It would appear that, regardless of the viability of basing alternatives only on public comment, the public comments that were considered were selectively chosen. None of HCPC's comments were included for consideration, and in fact were not even listed under "Other Issues." As mentioned above, the OEA's plan amendments only accommodate the concerns of commercial jet boaters, not the nonmotorized or other publics. Three of the alternatives that might have been included to provide a full range of options and divergent scenarios for the public to compare, would be:

1. An alternative that is based on the "Solitude Alternatives," developed by HCPC and supported by 19 conservation and floating organizations to reflect their interpretation of the directives and intent of the HCNRA Act and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as they relate to both commercial and noncommercial jet boat use.

2. An "equity" alternative that would set up a use allocation, reservation, and permit system for commercial jet boat operators that is identical to that imposed on commercial floaters. In such a scenario, commercial jet boat outfitters could employ a new system of marketing their trips based on allocated launch dates. This is the way commercial float use has been controlled for years, and will be controlled in the new plan.

This would be an alternative to the system proposed in the OEA preferred alternative wherein traditional use patterns are "institutionalized," and the priority is given to allowing commercial jet boat operators to run trips whenever they get customers. Implementation of such a system through this EA would be timely, as the outfitters could employ a new system of marketing their 1997 trips beginning early this year. This would be a fair system that would provide predictability of jet boat use levels for other river users.

3. An alternative that responds to the fact that the need for wilderness experiences is increasing, while the availability of such experiences is declining. The DEIS for the new HCNRA CMP discloses on page III-13 that: "demand for primitive areas in eastern Oregon is expected to exceed supply in the near future."

This alternative would provide revised management direction based on the new information and would address impacts to commercial nonmotorized use from jet boat use. It could expand the nonmotorized period, and reduce jet boat use levels to provide a better and more predictable wilderness experience on the entire river, thus addressing changing public needs. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***All substantive comments that responded to the purpose and need for action were considered by the planning team. Many of the comments submitted by Hells Canyon Preservation Council (1/31/96) were outside the purpose and need for this environmental assessment and had previously addressed in the EIS process for development of the Snake River Plan. Reference the analysis file for a copy of the correspondents comments and Forest Service responses.***

Alternative 1 was submitted as part of the EIS process for development of the Snake River Plan. Reference pages II-2 and 3 of the FEIS for additional discussion on how this alternative was considered.

Alternative 2 replicates the allocation system established within Alternative B, the proposed action. The decision notice for this EA provides for additional adjustments to the allocation system based on public input.

Alternative 3 responds to the CMP reference out of context. The CMP EIS amendment process is focused on the need for primitive areas outside the Snake River corridor. The Snake River EIS considered alternatives with no motorized use in the wild river or significantly reduced motorized use, but did not select those alternatives for implementation. Reference comments and Forest Service responses relative to wilderness values in Appendix K of the FEIS for the Snake River Plan (pages K-274 through 277).

Comment 101-4. It is ridiculous to show Alternatives B and C as providing more diversity of services than A! We currently run tours of varying lengths, in boats of differing sizes, 25 to 42 feet. We also do fishing trips ranging in duration from 1 day to several days, basing overnights out of Sheep Creek. Under alternatives B or C it is unlikely that we will be able to expend any of our precious boat days on trips for small groups and fishing will be out of the question. Overnights at Sheep Creek can only take place during the motorized days when we can access Sheep Creek. This is not diversity! What we have now, Alternative A, provides diversity of services impossible in the tightly regulated world of B and C. Of the alternatives presented in this EA, alternative A is the only acceptable one for commercial power boaters. C is, of course, better than B, but neither is really viable; B was found seriously lacking on appeal, the reason this document was prepared. Since A is the mandatory no-action straw man, and implements the FEIS plan for the private sector while leaving commercial outfitters free of its constraints, we realize it probably isn't going anywhere. (Correspondent 120)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C, as adjusted in the decision notice, provides commercial powerboat levels at or near 1992 to 1995 use levels. Alternative C will allow outfitter and guides to continue marketing trips that provide a diversity of motorized opportunities to the public. Alternative A was not selected for implementation because it is non-responsive to the purpose and need for action as defined in Chapter I.***

Comment 101-5. The EA's other major failure is to develop a range of alternative adequate to meet the requirements of NEPA. You have simply offered the mandatory no-action alternative, the original EIS alternative (which was found faulty on appeal) and a slightly modified version of the EIS alternative, edjusted to make it a bit more reasonable in its handling of outfitter guide operations. There was no alternative offering different levels of use that would have made the the outfitters operations viable. No alternative addressed any significant change in the boater management or allocation. No alternative did away with the illegal nonmotorized window.

The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the nonmotorized window, but did not constrain you from reexamining it in the EA, changing it or even doing away with it. Certainly you should have examined an alternative that had no nonmotorized window. By limiting yourself in this manner you precludad a real chance to examine a range of alternatives. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 101-6. There is no range of alternatives; while both float and power boat outfitters were to be covered in this EA, no alternative affects any change in the manegement of floating. We would have expected an alternative that protected the economic viablilty of most, if not all power boat outfitters, but there was none. There should have been an alternative which did away with the nonmotorized window. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 101-7. The agency has failad to review all relevant information, including information contained in the Outfitter EA, prior to reaching a decision. The Outfitter EA apparently was generated to supplement data considered within the FEIS, but the Outfitter EA acknowledges that only limited issues will be considered at this stage in the NEPA process, since primary decisions were made by the agency in the ROD. CEQ has consistently noted that the balancing inherent in the generation and evaluation of an EIS must occur prior to actual decisionmaking. The decision to prohibit motorized use during the specific time periods has been improperly made before completion of necessary data collection, as evidenced by the fact that there is no alternative proposed by the Outfitter EA which would eliminate the non-motorized window. Just as individual portions of a project cannot be considered in separate EISs so as to minimize their cumulative impact, individual decisions within the planning process cannot be made at various stages to overlook their total impact. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Chapter I narrowly defines the purpose and need for the proposed action. This clearly defined proposed action facilitates specific and substantive public comment, which ultimately allows for a narrow range of alternatives.***

Although the correspondent believes the non-motorized window to be "illegal", the implementation of such is within the Forest Service's authority as the managing agency for the river. Alternative A provides for the opportunity to select an alternative without a non-motorized period, as did Alternatives B and C in the EIS process. The purpose and need for the proposed action is specifically focused on the duration and timing of the non-motorized period, not the elimination of the non-motorized period.

Comment 101-8. There is no real need to regulate use in the May and June part of the primary season. This year was more typical than the last few drought years have been. There was very little traffic on the river in that period. High water discourages floaters from running both the Snake and Salmon. Those same conditions also turn away most of the private power boaters. Even during lower water years June use usually is light. Why regulate when you don't need to? Please consider running the primary use season from July 1 through Labor Day. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 101-9. Considering the light use experienced during the month of June in previous years, you should consider an alternative that backs off all use restrictions, float and power in that month, regulating only July through Labor Day. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference comments in Appendix K of the FEIS on length of use season (pages K-165 through 168).***

Comment 101-10. Alternative A should reflect no action for private boaters on the same basis as commercial users. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***This is outside the scope of the purpose and need for the proposed action, as defined in Chapter I.***

Comment 101-11. The agency has improperly narrowed the range of alternatives during generation of the Outfitter EA, and has thereby created several layers of decision making at various stages of the planning process. This procedure, resulting in decisions being made prior to complete collection and evaluation of all data, violates NEPA. An EA is typically generated prior to any EIS, and while the EA forms a useful tool in the agency's planning arsenal, it cannot substitute for the rigorous analysis of an EIS when the decision to generate an EIS has occurred. See 40 C.F.R. 1508.9 (1995)(explaining that EA can provide information to determine whether an EIS is needed or a Finding of No Significant Impact ("FONSI") can be declared, can aid the agency when no EIS is needed, or can facilitate generation of an EIS when one is needed). There is no provision in NEPA or the Council on Environmental Quality ("CEQ") regulations which allows an EA, standing alone, to correct oversights or shortcomings of an EIS. The CEQ interprets NEPA as requiring all necessary environmental documents to be completed prior to actual decision making. 46 Fed. Reg. 18026, 18036(1981). Assuming the Outfitter EA can be validly tiered to the FEIS, it must essentially re-open the decision alternatives present in the FEIS, so that the Responsible Officer can properly consider the complete effects of all aspects of the decision alternatives before making any choices. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 101-12. The agency has improperly narrowed the range of alternatives during generation of the Outfitter EA, and has thereby created several layers of decisionmaking at various stages of the planning process. This procedure, resulting in decisions being made prior to complete collection and evaluation of all data, violates NEPA. Assuming the Outfitter EA can be validly tiered to the FEIS, it must essentially re-open the decision alternatives present in the FEIS, so that the Responsible Officer can properly consider the complete effects of all aspects of the decision alternatives before making any choices. The information generated by the Outfitter EA is apparently only being considered in the timing of the non-motorized window, but cannot be considered by the agency to reconsider whether a non-motorized period should be created at all. This procedure is erroneous.

If the agency did not make a substantial change, why make one at all? If the agency did not uncover significant new information, why was a change made? Assuming that the agency validly determined that generation of a SEIS was not required, the agency was at least required to preserve even the range of alternatives provided by the EIS. The agency has presented an economic analysis that is based on misleading assumptions and, therefore, produces misleading results. The agency is required to take a hard look at the environmental effects of a proposed action, and must also ensure that the information has enough technical substance to enlighten the public as to the agency's analysis without being misleading. At the level that the Outfitter EA analysis attempts study, it paints an unsupportable optimistic picture that tends to prevent the Responsible Officer from properly recognizing the true impacts of the proposed action. Additionally, members of the public will be prevented from reacting to the relatively neutral findings of the Outfitter EA, contrary to the intent of NEPA. The agency has decided to conduct an economic analysis, and they have failed to conduct that analysis in a manner that complies with the mandates of NEPA. (Correspondent 250)

Comment 101-13. The hybrid procedure leading to the generation of the Outfitter EA has apparently caused the agency to make decisions at various stages of the data gathering process. The Outfitter EA notes that "[w]hile the decision was made in the ROD to have a non-motorized period, the analysis in this EA will determine when the period should be in effect." Outfitter EA at I-2, para. 5 (emphasis added). Thus, the information generated by the Outfitter EA is apparently only being considered in the timing of the non-motorized window, but cannot be considered by the agency to reconsider whether a non-motorized period should be created at all. This procedure is erroneous. An agency should certainly not adhere at all costs to a FEIS that presents an incomplete analysis of issues relevant to a decision, and the agency properly decided that outfitter economic impact analysis was lacking in the FEIS. When faced with additional information, the agency must initially decide if the information reaches the point where it is properly considered "significant new information." because the relevant CEQ regulations require that a Supplemental EIS ("SEIS") be generated when an agency makes substantial changes in the proposed action that are relevant to environmental concerns, or there are significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns bearing on the proposed action or its impacts. 40 C.F.R 1502.9(c)(l). If either of these conditions were satisfied, the CEQ regulations suggest that an agency must complete a SEIS prior to decisionmaking.

Assuming that the agency validly determined that generation of a SEIS was not required, the agency was still required to preserve even the range of alternatives provided by the EIS. On a related topic previously raised in our prior submissions, one may question whether the EIS ever presented a proper range of alternatives. Regardless of the answer to that questions, the Outfitter EA plainly restricts the FEIS alternatives even further, and thereby impermissibly narrows the decisions to be made by the Responsible Officer. Once an agency has decided to collect additional data or perform a new analysis of data, the agency must provide for the opportunity to assess at least all of the options presented by the EIS. The agency cannot make decisions at various stages of the data collection process. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***As stated in Chapter I, page 1, the proposed action responds to the Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on the appeal of the ROD for the Snake River Plan to further analyze the***

specific economic effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual commercial river permits.

Forest Service planning regulations (36 CFR 219.10 (f)) allow the Forest Supervisor to amend Forest Plans. The Snake River Plan was incorporated in the Forest Plan through the 1994 record of decision. FSH 1909.12,5.32 addresses the process to amend Forest Plans in relation to the significance of the amendment. The decision notice for this EA determined that this decision and resultant amendment to the Forest Plan is non-significant in relation to both NEPA and NFMA, thus not requiring an EIS.

Subject 103
Disclosure of Effects

Comment 103-1. The Regional Forester's decision directs the Forest Supervisor to analyze and disclose the effects on outfitters, not to adjust the plan to accommodate them if there might be impacts. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester's July 1995 decision (page 19) directs the Forest Supervisor to "further analyze the specific effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual permits and then make a new decision relative to commercial use".***

Comment 103-2. Not only did the Regional Forester validate the nonmotorized window as it was originally designed in his decision on the appeals, he did not open the door to an amendment of the plan based on impacts to commercial businesses or their customers.

This point is especially pertinent because the ROD allocates jet boat numbers on 1988-1992 levels, yet fails to determine the effect of those levels on commercial float businesses. Thus, if indeed the plan could be amended based on the Regional Forester's decision on the appeals, it is a double-edged sword. The ROD concedes that jet boat use does affect float use by degrading the conditions desired by nonmotorized recreationists, and thus the nonmotorized window was conceived. But the OEA creates a no-win situation for commercial nonmotorized businesses when it proposes to amend the plan to accommodate commercial jet boat use, but fails to conduct an analysis of benefits to commercial nonmotorized use that could result in amending the plan in favor of stronger controls over motorized use.

By failing to address the impacts of motorized use on commercial float services, yet examining the effect of use limits on commercial motorized use, the nonmotorized window could only be reduced, not increased in this OEA, and jet boat use levels can only be sustained or increased, not decreased.

The whole basis of logic used in the OEA's amendments to the ROD are skewed. The ROD says it will meet desired future conditions and sets standards and guidelines to do so. Then the OEA says the ROD won't accomplish this, and elevates jet boat use levels. The ROD says the one day float trips are inappropriate, then the OEA says they are. Yet there is no principle or logic supporting these changes.

It would appear that the Forest Service has the ability to manipulate use allocation to any degree within these contributed standards and desired future conditions, thus justifying almost anything it wants to do. The OEA is a study in the manipulation of process. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester's July 1995 decision (page 6) allowed for adjustments to the non-motorized period by stating: "The specifics of timing and duration of a non-motorized window will be determined by the Forest Supervisor's analysis and subsequent decision relative to commercial use."***

The effects of motorized and non-motorized users, both private and commercial, upon each other and the environment are disclosed in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan (Chapter IV). Further, the effects of the alternatives on the recreation resources is disclosed on pages III-1 through 21 of this EA.

The decision notice provides the rationale for the decision elements.

Comment 103-3. The whole tone of both the Plan and the Outfitter EA is slanted toward support of commercial outfitters. Virtually nothing is said as to how the proposed alternative for commercial outfitters impacts others. (Correspondent 135)

Forest Service Response: ***The effects of motorized and non-motorized users, both private and commercial, upon each other and the environment are disclosed in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan (Chapter IV). Further, the effects of the alternatives on the recreation resources is disclosed on pages III-1 through 21 of this EA.***

Comment 103-4. The key indicators, sense of remoteness and level of social encounters, have never been measured and are irrelevant on a river shared by motorized and nonmotorized river craft. What is the present level of encounters? What is the target level? How will you measure it? There is no way to measure remoteness, so how can it be a key indicator? "Capability to provide an appropriate level of visitor management--." The Forest Service is incapable at this point of opening trails in the Seven Devils, of managing and protecting cultural sites, of keeping Kirkwood staffed, or maintaining campgrounds. How do you expect to manage the most regulatory and complicated river recreation management plan in the Nation? If an appropriate level of visitor management is what you are capable of providing, this EA and the parent EIS miss the target. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 103-5. There are terms, developed by the "team," within all plans which are vague, undefined and misleading, such as "feeling of remoteness," "experience solitude," "desired recreational experience," segment of the public, I feel these are slimy little words being used as documented facts when in reality they are not. These terms have confused and misinformed people. (Correspondent 250)

Forest Service Response: ***Chapter III of the FEIS for the Snake River Plan provides a detailed discussion of the elements that comprise the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS). The use of ROS to address user capacities and achieve a desired recreation experience in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan was affirmed by the Regional Forester in his July 1995 decision. The key indicator listed for issue 1 (page I-5 of this EA) is a valid unit of measure to address the potential effects of the recreation resources relative to the operational limitations presented in the proposed action.***

Subject 104
Legal Concerns

Comment 104-1. The Forest Service has an obligation to protect river values and resources, including wilderness and primitive values. You have no obligation to protect or contrive specific levels or patterns of commercial use. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service is delegated the responsibility of maintaining and enhancing the outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) of the river, as listed on page 2 of the Snake River Plan. In managing to maintain and/or enhance the recreation ORV, it is the Forest Service's responsibility to manage commercial boating levels, subject to restrictions on size, type of craft, numbers, noise limits, duration, seasons, or other matters deemed necessary (36 CFR 292.45 (b)).***

As stated in I-1 of this EA, Forest Service policy (36 CFR 251.56(f)) requires that the permittee charge reasonable rates and furnish such services as may be necessary in the public interest. Through specifying the launch locations, the availability of a desired mix of visitor services can be better assured.

Comment 104-2. The preferred alternative, Alternative C does not conserve the scenic or wilderness values, it allows motorized use that substantially interferes with the designated values and therefore fails to regulate the use and number of motorized river craft as required by the statute.

Alternative C relaxes the regulations as proposed in the ROD (Alternative B) and is in violation of the WSRA, the HCNRA and goes beyond the scope of the Appeal Decision's remand. The EA proposes to institutionalize historic use of commercial jet boat operators and even allows for increase in use from the 1988-1992 base period. The Forest Service's obligation is to protect the ORVs not the commercial outfitters' economic profits. Institutionalizing historic use and allowing an increase in use is in violation of the HCNRA Act, the WSRA and beyond the scope of the Appeal Decision remand. (Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference Forest Service responses to comments 101-1, 103-1, 103-2, and 104-1.***

Comment 104-3. The following chart shows the regulations proposed in the ROD and the changes in the EA's preferred alternative that HCPC objects to and finds are inconsistent with the law and the Appeal Decision.

ROD - Alternative B	EA Preferred - Alternative C
24-day non-motorized period	18-day non-motorized period (6 out of next 10 years) 21-day non-motorized period (4 out of next 10 years)
1208 commercial jet boat days	1381 commercial jet boat days
Specific launch dates for each outfitter and daily launch caps	Elimination of daily launch caps allows maximum number of boat days to be used anytime during month
Prohibition on launching of inflatable watercraft from commercial powerboats	Permission to launch inflatable watercraft from commercial powerboats
New boats maximum length of 39.6 feet.	New boats maximum length if 42 feet

(Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference the decision notice where Alternative C has been modified to address some of these concerns and the rationale for these decisions are provided.***

Comment 104-4. The ROD acknowledges that "it is inevitable that establishing use levels to resolve the concerns of fair and equitable allocations and to protect river ORVs would involve impacts to some river users. This is particularly true concerning powerboat use which has not had any limitations." The preferred Alternative, Alternative C does not meet the objectives stated in the ROD which, for the most part, were affirmed in the Appeal Decision. (Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference the decision notice where the rationale for decisions on the operational limitations and amendments to the Forest Plan is provided.***

Comment 104-5. There is no need for a nonmotorized period; there is no need for solitude or remoteness in a wild river. While some might like those attributes, it is certainly not the responsibility of the Forest Service to rewrite legislation so that a few may get their way. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference Forest Service responses to comments in Appendix K of the FEIS for the Snake River Plan (pages K-31 through K-34, and K-50 through K-53).***

Comment 104-6. Physically challenged individuals are often limited to accessing the NRA via powerboat. By restricting the access of powerboats to sections of Hells Canyon, the agency is necessarily restricting the ability of these individuals to experience the same opportunities as experienced by others. The Outfitter EA does not mention these impacts in any detail, and the agency has not assessed these effects adequately at any point in rendering its decision. At a minimum, the applicability of the ADA and the rights of physically challenged individuals to enjoy the NRA should be incorporated in the agency's analysis. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference Forest Service responses to comments in Appendix K of the FEIS for the Snake River Plan (pages K-177 through K-180).***

Comment 104-7. The elimination of power boats even during part of the year is beyond the scope of your agency. These waters are an historic RS2477 Right of Way as defined by Idaho Code 40-204-A. The users on this river both commercial and recreation both power and float need to share the waterway in a safe and sane manner. (Correspondent 203)

Forest Service Response: ***Revised Statue 2477 does not apply to waterways such as the Wild and Scenic Snake River.***

Comment 104-8. I have previously raised in our appeal and in testimony to the Deputy Regional Forester at our oral hearing, the issue of being intentionally excluded from a section of the river by new restrictions on our area of operations. This renders us less competitive and hinders our ability to remain a viable business. This was never responded to by you or the Deputy Regional Forester in response to our appeal. (Correspondent 247)

Forest Service Response: ***Forest Service records indicate these appeal points were directly responded to as part of the March 10, 1995 responsive statements on Three Rivers Outfitters December 19, 1994 appeal of the Snake River Plan. The Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on the appeals found that the ROD and FEIS for the Snake River Plan do not disclose the consequences of how the decision affects the economic viability of outfitter-guides. The Regional Forester directed the Forest Supervisor to further analyze the specific effects of the allocation and operational limitations on individual permits and then make a new decision relative to commercial use. This EA and decision notice fulfill those requirements.***

Access to Private Land

Comment 104-9. The EA does not provide the specifics of how the non-motorized window will operate with regard to private property access, and the EA fails to disclose the specifics on how the limited permits available for private powerboating use during the primary use period will be distributed. Such a lack of specific analysis thwarts informed public review and informed decisionmaking here, violating the agency's NEPA directives and its own appeal decision guidance.

Moreover, because the Ferraro decision acknowledges that the private land access issues are connected to decisions on commercial operations and special use permits, the private land access issues must be addressed at the same time, and in the same environmental analysis document, as are the decisions on commercial outfitter use and establishment of the specifics on any non-motorized period restrictions. Further, a decision of the magnitude proposed in the EA and fully responsive to the Ferraro decision must be addressed by a comprehensive EIS and not a perfunctory EA analysis as the agency is proposing here. (Correspondent 165)

Comment 104-10. One of the Regional Forester's charges in the appeal decision was to conduct further analysis in order to assure reasonable and adequate access to private land. This was not addressed in the EA. While the issue of private land access and river recreation or outfitting and guiding might seem separate issues, they are closely tied together and both should be addressed in this document. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***In July and August of this summer, private landowners within the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor and the Lower Salmon River were notified of the process to consider and grant, if necessary, access to private lands via the Snake River during the primary season. A special use authorization would allow access to private lands within the Snake River corridor or access through the Snake River to private lands within the Lower Salmon River. There are no private lands within the wild section of river that correspond with the area of the non-motorized period. Requests for access to private lands from the Hells Canyon Creek launch site during any of the 21 non-motorized days will be considered in the application process. Reference analysis file for copies of the private landowners notification.***

Private powerboat access and allocation is addressed in the 1994 Snake River Plan and its accompanying FEIS and ROD.

The decision notice to this EA discloses a finding of no significant impact, thus meeting the requirements to not pursue an EIS.

Subject 105
HCNRA Act

Comment 105-1. As a public school educator who has used Hells Canyon as an extension of our classrooms, I am writing to strongly endorse Alternative A. The open access presently available to anyone who want to responsibly travel the rivar is fully consistent with the original intent of the legislation designating the area as a national recreation area. This special status was granted in order to accommodate the widest reasonable range of river experience and still ensures government oversight and stewardship of the land. Further restrictions on public access to the Hells Canyon Recreation Area would mean a national treasure would remain undiscovered. This was not the intent of those farsighted individuals like Mark Hatfield and others who, in the spirit of Theodore Roosevelt, have sought to share this special part of America with everyone. (Correspondent 25)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference Forest Service responses to comments in Appendix K of the FEIS to the Snake River Plan (pages K-27 through K-40).***

Comment 105-2. How can you classify the Snake River as a Wild and Scenic river with a dam on it? (Correspondent 52)

Forest Service Response: ***The Hells Canyon Dam is not within the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor. The Snake River was designated wild and scenic by Congress in 1975, when the HCNRA was established (Public Law 94-199).***

Comment 105-3. Both commercial and private jet boat use of the Snake Wild and Scenic River should be limited to 1975 levels in the Wild designated section of the river. This is necessary to protect the wilderness values and primitive character of the river that existed upon designation. This section of the river is supposed to be treated as a "vestige of primitive America," but is not due to increases in jet boat traffic.

All jet boat levels in the scenic section of the river should be limited to 1977-1978 levels, which is the time float boat levels began being managed. Float boat launches were controlled in the Wild river section to prevent overuse in the most popular section of the river for floating. Jet boat levels should have been capped at that time at existing levels to protect river resources and values in the Scenic section of the river, which is the section most heavily used by jet boats. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***This is outside the scope of the purpose and need for the proposed action as stated in Chapter I. These comments were raised in appeals of the ROD by Hells Canyon Preservation Council. The Regional Forester found in his July 1995 decision that the Forest Supervisor is not limited to those levels of rivercraft that existed in 1975-1978.***

Authority for Non-Motorized Period

Several people questioned the authority of the Forest Service to close the river to motorized rivercraft during the non-motorized periods. Several comments expressing similar views are followed by the Forest Service response:

Comment 105-4. The power boat closure periods in the wild river are neither needed or legal. Power boating has been taking place on this navigable river for over 100 years. By contrast, floaters are Johnny-come-latelys, not appearing in any numbers until the early 1970's. This is our country's finest white water power boating river and may well be the finest in the world. We certainly hear comments to that effect from our international guests. Power boating is recognized as a use every bit as valid as floating in the HCNRA Act. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act doesn't even mention power boats, to say nothing about banning them. In the HCNRA Act they specified that both motorized and nonmotorized river craft were valid uses, one no more valid than the other. By taking these actions Congress went beyond "allowing" motorized river craft. By declining to include the corridor in the surrounding wilderness and specifying its validity, Congress made it clear that motorized use was to continue. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 105-5. The sad fact is that the Forest Service has taken the attitude that they do have the authority to ignore the intent of Congress and torture the intent of the HCNRA until it is almost totally unrecognizable. It is a judicial fact that the intent of the law is the law. When Congress recognized certain uses as valid in the HCNRA there was no intent that any of those uses should be eliminated in the name of regulation, whether temporarily or permanently. Regulating a valid user group off the river for even one single day is just the same as eliminating that user group for one single day. The HCNRA did not break up the river into sections in which the intent of Congress could be ignored. If that were the case, what would stop the Forest Service from closing all but one mile of the river to power boats for only 364 days each year? (Correspondent 128)

Comment 105-6. Hells Canyon should be left open to all users and not locked up or set aside at any particular time for any one river user and/or canyon user to enjoy solely by themself. Hells Canyon is a National

Recreation Area set aside for the public by congress. All users should be able to enjoy Hells Canyon at any time of the year, month, week, or day providing the environment is not over impacted or abused. (Correspondent 177)

Comment 105-7. The Hells Canyon Act specifically recognizes both motorized and non-motorized river craft as valid uses of the river within the recreation area. It does not say that they are to handled differently on different parts of the river. Both are equally valid on the whole river for the whole year. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 105-8. I agree there should be reasonable limitations but to take away privileges altogether is unconstitutional. (Correspondent 21)

Comment 105-9. I was brought up believing all waters had to be open to all. What has happened? (Correspondent 95)

Comment 105-10. So why is it necessary to risk ruining our business? Why is it necessary to deny our customers access to their national recreation area? That need certainly isn't exhibited in this EA. The need statement is a flimsy contrivance stating some floaters need a nonmotorized experience and that we must provide a "desired recreation experience." But the experience provided by this plan isn't what most of the canyon's visitors desire; it isn't an experience required by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act or the Hells Canyon Act. We feel, in fact, that it clearly violates both the letter and intent of the Hells Canyon Act. (Correspondent 251)

Comment 105-11. Hells Canyon is a National Recreation Area. It was the intent to keep it and manage it as a National Recreation Area. Eliminating any one user group for any time during the year is not correct. (Correspondent 243)

Forest Service Response: ***The authority and responsibility of the Forest Service to manage motorized and non-motorized rivercraft based on type of craft, numbers, duration, and seasons is summarized under "Legislated Requirements and Management Direction" on pages I-9 through 11 of the Snake River Plan FEIS.***

Appendix C of the Snake River Plan FEIS presents a framework for management of the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor that further clarifies the agency's authority.

Appendix H of the Snake River Plan FEIS presents regional river recreation opportunities used as a tool in balancing use allocations on the Snake River with similar opportunities on other regional rivers.

Appendix K of the FEIS provides considerable discussion and rationale for the non-motorized periods. Many of these comments were originally brought forward in comments on the DEIS and FEIS for the Snake River Plan and can be found under the following sections:

Regulatory Concerns, pages K-27 through 40
Recreation Experience, pages K-50 through 61
Use Levels, pages K-61 through 109

The record of decision for the Snake River Plan FEIS clearly outlines the rationale for the non-motorized window under Issue 1: Managing for the Intended Recreation Experience, pages 8-14.

The Regional Forester's July 1995 decision on appeals affirms the decision to provide a non-motorized window to achieve more primitive conditions in the wild river segment and to reduce user conflicts (page 9).

Comment 105-12. When you reference to section 10(d) of the HCNRA Act why do you avoid the validity portion of that section? Include the whole thing please. You say you are trying to "assure that use levels are compatible with the objectives of Sections 7 and 10 of the HCNRA Act." While section 10 gives you the authority to regulate use and numbers, it contains no direction as to what those numbers should be and states no objectives. While section 7 lists objectives, you have failed to show that power boating creates problems or poses a threat to achievement of any of those objectives. You have provided no justification for the actions taken to severely curtail and, during the closure periods, eliminate power boating, that can be based on section 7's objectives. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***A complete reference to section 10(d) has been added to page I-4. Reference the previous Forest Service response for discussion on the need for use restrictions and agency authority.***

Subject 106
Relationship to Other Planning Processes/Decisions

Comment 106-1. Once again you refer to the "study river." The study was completed in 1980 by the NPS and the recommendation went to the President in 1983. No legislation was introduced and the study protection expired. Applications were immediately filed to build the Asotin Dam. Congress passed a law prohibiting dams, but elected not to designate it under the W&SRA. It does not stay a study river forever; otherwise there would be no need to ever designate it. A study river would remain in that limbo in perpetuity. You might recommend designation, but only Congress can do it, and Congress has decided not to in this case. This 4 miles of the Snake is simply an undesignated section of river. There is no delineated river corridor in this segment. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Although the Assistant Secretary of the Interior did not recommend wild and scenic designation at the end of the first study, a subsequent study resulted from a Forest Plan appeal with American Rivers and Oregon (now Pacific) Rivers Council under section 5(d) of the Wild and Scenic River Act. Under the settlement agreement, the Forest Service agreed to determine the eligibility and suitability of the lower Snake (the 4.2-mile section within the HCNRA immediately north of the existing scenic river) and to manage these suitable rivers at their potential wild and scenic river classifications until Congress designates these rivers or releases them from further consideration. This portion of the Snake River is being managed in accordance with Management Area 8 of the Forest Plan and within the direction set forth in the Snake River Plan as scenic.***

Subject 107
Proposed Action - General

Comment 107-1. In the proposed action Purpose and Need section of the OEA, it is stated that "...the proposed action seeks to allow business flexibility for commercial permittees to ensure the public need for these services will be met." However, the OEA fails to define or quantify this "public need," whether in the context of the unlimited commercial use that has for 20 years been allowed, or the protection of river values that the law requires.

The only context for "public need" is the business that jet boat outfitters have been able to accumulate over 20 years of uncontrolled use. Is "public need" then defined by the "need" perceived, based on the "demand" for these services that accumulated during unlimited use? What would be the impacts on the public if the established use, based on unlimited launch capabilities, was reduced? What would be the impact if some people, the "transient" tourists described in the OEA who choose to take a jet boat tour because it is available, were denied this opportunity because use was limited based on the needed protection of wilderness values?

The impacts would be to the number of customers of jet boat outfitters, not to public access to visit Hells Canyon. In fact, the option exists for visitors to drive to a river portal at Pittsburg Landing, Dug Bar, or Hells Canyon Creek and view the river and canyon, while staying at the campground at Pittsburg Landing or going to the visitors center at Hells Canyon Creek. They could drive on paved or otherwise improved roads on the canyon rim at Hat Point, Overlook I, or Windy Saddle and view the canyon from there, using the camping, interpretive, and other facilities that the Forest Service has provided at these locations. In addition, these visitors have access to companies providing scenic tours of Hells Canyon by van, and land-based outfitters that access river trails by horse and llama.

In short, the public "need" for outfitted services on the river is not defined in terms of a specific experience in a boat that is somehow necessary to the point that a specific level must be maintained. Nor is this "need" explained in the context of the public being somehow harmed or deprived if a specific amount of this service were not made available. In fact, this service is available, and there is a wealth of opportunities for people to view Hells Canyon from top to bottom. Saying that there is a need for outfitted services is one thing, but the issue of levels and expectations is another.

The OEA is obviously using the "public need for outfitter services" as a surrogate to guarantee a desired "traditional" levels of business and profits for outfitting companies. The "need" for specific levels of jet boat outfitter services is not justified or even defined in the EA, nor in this context even in the EIS. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The FEIS and ROD for the Snake River Plan demonstrate the public need for outfitter-guide services, both motorized and non-motorized. The FEIS and ROD also established maximum allowable use (carrying capacity) within the primary season, for both motorized and non-motorized, to ensure the protection and enhancement of the outstandingly remarkable values. Both the demonstrated public need for outfitter-guide services and the carrying capacity were affirmed by the Regional Forester in his July 1995 decision on appeals.***

Comment 107-2. The "need" for distribution of commercial jet boat use as described in the OEA is mischaracterized and irrelevant. The statement that "There is a need to provide public service through offering a level of outfitted services at each river portal" is unsupported. The public that is "unable to enjoy the unique recreational experience of the Snake W&S River because of lack of skills or specialized equipment" is not dependent on entry to the river at a specific portal.

Again, it would appear that the alleged need to provide access to specific portals is based on the needs of jet boat outfitters, not the public. Certain outfitters prefer to initiate their trips from specific portals (launch sites on the river). This is usually based on where the best access to the river is from their home base.

There is no indication that any publics care which portal they enter the river on. The ROD goes to great lengths to guarantee jet boat outfitters access to the same areas of the river they traditionally have accessed on their tours.

One jet boat outfitter, Hells Canyon Adventures, operates from Hells Canyon Creek on the upper section of the river. In fact, this outfitter is the beneficiary of the walk-in business that comes to him from the tourists that drive the paved road to the visitors center at Hells Canyon Creek. This operation is the only one that has a consistent presence (docks, boats permanently moored, employees present) at a portal, and can accommodate people who drive directly to Hells Canyon on a trip the minute they arrive and inquire. No other outfitter maintains such a presence at any portal.

The "walk-in" business that is referenced in the OEA refers to people who contact an outfitter to book trips at the spur of the moment. Many of these folks call an outfitting business office, and do not actually access services from the river. The one outfitter that does receive direct walk-in business at the river has a distinct business advantage. But the point is, most people could care less what portal their trip starts from. So what is the motivation for this "need?" Is it to continue to perpetuate the gravy train that Hells Canyon Adventures has feasted from over the years?

The OEA does not disclose the information required to make a determination of launches from specific portals based on a desire to see specific parts of the canyon, or the public's desire to begin a trip from a certain location. It is doubtful that customers of commercial jet boat outfitters have any clue as to what particular attraction of the canyon they wish to see on their zip-in, zip- out jet boat tour. Based on this fact, and the absence of outfitter contact offices at portals, "availability of services" based on launches from a specific portal is largely irrelevant.

The "need" for maximum and minimum numbers of outfitters "at" specific portals is illuminated in the OEA. This issue might be relevant if the customers of jet boat tour operators learned of jet boat tours, and signed up for them while visiting a portal. But as previously stated, this is not the case, except possibly with the one outfitter that operates from Hells Canyon Dam. But again, since the outfitters do not have offices or other contact stations on site at the portals, this point is superfluous. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***Public need can best be described by the recreation ORV and articulated through ROS characteristics (Appendix C of the Snake River Plan). Public need for outfitter-guide services at the Hells Canyon Creek, Pittsburg Landing, and Cache Creek portals, both motorized and non-motorized, has long been demonstrated by the ability of the outfitter-guides to sustain a viable business. Throughout the Limits of Acceptable Change planning process, the EIS process, and now this EA the public has expressed interest in maintaining traditional access points to the river corridor, both for private and commercial uses. The communities that are dependent on tourism dollars have also echoed that interest. One element of the 1994 ROD for the Snake River Plan was to maintain daily access to the wild river from all portals throughout the primary season for both private and commercial powerboats (page 10).***

Comment 107-3. With regard to the organization of the decisionmaking vehicle, it seems significant that the purpose/need of the Outfitter EA does not correspond to the purpose/need of the FEIS. Assuming that the agency can address its present concerns in the context of an EA, one can certainly argue that the agency cannot shift the focus by relying on some conclusions already reached in the ROD while renewing analysis of other areas in the Outfitter EA. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***Although the comment does not address specific elements of concern, the decision notice for this EA provides the rationale for each decision element and the justification for amendments to the Forest Plan.***

Comment 107-4. The need for proposed action originates from Forest Service visitor use reports showing a 147% increase over a 12 year period. One must wonder how negatively this increase was impacting recreational experiences, that only an 11% increase per year. There are 19 powerboat permits issued, on average that is only .64% increase per permit, per year. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***The 147% increase in recreation use (EA, page I-1) is relative to all river-related use, both private and commercial, motorized and non-motorized. Looked at narrowly, as did the correspondent, the growth does not appear to be alarming. But looked at cumulatively (147% growth in 13 years), the growth can have considerable risks on degradation of the river's ORVs; thus the need for visitor use management.***

Subject 108
Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC)

Some people responding to the EA felt that the planning team should have made better use of the LAC process. The Forest Service response follows several comments:

Comment 108-1. Why was there not an alternative that allowed access in the wild river as outlined in LAC? This would have made an interesting comparison with C, especially with respect to the economic effects. When discussing the mix of use levels you say that there was "little agreement on the mix of use levels," "there was not complete consensus." Of course, you will not find agreement or consensus when you call for comments on a vague proposal. Consensus comes only after serious negotiation among reasonable people. Unfortunately, there has been no effort since LAC to bring the major parties together to build consensus. What we have seen is unilateral agency proposals and decisions that divide the user, pitting the interests of one against the other. The LAC process was successful in reaching consensus of these very issues, with the exception of two task force members who were unwilling to find any accommodation; that was their position when the process started and their position at the end. Twenty two of twenty did find consensus. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 108-2. We continue to believe that a broader range of alternative, including an alternative mirroring the Limits of Acceptable Change (the "LAC") findings with appropriate updating, would best serve the needs of the public. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 108-3. The need of a non-motorized period falls within this distortion. I respectfully request you clean up that team and by consensus such as the LAC or using the current LAC results, develop a plan with updated, realistic, honest data. (Correspondent 250)

Comment 108-4. This EA doesn't really have a range of alternatives as required by NEPA. A is the mandatory no action. C is a variation of B. Why wasn't a real alternative developed that did away with the nonmotorized window and allowed wild river access on a par with the LAC alternative we all agreed to and were committed to? If this had been done, an honest, unbiased review would have placed that alternative at the top of the pack. (Correspondent 251)

Forest Service Response: ***As disclosed in Appendix K of the FEIS (K-10 through K-15) many of the elements of the LAC recommendations are carried forward into the Snake River Plan. Upon careful review of this EA's selected Alternative C, the correspondents would find that the use levels prescribed for motorized commercial use actually exceeds the LAC recommends. For additional discussion on the range of alternatives, reference Comments 101-5 and 101-6.***

Subject 111
Public Involvement Process

Comment 111-1. To what point is the general public expected to continue on with comments dealing with preparation of a Snake Wild and Scenic River management plan? At what point to disillusion and confusion too much to handle? Have you considered this? Over the past 7 years, the public has been expected to understand and be fully involved in the LAC process; to submit comments on the original river plan EA and attend meetings on that proposed action; to comment on an EIS proposed action; to attand another round of public meetings; to comment on the DEIS; to then comment on the FEIS; then to appeal the ROD; then comment on the proposed action for an amending EA, and now comment on a draft EA for the amendment.

How can you expect the public to stay focused, to have faith in the process, and to continue with serious, hopeful involvement through such a convoluted, confusing, and seemingly endless progression of process? At what point would the Forest Service expect the public will lose faith in the process, particularly given the record of unsupported and indefensible delay in finally implementing a river plan it has waited more than eleven years for since the expiration of the Crowell CMP appeal decision? This record of delay includes two recent decisions that delayed plan implementation without offering any good reason for doing so. Add to this the frustration of nonmotorized recreationists at having waited 20 years for jet boats to finally be regulated as the law requires (while float boating has been regulated) and you have a recipe for complete and justified disillusion with the process. It would appear that indeed, the number of comments from the jet boat constituency has inspired the preferred alternative for the OEA. The OEA should disclose the rationale for basing the preferred alternative on public comments, specifically which comments.

The OEA should explain at what point the NEPA process is reduced to a vote. This information is necessary because in other NEPA forums, the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest has ignored the collection of comments that overwhelmingly favored a certain position on a specific issue. In the case of the Overlook II project, 132 comments received were opposed to the project. Only 8 were in favor. Yet in withdrawing the decision to implement Overlook II, public opposition was not noted in any way, shape, or form as the reason for the withdrawal. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service shares the concern of this correspondent that as the planning process continues, the public can and sometimes does become disinterested. The Forest Service is committed to public participation in these planning efforts as evidenced by the number of public meetings held, invitations for interest group meetings, meeting with affected outfitter-guides, media releases, and newsletters mailed.***

The decision notice for this EA provides the rationale for the selection of the preferred alternative.

The Forest Service does not consider public participation as a voting process. Public comment is weighed heavily based on the substantive and factual nature of the comment. In addition, prior to formulating decisions, the Forest Supervisor will consider input from Forest Service staff to ensure the protection and enhancement of the river ORVs.

Comment 111-2. My real objection to this document, is its continued catering to the outfitters of the region. This is evidenced starting on page I-7. This page shows some 645 contacts by mail - several meetings with outfitters both privately and in groups and at least 30 calls from the Forest Service to outfitters. None of this kind of personal attention or consideration has ever been given to private floaters. Our names are all in your computers every time we draw a permit. (Correspondent 82)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service strives to invite all interested publics to become involved with these planning processes. Public participation is not a closed process and is open at all times to interested individuals. Since this EA is focused on operational limitations specific to motorized and non-motorized outfitter-guides, all of which are under special use permit with the Forest Service, special efforts were made to contact these individuals. The various meetings and phone calls focused on presenting the Forest Service's proposed management alternatives and allowing feedback on potential effects of those actions. In addition, the various contacts with outfitter-guides provides the planning team with a better understanding of how the businesses operate so that the public and Forest Supervisor can be better informed on the potential effects.***

Comment 111-3. Throughout this process it seems that the Forest Service has gotten further and further away from the original public comment and input taken during the initial scoping process and more and more responsive to the continued demands of the power boat community which is simply repeating their same demands over and over.

I would urge you to look back to the original comments from the public and the float boat community as you make the final decisions. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comment. Public comments gathered throughout the EIS and this EA process have been reviewed to assist in formulating the decision.***

Subject 410
Commercial Use Allocation

Views expressed by commenters regarding restriction of commercial use were varied. For example:

Comment 410-1. I fully support the proposed restrictions on jet boat use/trips in the Wild and Scenic portion of Hells Canyon. (Correspondent 31)

Comment 410-2. We agree with reasonable limitations but not closure. (Correspondent 52)

Comment 410-3. Power boaters have worked diligently to be good citizens on the river. Our efforts have been successful, but for that effort we have been singled out as a use which is less valid than floating. (Correspondent 56)

Comment 410-4. The Hells Canyon National Recreation Area is an important resource to Idaho. Not only does it contribute to our economic diversity but also to our quality of life by providing a unique recreational opportunity; a blend of motorized and non-motorized craft experiencing together the challenges of whitewater.

There is no question that boating use of the river, both power and float, must be managed to provide a quality experience and to protect the canyon's resources, however, the numbers should be reasonable and the restrictions warranted. (Correspondent 191)

Forest Service Response: ***Many respondents recognize a need to limit use on the river to maintain its unique character. However, there have been many different ideas concerning what the correct mix of use should be based on individual perception. Powerboat use is not less valid then floating; but some floaters prefer a trip that does not include the presence of powerboats. The preferred alternative meets that need and still allows powerboat use.***

Comment 410-5. We still do not feel you should take more launches from other powerboat outfitters in an attempt to make some economically viable. (Correspondent 13)

Forest Service Response: ***All boat day allocations were derived from the 1988-1992 base period, using the five-year average/priority use calculation as affirmed by the Regional Forester. Each outfitter received their total boat day allocation using this method. As a result, no outfitter's allocation has been reduced from the base period to provide more use to other outfitters. Some outfitters have additional boat days allocated from the 88 boat days that were originally identified in the EIS as Pittsburg-to-Kirkwood-only boat days for use by the Riggins outfitters. These boat days represented an additional allocation above the base period allocations that were based on historic use. In the EA, these 88 boat days were expanded to include all of the scenic river and were re-allocated among more outfitters to meet specific objectives. Since these 88 boat days were never part of the original base period calculations for any outfitter, they do not represent loss of use to any outfitter.***

Comment 410-6. I want daily commercial trips reduced 50% from average of last 5 years and held at that level or less. (Correspondent 40)

Forest Service Response: ***The allocation of commercial powerboat use into different sections of the river is based on meeting specific objectives for recreation experiences by floaters and powerboaters, including levels of encounters among different user groups.***

Comment 410-7. My only criticism of your proposal is that you should have restricted power boat usage yearlong. (Correspondent 41)

Forest Service Response: ***Current use in the secondary season does not exceed established use levels. The existing Snake River Plan makes provision for expanding the primary season if monitoring indicates a need. See "Length of Use Season, Code 410" in Appendix K of the FEIS for more information. Likewise, commercial float use is not restricted year-long since there is currently no demonstrated need to do so.***

Comment 410-8. It is my considered opinion that ALTERNATIVE A SHOULD BE THE ONLY CHOICE IMPLEMENTED! This is the "No Action" alternative, and does not change the way business is operated at the present time with specific regard to commercial powerboat operators. (Correspondent 48)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative A does not meet the purpose and need for action, and does not resolve the issue of providing appropriate levels of access for all users to meet the intended recreation experience.***

Comment 410-9. Although the EA recognizes that establishing capacity is a requirement for the Plan and the EA, this major issue is dismissed in the EA merely by referring to numbers of campsites in part of the Wild section of the river and to incomplete studies in the Plan regarding user comments on satisfaction. ...capacity has not yet been determined, so establishing numbers of outfitters and allocating use is premature.

The Forest Service is bound to the principle of considering public input before determining how the Snake River should be managed. Following that, reasonable decisions can be made on appropriate capacity and types of river use. For awarding special use permits, bid and prospectus method should be used to choose commercial outfitters who will provide services commensurate with the Plan.

The EA simply records what presently exists after twenty years of unmanaged growth, and, without any regard to what the river capacity should be, presents a proposal that would continue the crisis for the foreseeable future. (Correspondent 135)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service has no any authority to issue special use permits for outfitting and guiding through a bid prospectus process for ongoing outfitter-guide activities. In fact, the national outfitter-guide organizations are opposed to this method of allocating use to outfitters because of the uncertainty of maintaining a business over an extended period of time.***

The FEIS and EA involved extensive public involvement, including public input in regard to the capacities for use of the river to provide different recreation experiences. The use allocations in this document are based in part on public input as well as professional judgement based on using the best available information.

Comment 410-10. Raise the powerboat CAP. The public demands the services of commercial powerboaters. There is no reason at this time to so severely reduce the availability of these services. The river has enormous capacity much greater than the CAP allows. Because the CAP is not based on anything scientific or even tangible, it can easily be changed. I do not expect the Forest Service to guarantee me a living, If I succeed it will be because I have worked hard and provided a service the public wants. However, the Forest Service should deny me the opportunity for success through an oppressive management plan based not on what is good for the public, the communities, or the state but rather on what enhances the experiences for floaters. Please increase the number of needed launches; the number allowed in Alternative C still falls short. (Correspondent 162)

Forest Service Response: ***Per the Regional Forester's appeal decision, outfitter use was reviewed and some adjustments were made as a result of that review, including an audit of several outfitters' records. With the exception of Hells Canyon Adventures, that review indicated that there was a margin of error in the data used in the FEIS of approximately 2%, and that the Forest Service had erred in favor of the powerboat outfitters. As a result, boat days were adjusted downward, but this resulted in little noticeable effect to total allocation since the priority use factor used in the total calculation inflates actual average use.***

A review of Hells Canyon Adventures' use resulted in a substantial addition to their allocation as a result of incorrect records submitted by the previous owner. The cap was raised as a result of this increase to reflect actual use for that outfitter during the base period, but the additional use associated with this raise in the cap was historic use generated by Hells Canyon Adventures and, therefore, the additional use was assigned only to that business.

Comment 410-11. In reading your commercial outfitting history, I learned that your stated long term goal for float boat allocation between private users and public providers is a 60/40% split. However, by taking an additional 60% of the commercial unissued slot that outfitters have used as a pool, you will be tipping the split even beyond the 60/40 goal. We were already at 60/40 with 3 private launches a day and 2 public launches. Under your preferred alternative C, 60% of the launch dates in that slot there will be 4 private groups and only one public provider. (Correspondent 168)

Forest Service Response: ***In order to continue to provide flexibility for commercial floaters and to maintain the historic allocation between commercial and private floaters, the commercial pool allocation will not be split. Private floaters will continue to have access to unused commercial launches 30 days prior to launch as part of the cross-over system.***

Comment 410-12. How were the splits between Kirkwood only and full Wild allocations determined? It appears very arbitrary to us. Power boat businesses that have used the wild river on every trip are backed down to about 42% access to the wild, while floaters continue to enjoy full access with room to grow. The power boat passengers are being discriminated against, forced to either float the wild river or do without the best scenery, the deepest part of the canyon and the best fishing. It is well that the 88 special boats days are reallocated, but this is too little to help many outfitters. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Based upon comments to the EA, allocation of commercial powerboat use has been changed to reflect each business' historic percentage of use associated with the total number of boat days that occurred upstream from Kirkwood from 1988-1995. As a result, outfitters who primarily used the wild river upstream from Kirkwood in those years will be assigned more boat days in this section of the river than other powerboat outfitters to properly credit them for their historic use.***

Comment 410-13. Alternative C, with its 1,381 boat days, is a definite improvement over B. You should note, however, that the seeming increase over the base period resulted from correcting base period figures. Also, service trips were recognized. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***This is correct. The change in the cap resulting from the corrections comply with the Regional Forester's appeal decision. Service trips were added in response to scoping comments.***

Comment 410-14. The Forest Service has no obligation to keep everyone in business. If some go out of business, then tough. The government cannot ensure private businesses from risk. If jetboaters are disturbing the non-motorized recreationist on the Snake River, then limits are needed. It is not unreasonable to allocate a few days each week for rafters, hikers, and nature-lovers to have some undisturbed solitude. The rest of the time the jetboaters can ruin the place. (Correspondent 193)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service considers the ability to conduct business on National Forest lands and waters as authorized by special use permits a privilege, not a right. However, the need to provide outfitted services reflects a need to provide a variety of service to that portion of the public which does not have the skill or ability to travel in Hells Canyon without utilizing the services provided by a professional outfitter. As a result, it is in the best interest of the public if a variety of businesses are maintained in the canyon, not only to provide these services, but to provide competitive pricing and quality for those services. There is also a need to provide all recreationists with a variety of experiences, both motorized and non-motorized, in conjuction with providing outfitted services.***

Comment 410-15. It would appear that in the Wild and Scenic Snake River Outfitter Environmental Assessment that many concessions have been made for power boat users, and none for float boaters. You have modified Alternative B in so many ways that it is clear you have buckled once again to the demands of the vocal power boat community while ignoring the concerns of float boaters. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***Adjustments for both floaters and powerboaters have been made throughout the planning process as a result of scoping, comments, and the Regional Forester's appeal decision. Adjustments for float use were smaller compared to those addressed for powerboating since float use has already been limited for many years and powerboat use has not. As a result, it should be expected that the primary adjustments to make in the allocations would be to powerboat use as it is further refined throughout the planning process.***

Comment 410-16. On every major river in the west, everyone lives with date and launch allocations and many river businesses (both power and float) have not only survived, but thrived. Powerboat arguments that indicate they will lose business without this flexibility are not based in any tested reality. On the Snake and Middle Fork of the Salmon where I operate, my business does fine with a rotating 8-day turn-around that forces the outfitted public to go on trips departing every day of the week, whether weekday or weekend. When I cannot accommodate a specific date need, I refer the public to another outfitter. The system benefits us all with fuller trips and more economically viable operations. You have only to look at other rivers in Utah, the Rogue in Oregon and others to see that this is true. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***The vast majority of rivers in the west that have launch allocation systems that allocate use on scheduled basis are float only rivers. Even within those systems, such as the Snake River, there is still some flexibility for the float outfitters to obtain additional launch dates through use of a pool or by utilizing unallocated launches from the private sector. In the absence of a pool or the ability to utilize unallocated private powerboat launches, flexibility in scheduling is the next available option for commercial powerboaters. Floaters historically have "grown into" their launch allocations. Powerboaters will not have that degree of flexibility to adjust to their use allocations, since use will be capped near the top of their allocation.***

A cap on total use automatically results in a corresponding reduction in flexibility to schedule trips, and represents a major change from the present system of unlimited commercial powerboat use. Some level of scheduling flexibility as part of the allocation system is reasonable since the commercial powerboating industry operates quite differently from the commercial float industry. The Snake River is not like every other river, and historically, has been primarily a powerboat river. The allocation systems for commercial float and commercial powerboat use do not have to be identical as long as the intended recreation experience is provided.

Comment 410-17. The entire issue brought up during the initial scoping and comment period had to do with acceptable levels of powerboat use on each day... not just a per season basis. Again, rafters have been highly regulated since 1975 with only 7 groups per day allowed to launch, while power boats have had no limits. Because Alternative C does not specify daily caps on power boat use, the issue of congestion is not solved. Dropping this provision of the plan is a slap in the face to the entire float community and makes the new alternative a meaningless management tool. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***A peak use analysis was conducted which modeled the flexible launch system for commercial powerboaters in conjunction with a rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters. The results indicated private powerboat use was the primary cause of use peaks, both in size and frequency. With implementation of the launch reservation system for private powerboaters, and allocation of limited commercial powerboat use within blocks of time, the effect of a flexible system for commercial powerboaters should be negligible. Use levels will continue to be monitored to determine any effects commercial powerboat use may have on peak use on the river.***

Comment 410-18. All of the raft permits that are available under current guidelines are not being used. With this being the case, just what is the issue? Is it to simply reduce the number of Power Boats? (Correspondent 256)

Forest Service Response: ***Part of the purpose and need in the FEIS was to allocate powerboat and floatboat use levels in order to manage continuing growth in visitor use to protect ORVs, including the recreation ORV which deals with desired recreation experiences of all users. The EA completes this element of the FEIS which was appealed in regard to commercial use levels. The EA provides for an increase in commercial outfitting use levels within certain operational restrictions.***

Comment 410-19. Goal: provide levels of shared use by motorized and non-motorized users that would support the user survey findings that the majority of visitors felt the recreation opportunities in the canyon were acceptable during the 1988 period.

It certainly appears to NWRA that the above goal will not be achieved under the proposed alternative. First, the basic period of 1988 - 1992 greatly exceeds the use level of 1988. Second, the actual use in 1993 - 1994 exceeds the use in the base period. Third, the preferred alternative would establish a use of 1,381 boatdays which is higher than the actual use in 1993 - 1994. NWRA believes that all the reasons for determining that the 1988 use levels were acceptable in the 1994 ROD are still valid reasons for establishing acceptable use levels today. (Correspondent 163)

Forest Service Response: ***The first statement is from page 9 of the ROD, but is taken out of context. The statement was not a "goal" but was identified as one of four "themes" for the planning team to address in development of an alternative. The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the use of the 1988-1992 base period and the method use to set maximum commercial capacity, and the ability of the Forest Supervisor to refine the cap based on verification or refinement of actual use. This resulted in the final cap of 1,381 boat days, which reflects the record of use that occurred during the base period. It***

is well above the average use levels for the base period as a result of inclusion of the priority use factor which inflates the total use for each outfitter. In addition, the use is spread throughout the primary season to avoid peak use levels. The primary season of 1988 did not have any system in place to check peak use levels, therefore use on individual peak use days was higher than the levels of use that can occur in Alternative C as modified.

Subject 411
Historic Use (1988-92)

Comment 411-1. The OEA analyzes the effects of the ROD on commercial jet boat outfitters, but disregards its effects and the effects of past launch restrictions and unlimited jet boat use on commercial nonmotorized use.

A. Over the past 19 years, the growth of the business, use patterns, and use levels of float outfitters has been controlled by the Forest Service. Conversely, jet boat outfitters have been allowed virtually to establish their own use patterns and use levels, and have fashioned their businesses accordingly. The ROD based use allocation on protecting the use patterns and levels of commercial jet boat operators that have built up illegally. The OEA takes away most of the few constraints placed on jet boat outfitters in the ROD.

This is not only an obviously biased and irresponsible policy (based on the fact that the motorized use is obviously the more impacting use) it is an illegal policy. The law (at 16 USC 460gg-7) clearly distinguishes between motorized and nonmotorized use and mandates that the use and number of both be controlled. Yet the OEA magnifies and increases the compulsion of the ROD to accommodate the use levels and patterns of both commercial and private jet boat use that these users have been illegally allowed to establish for themselves.

There is little question that if float use had been unrestricted, we would see more weekend use, some walk-in business, and use patterns that are exponentially different from what they are now. Two factors have shaped commercial float outfitting in Hells Canyon: 1) The profusion of jet boats in the scenic section of the river wherein float use has been displaced, and concentrated on the wild section, and; 2) The launch limits placed on floaters on the wild section of the river.

Virtually nothing has been done by the Forest Service to influence the use patterns of either commercial or private jet boats either to promote equity among two distinct recreation experience businesses, or to protect the wilderness or other values of the river. Through the ROD and the OEA, the Forest Service is exhibiting a tactlessly clear and compulsive protection of motorized use on the Snake Wild and Scenic River. It was not enough for the agency to give jet boats free run of the river for 20 years despite a legal mandate to control this use, it now emphasizes protection of the use levels and patterns of use that were established during this time.

The OEA exhibits the lack of backbone of the Forest Service in sticking to its plan, following the laws rather than kow-towing to the most politically powerful special interest, and protecting the river. In the litigation, appeals, and public disillusionment that your handling of the Snake Wild and Scenic River plan, you are frankly swimming in a foul broth of your own making. The only way out is to finally show some character and conviction, and stand up for fairness, equity, and law. That can only be done by basing jet boat use levels on protection of river resources, not the desires of jet boat outfitting businesses. The OEA is the antithesis of such principle.

B. The OEA lacks any discussion of the effects of the river plan's (or the OEA's) allocation of jet boat use levels on commercial float operations. The document is rich with attempts to justify levels of jet boat use and areas of use based on "public need," but treats the established public need for a wilderness experience as a peripheral concern. The miniscule nonmotorized window is portrayed as if it is a divine gift that can be sacrificed or manipulated to achieve the chief objective of accommodating "historic" commercial jet boat operations.

The OEA fails at any point to address the problem of jet boat levels that have accumulated by 20 years of unlimited use in defiance of statute, and clearly have impacted both the wilderness values of the river, and commercial float operations. It fails to compare the commercial nonmotorized float use on the Snake W&S River to other rivers with fewer, or no jet boats, which have exponentially higher rates of outfitter success at attracting customers. For example, commercial float businesses on the Middle Fork salmon have filled approximately 70 percent of their seats over the past three years, whereas Hells Canyon outfitters have filled less than 40 percent during the same time frame. The OEA fails at any attempt to quantify the harm to float outfitting businesses that has been caused by unlimited jet boat use.

The OEA states that commercial float launches have decreased since the base period (1988 to 1992) by 12 percent, but passenger numbers have increased 13 percent. Overall, float use has remained relatively steady over the past eight years or so. But the EA fails to provide any perspective by applying the overall demand on the part of the public for nonmotorized recreation and the increase or dacreased use of other rivers. It also makes no attempt to correlate the fluctuation of float use with escalation in jet boat use. This "steadiness" in float outfitter business is a steadiness at a low level of business.

The OEA only relates commercial float outfitting revenue and business viability based on available launches and party size and makes no application whatsoever of the effects of jet boat use and levels on their business. The 1988 University of Idaho survey clearly indicates that commercial float customers are the constituency most bothered by jet boats.

C. Moving to the broader issue of appropriate jet boat use levels, the only justification given for the plan's proposed jet boat levels in the EIS is that 1988-1992 levels appear to be levels that were satisfactory to the public based on the survey conducted at that time. But as we have pointed out in our appeal, the survey really doesn't say that, and provides little justification for those levels. The OEA provides an opportunity to get to the meat of the issue by providing further analysis of the extent of public need for a nonmotorized experience, vs. its need for a motorized experience, but fails to do so.

The competing "needs" of two different constituencies of public seeking commercial boating services (those wanting a zip-in, zip-out jet boat tour, and those wanting a nonmotorized experience) are not in any way quantified or prioritized so as to provide a clear picture of what levels of each use are appropriate. The OEA should do so from a clean slate, disregarding past levels. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed the commercial powerboat use level, with provisions, in the July 1995 appeal decision as proposed in Alternative G of the FEIS. Chapters II and IV of the FEIS disclose the process, rationale, and analysis of user allocation levels. In regard to the issue of providing a wilderness experience on the Snake River, reference Appendices C and K of the FEIS (pages K-50 through K-54).***

Comment 411-2. Access into the wild river should be based on historic patterns of use. We have always featured trips into the upper river. Nearly all of our primary season trips go at least to Rush Creek, many to Granite and some through the major rapids, into the real Hells Canyon above Johnson Bar and into some of North America's finest scenery. However, we find ourselves allocated the same proportion of wild river boat days as those who made little use of the wild river, or turned around at Rush Creek. During the base period Kirkwood was never a destination and rarely is today. Yet the EA essigns that as the destination for 58.5% of our tours. (Correspondent 120)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service agrees with this issue which was raised by several respondents. As a result, the method of allocating use upstream from Kirkwood has been changed.***

Allocation of use will be based on the historic use of each powerboat outfitter in that section of the wild river between 1988-1995 and allocated accordingly within the overall use cap.

Comment 411-3. I am still disturbed that the document uses "historical use" data as a basis for the myriad of charts and graphs. The data led the team to the conclusion that the allocation for powerboat outfitters should be disportionately high compared to the float outfitters. It is my understanding that floatboat usage has always been limited whereas powerboats have not. Therefore, to consider the history as equal is unfair.

As a result of using a suspect database for allocation, I do not believe you have met your "Key Indicators" for Key Issue No. 1. (Correspondent 153)

Forest Service Response: ***The first three key indicators in Key Issue No. 1 are derived from the FEIS. The fourth indicator directly relates to the purpose and need for action, i.e., the level of outfitter services to be provided to the public. The Regional Forester affirmed the use of the 1988-1992 base period as the basis for determining the total commercial powerboat allocation, with the condition that the use records be reviewed for accuracy and adjusted if necessary. This was done. There were also other issues in the FEIS that dealt with the fairness of allocation, such as the review of regional availability of a float experience compared to a powerboat experience. Refer to Appendix H of the FEIS for a review of Regional river recreation opportunities.***

Comment 411-4. The Forest Service prioritizes historic use of commercial jet boat use in Alternative C over the protection of the resources and movement back to a primitive or semi-primitive setting. This is contrary to its assertions in the ROD that "human activities since 1975 have moved the river settings away from the primitive or semi-primitive experience normally associated with a wild and scenic river designation" and the stated desire to focus management toward primitive and semi-primitive settings that accommodate motorized use. ROD, p. 9. (Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed that the Forest Service is not limited to allocating use based upon levels of rivercraft use that existed in 1975. Some of the issues that dealt with the "human activities" that have moved the river settings away from primitive or semi-primitive experiences were resource impacts to the landscape and river resources as a result of increased numbers of people using campsites, damage to vegetation, and other resource-related impacts. The FEIS and ROD addressed these issues and implemented changes in management to improve the setting, such as reductions in party size, chainsaw closures, and other elements that would protect resources. At the same time, issues relating to boat wakes and effects on salmon were found to be negligible on the Snake River. The remaining issues eddressed in the the EA focus primarily on social issues concerning the appropriate level of access for commercial users into different sections of the river.***

Comment 411-5. The ROD discussed a need to move the river back to primitive or semi-primitive recreational settings. The primary season base period (1988-1992) average use was 1,283 commercial powerboat boat days. The 1993-94 average primary season use was 1,324 boat days. EA, p. II-3.

By implementing regulations allowing 1381 boat days as proposed in preferred alternative C, boat days are allowed to increase even beyond the 1993-1994 figures. Throughout the ROD, the reduction in severity of peak levels is stressed. Allowing the jet boat operators to increase their use is directly contrary to this stated objective which was affirmed in the Appeal Decision.

The ROD concludes higher levels of total use or higher levels of peak use other than those proposed in Alternative B would negatively impact the recreational experience. ROD, at 11. There is nothing in the EA that suggests this has changed. Alternative B explored the options of minimizing significant impacts to the outfitters without increasing overall daily allocation of river use. ROD, p. 11.

By allowing 1381 boat days, more boat days than the 1993 and 1994 season average, the resources (ORVs) are not protected and enhanced. This is a direct affront to the process and a clear violation of the HCNRA Act, the WSRA and goes way beyond the scope of the Appeal Decision remand.

HCPC has consistently stated that the 1988-1992 base period is an inappropriate period to use and that 1978 figures should be used for the scenic section and 1975 should be used for the base period in the wild section. Use of these numbers would ensure a move toward a more primitive and semi-primitive setting and conservation of the wilderness and scenic values as required by the statutes. Use of these numbers would also ensure fair and equitable allocation of use. Congress saw a need for protection of the resources in 1975. Motorized use should not be allowed to increase more than the 1988-1992 figures.

Floatcraft have been regulated since 1976 in much the same way as is proposed in Alternative B with daily caps and launch restrictions. This clearly had an economic effect on floatcraft operators but it was done in order to protect the resources. The same must be done for the powerboat operators. (Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed that the Forest Service is not limited to those levels of rivercraft use that existed in 1975, and affirmed the method for establishing the cap based on 1988-1992 use. He also required a review of the actual use during this time period to verify and refine the numeric estimate of the CAP without a new decision. As a result of that review, the use allocation of Hells Canyon Adventures was increased as a result of better information on daily use levels provided by the existing permit holder, and the use cap was adjusted to 1,381 boat days. If this information would have been available earlier, it would have been used throughout the planning process and there would have been no adjustments made in use levels between the FEIS and the EA. It is Forest Service policy to use the best available information when conducting NEPA analysis.***

Peak use levels will still be managed by allocating limited numbers of boat days to outfitters within specific time periods. This is a major change from the existing situation of unlimited numbers of boat launches on a daily basis. The peak use analysis conducted using a flexible schedule for commercial powerboats in conjunction with a rigid launch schedule for private powerboats indicated that commercial powerboat use is not the primary cause of peak use days on the river, and is negligible when daily access by private powerboat is limited.

The primary seasons during the base period years did not have 21 non-motorized days in the wild river. The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the decision to provide a non-motorized window "...to achieve more primitive conditions in the wild river..."

Comment 411-6. After looking over your recently released plan from beginning to end, I find it very inaccurate. This I say looking at Hells Canyon historical use from an on the river view point, not from an office point of view where obviously numbers can be changed quite easily. The launch dates allocated to Hells Canyon Adventures (HCA) is an estimated 35% less than what HCA was doing in the Forest Service chosen base years of 1988 to 1992, or is currently doing. Last spring at the Forest Services request after HCA had been put through yet another Forest Service audit, I sat down with Lyle Hill and Judy Redner and went over some of HCA's past use. We would have went over more of the years had I still had information that seems to have disappeared during the time the Forest Service auditors had it. What came out of this we find quite different in the current released plan. Looking at other power boat outfitters allocated use there are several who to me appear to be severely cut as well. (Correspondent 177)

Forest Service Response: ***Per the Regional Forester's appeal decision, outfitter use was reviewed and some adjustments were made as a result of that review, including an audit of several outfitters' records.***

A review of Hells Canyon Adventures' use resulted in a substantial addition to their allocation as a result of incorrect records submitted by the previous owner. The cap was raised as a result of this increase to reflect actual use for that outfitter during the base period, but the additional use associated with this raise in the cap was historic use generated by Hells Canyon Adventures and therefore, the additional use was assigned only to that business.

A review of the concern for the lost records was conducted and it was determined that the Hells Canyon Adventures' own records were at all times in the custody of the outfitter or the outfitter's accountant. The Forest Service's records are complete for the entire base period years.

Comment 411-7. This plan is very inaccurate as far as numbers of boat trips that HCA done in the forest service chosen base years (88-92). The economic analysis of comparing Oxbow, Oregon to Riggins, Idaho, we feel is very poor. In Riggins, Idaho you have unlimited one day float trips, just to name one major difference. We further feel that several other powerboat outfitters use was not accurately shown in the EA either. I am asking you to please look at this use from a fair unbiased view. Maybe if this use could be dealt with in a fair, open minded manner, maybe we could get on with serving the public instead of going slowly through the process of taking the public out of Hells Canyon. (Correspondent 177)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service made a concerted effort to accurately identify all boat days that Hells Canyon Adventures should be credited with for the base period. This involved an audit, a separate review of two years of use records provided by the permit holder, involving several days of meetings between the permittee and the Forest Service going over the records in detail, and an offer from the Forest Service to review all five base period years of the permittee's use records with the permit holder. The Forest Service has used the best data available, much of it provided by the outfitter.***

Comment 411-8. The "team" ignored, and admitted to ignoring our actual use figures and the Forest Service's own audit conducted in February 1996. The team also admitted to having access to that audit before the EA was finalized. Ignoring the Audit showed the allocation numbers. Kirby Creek Lodge and Snake River Outfitters should have been granted access into the wild section at least to Rush Creek issued on our historic use. (Correspondent 248)

Comment 411-9. During the use audit conductad on Snake River outfitters by the USFS this winter, it was discovered that two or more boats were used on some of my use days. This corrected number increased my boat days. This increase in boat days has been explained to team members and the Clarkston office on numerous occasions but it keeps being overlooked when my use is allocated. The team admitted on July 10th and 17th, 1996, that they did not look at the FS audit or our actual use numbers to determine the allocation for the Outfitter EA. The team agreed on July 17, 1996, to increase our allocation based on the corrected numbers. I respectfully request my boat days be adjusted to the correct level. (Correspondent 250)

Forest Service Response: ***The team did not ignore the results of the audit. The one team member that was not present at the meeting with the outfitter was the one responsible for reviewing the audit and making any adjustments to the base period use figures. The additional boat days were added to each base period year as identified in the audit report and any change in the outfitter's allocation was included in the EA. However, the majority of the change in number of boat days did not occur in the primary season. As a result, there was only a small change in the outfitter's total allocation in the EA.***

The issue of access to Rush Creek based on historic use was raised by several outfitters. As a result, the method of allocating use upstream from Kirkwood has been changed to reflect each outfitter's historic pattern of wild river use from 1988-1995, based on a percentage of the total allocation of all commercial powerboat use that took place in that section of the river in those years.

Comment 411-10. We cannot accept that you chose to use a base period of 1988 through 1992. For one reason we did not own the business at the time. We can be held responsible for reporting use for 1993 through 1995, but cannot and should not be held responsible for the reported use of the previous owners. We cannot verify the accuracy of that reporting.

We feel very strongly that the analysis needs to be based on a more current period to be accurate. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***The method of allocating use, including the use of the 1988-1992 base period, was affirmed by the Regional Forester's appeal decision. The record of this use for each outfitter was reviewed and refined as necessary. Businesses are bought and sold based in part on their past history and level of use. Therefore, base period use data is applicable to new owners.***

As a result of comments received on the EA, the method of allocating use upstream from Kirkwood relies on more recent use data as well as historic use data. Use upstream from Kirkwood is allocated based on each outfitter's percentage of total historic commercial powerboat use of this section of the river between 1988-1995.

Comment 411-11. Historically, Snake River Adventures has not run trips to just Kirkwood or solaly in the scenic portion of the river. The manner in which the allocation occurs would require a totally different emphasis from the entire operation of Snake River Adventures. It is our feeling that people hire our services looking for a trip into true Hells Canyon which, in our opinion, doesn't start until Johnson Bar. A lesser trip is a sop, albeit pleasurable, but not a trip into true Hells Canyon. There needs to be some determination of what the past historical use has been. Virtually all of Snake River Adventures 139 trips shown wild river were wild and not to Kirkwood. The allocation of 58 trips of wild river and 81 trips to Kirkwood is a serious decrease in the amount of trips available to Snake River Adventures into true Hells Canyon. Allocation should be based upon actual historical use in or to a given area, not averages on "launches." (Correspondent 259)

Forest Service Response: ***Use upstream from Kirkwood is allocated based on each outfitter's percentage of total historic commercial powerboat use of this section of the river between 1988-1995.***

Comment 411-12. We are not aware of any data that supports the statement, "This has resulted in an undesirable concentration of use and associated levels of encounters with other users in some river segments--". What is the source of this information? What studies support this conclusion? If it is happening, how is "institutionalzing historic area of operation patterns" going to accomplish anything? If institutionalizing historic use is the goal, why pick and choose among the historic uses and patterns? Why is the non-motorized window, unprecedented on this river with over 100 years of free use by power boats, featured in the plan? Historic use might preclude undesirable changes, but it also precludes desirable growth as wall. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Refer to the FEIS and EA for a description of purpose and need and for the rationale supporting the river management strategies in the ROD and DN. Also reference Appendix K, pages K-128 through K-136, Encounters and Congestion.***

Although there has not previously been a management strategy creating non-motorized periods, there have been and continue to be times when motorized craft are not present, both during the primary and secondary seasons. The frequency and duration of these periods has diminished as motorized use has increased.

The Regional Forester affirmed the decision to manage use levels and to include a non-motorized period. Powerboaters will continue to be able to use the river corridor in larger numbers than any other user group during the primary season. Non-motorized periods contribute to the diversity of recreation

opportunities and outfitter services on the Snake River The non-motorized period has been reduced from 24 days in the FEIS and associated ROD to 21 days and been distributed evenly throughout June, July, and August to reduce the impact in July and August and to further increase the diversity of recreational opportunity in June.

Selection of Base Period Use

Comment 411-13. There is no explanation why historic use has been selected as the goal. As we explained previously, many outfitters, including Darell Bentz, have suffered injuries or other one-time events that severely restricted use during a particular season. The impact on historic use levels from these types of events is particularly great for smaller outfitters. Also, historic use levels freeze development and preclude desirable and acceptable growth, particularly for smaller volume outfitters. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***Part of the purpose and need in the FEIS was to allocate powerboat and floatboat use levels in order to manage continuing growth in visitor use to protect ORVs, including the recreation ORV which deals with desired recreation experiences of all users. The EA completes this element of the FEIS which was appealed in regard to commercial use levels. Opportunities for growth are now limited within each outfitter's boat day allocation or through purchase of other businesses. Powerboat outfitters still have unlimited business expansion opportunity in the secondary season.***

The priority use factor that is calculated into the base period use credits powerboat outfitters with their two best years of use. This inflates average use and should offset any one-time events that restrict use in a particular season. In addition, through a review of historic, yearly use of each outfitter, it becomes readily apparent which outfitters have been operating at a limited use level over many years, which have been actively marketing and increasing their business over the years, and which outfitters have specialized primarily in secondary season use over the years. The EA provides for an increase in overall commercial outfitting use levels within certain operational restrictions, with operational limitations that mainly affect primary season growth.

Subject 412
Current Use (1993-1995)

Comment 412-1. In 1992 we had 10 days above Cache Creek. That alone is more than our 1997 allocation. Our 1993-1994 average was 25 user days and in 1995 it was 36. The allocation of 6 days would be reducing our revenue by 5/6. What business could survive on 1/6 of their previous salary? Could you? It will virtually put us out of business. (Correspondent 202)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed the method of allocating use with 1988-1992 as the base period. The Regional Forester's appeal decision stated that operational limits could limit the Forest Supervisor's ability to allocate the entire capacity as derived from the base period, even with an increase in the cap as a result of the verification of use during those years. The Forest Service has chosen to allocate the additional 88 boat days within the cap to meet specific objectives to provide service to the public. These objectives, the operational limitations, and the cap on total allocated use, did not allow recognition of growth among some of the smaller outfitters that occurred in more recent years.***

Subject 414
Permit Management

Comment 414-1. We are glad to see some relief in the spreading out of the non-motorized windows over a longer period and with alternative weeks of historical vs. non-motorized use. The monthly launch allocation structure is also a much more practical method than the previous assigned launch days concept. (Correspondent 13)

Forest Service Response: ***The monthly launch allocation has been adjusted to bi-weekly periods for the larger powerboat outfitters as a method of reducing the potential for peak use days.***

Comment 414-2. On page II-19 paragraph 1. This sentence is not clear. Will the temps reduce the commercial or private allocations for that day? (Correspondent 82)

Forest Service Response: ***The temporary one-day float permits will not reduce the total allocation initially. As a result of comments received, there has been a modification in the method of allocating this use. The two outfitters that hold these permits will not be able to access available launches until 30 days prior to the launch date, and then only after all commercial and private waiting lists have been exhausted for those days. Since the cross-over between private and commercial floaters takes place 30 days prior to launch, all open launches are available to those on the waiting lists until all five launches are filled. All waiting lists will be exhausted before any unused launches are allocated to these one-day float outfitters. As a result, there should be a negligible effect on obtaining an open launch for a particular date. Since only one of the one-day float businesses may pick up a vacant launch, there still may be other launches available on the same day within the five launch per day maximum, depending on demand. As a result, even floaters who do not plan very far in advance for a trip may still be able to obtain a vacant launch after the one-day float launch has been reserved.***

Comment 414-3. While we appreciate the efforts in Alternative C to make use of Sheep Creek more feasible, we don't feel that our wild river access should be tied to that permit. We have always used the wild segment and have earned that access over many years of historic use. The additional 25 wild river boat days should stay with our business and not go with the Granger-Thye permit. Tying 25 additional wild river boat days to Sheep Creek places an artificial value on the permit over and above the use of its facilities. This makes it very likely that there will be a bidding war when it comes up for renewal and it could and up in the hands of someone who would care less about the ranch, its buildings and historical integrity. Snake River Adventures, through advertising, quality service, and hard work, has developed this business. The allocation should be ours with or without Sheep Creek. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 414-4. Twenty-five Sheep Creek Trips tied to the cabin are also unfair. Those are trips which Snake River Adventures have developed and used which should belong to Snake River Adventures, not necessarily tied to the cabin for two reasons. One is these is a Snake River Adventure trips and has been developed as a result of Snake River Adventure advertising and efforts. The cabin has merely provided a stopping off place and some overnight accommodations for fishing. Snake River Adventures has enjoyed the use of the cabin and enjoyed having that historical site to offer, but the additional trips are not the result of the cabin but are the result of Snake River Adventure's efforts. Also, the addition of those 25 trips tied to the cabin is like waving a red flag in front of the bull. An additional use permit tied to the cabin can obviously trigger a bidding war and will occur as a result not from any desire to hold or take care of the cabin but to hold and take care of the 25 additional trips. We feel that those trips should belong to Snake River Adventures and should be allocated to us as a result of historical use. (Correspondent 259)

Forest Service Response: ***As a result of allocating use between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep to each outfitter based on historic use of that section of the river in 1988-1995, the conversion of Kirkwood boat days for access to Sheep Creek has been dropped.***

Comment 414-5. Controls are needed and can be accomplished by a daily permit system which would be much simpler and easier to administer, as has been done for floaters. (Correspondent 134)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C, as modified, provides for a commercial powerboat allocation system that limits total use per outfitter, but with use allocated in blocks of boat days per time periods to provide some scheduling flexibility.***

Comment 414-6. It should be noted that virtually all of the present special use permittees previously operated illegally without permits and contrary to Forest Service regulations. For these infractions, the miscreants were rewarded with placement under a special use permit, usually for a period of five years, and given a Priority standing. Of much greater importance to the public, however, is the permit stipulation that gives each outfitter a guaranteed allocation. The guarantee is what allows the holder to treat his permit allocation as a property right, and, contrary to Forest Service regulation, to sell that guaranteed access.

In the EA, the Forest Service openly establishes outfitter sales procedures. A review of outfitters' sales confirms that past sales, in spite of regulations, have included the value of the permit allocation. (Correspondent 135)

Forest Service Response: ***Outfitter-guide special use permits are issued per Forest Service direction that is standard, nation-wide. The respondent's accusations of the existing permit holders operating illegally prior to issuance of permits is unfounded. The "guaranteed" allocation is the equivalent of the priority use allocation, also a Forest Service policy standard. It is currently issued as service days on the Snake River, based on the two highest years of use that occurred between 1985 through 1989. Priority use levels for outfitters were frozen in 1989 pending a final decision on management of the Snake River.***

Sales of businesses are predicated on the value of equipment and other property involved in the sale of business. The special use permit cannot be bought or sold because the ability to outfit on public lands is a privilege granted by the American people through the Federal government's administration of public lands, not an individual property right.

Comment 414-7. I would like to request that you eliminate the non-motorized window because: I use the permit system on the Salmon River during the control season, and feel that an acceptable permit process should be established and implemented in Hells Canyon. Hells Canyon float users have felt singled as a user group due to the present permit requirements. I must hold the administrators of the original permit plan accountable for a system that placed limitations on select user groups in an inequitable way, driving divergence and ill feelings between the various users of Hells Canyon. A system effecting all users with reasonable limitations on launch and headcount would be acceptable. (Correspondent 188)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C, as modified, provides for an allocation system for all commercial river users to correspond with the allocation system for private river users that was addressed in Alternative G of the FEIS/ROD, and affirmed by the Regional Forester. Alternative C as modified also provides for a 21 day non-motorized period to provide a variety of recreation opportunities on the river. Reference Alternative G in Chapters II and IV of the FEIS for information on the non-motorized window. This concept of a non-motorized window was affirmed in the Regional Forester's appeal decision. The EA addresses the timing and duration of the non-motorized window per the Regional Forester's direction.***

Comment 414-8. We are also unclear as to how the proposed "pool" will work. In fact, we have not spoken to anyone, including Forest Service employees, that really understand. (Correspondent 246)

Forest Service Response: ***How the pool works will be largely dependent upon input from the commercial powerboaters at the time that a commercial pool is set up. Commercial floaters have had a pool for many years and periodically request the Forest Service to make adjustments in how the pool operates in order to provide flexibility in its use or to properly manage its use.***

Initially, there will be no allocation in the pool because commercial powerboaters requested that the entire allocation of 1,381 boat days be distributed among them rather than creating a pool with a limited number of boat days that could be utilized to provide more flexibility to schedule trips. Scheduling flexibility will currently result from allocating boat days in blocks of time to each outfitter. The methods of creating a commercial powerboat pool in the future are described in the outfitter and guide operating guidelines.

Subject 415
One-Day Floats

Comment 415-1. The one day floats are back in C, an improvement, although they will be only marginally usable. While we appreciate the change in C to allow one day floats, it will be of little value to us because of the lack of a dependable allocation. Also, it will be very difficult to coordinate one day floats with our extremely limited power boat access into the upper river, a necessity for us to do the floats without setting up a base of operations at Oxbow. Of course this is impossible when the business must be based on unclaimed launches allocated initially to others. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 415-2. For many years, I thought the One Day Float Trip folk had been treated as a second class of people. After reading through the plan, I see where One Day Float Trip participants are now outright treated as third class. Yet the One Day Float trips HCA offers seem to run consistently full with us continually turning people away due to lack of available launch dates. Yet many allocated launch dates for the overnight rafters, often go entirely unused. I wish other outfitters could figure out that the public shows a lot of demand for One Day Float Trips, or even Half Day Float Trips rather than multi day trips. (Correspondent 177)

Forest Service Response: ***Per Forest Service policy, temporary use is an amount of use assigned under the permit for one season or less. A temporary use assignment does not commit the Forest Service to authorize that amount of use in the future. If the dates available for commercial one-day floats are not utilized, they will still be available for use by other commercial and private floaters and, therefore, a floating recreation opportunity. This includes one-day float trips conducted by commercial floaters holding priority use permits.***

Comment 415-3. The one day floats offer a valuable option to multi-day floats and should receive their own allocation, just as was proposed in the LAC plan. We would like to be able to offer this popular service, but must have a feasible management environment to do so. Alternative C falls far short of providing that. (Correspondent 120)

Forest Service Response: ***The commercial one-day float permits were originally issued with temporary use only with no guarantee of future use. They should be viewed as a temporary use only to supplement the larger operations of the outfitters who hold the permits. Multi-day float outfitters who hold priority use permits can also offer this service. This means it will remain available to the public even in the absence of temporary use permits, depending on how priority use permit holders want to market their float businesses. The intent of including the one-day floats in the five launch per day limit of all float trips is to phase out the use over time if excess capacity is utilized by private and commercial floaters, rather than increasing the amount of float use that occurs in the wild river, adding to on-river congestion.***

Opposition to One-day Float Trips

Current 415-4. I see no need for one day outfitter float permits in Hells Canyon. I support the maximum of 5 launches per day system in your preferred alternative. However, I disagree with your continuing support of 1 day outfitters for unused dates. Certainly, one day float outfitters should not be able to secure a launch date until one week before the launch. Otherwise, they will speculate on the launch dates and speculate on their bookings. The commercial outfitter float allocation should be designed for extended trip outfitters. My business could book several extended 3 or 4 day trips per year if I had flexibility of using unused launches. One day floating requires jetbacks and adds to congestion in the Canyon. One day floating reduces the opportunity for extended float trip outfitters by allowing one day floaters to speculate and hold available unused launches. One day float permits should be retained only if the one day outfitters can pick up launch dates that are unassigned no more than 1 week before the launch. Extended trip float outfitters must be allowed to work with the agency to decide how the launch date pool can and will be ethically used. (Correspondent 158)

Comment 415-5. Your decision to continue to reissue the temporary one day float permits is also hard for me to understand. Those are jetboat operations which have a double impact on the float outfitters first the jet back or increased traffic to service the trips and more importantly the impact they have on the float launch allocation. I am fully involved in my booking season aven into July, by allowing the one day permittees to grab up all available launches as early as March you further reduce my opportunity to enjoy any flexibility in the system. If indeed the one day business is as spontaneous and transient as you state in reference to the need for flexibility of powerboat operations, then why would you allow the one day float outfitters to exhaust our launch pool so far in advance. I think the dates should only be obtainable by those outfitters seven days in advance. (Correspondent 168)

Comment 415-6. The addition of the two one-day float permits is unacceptable to me. This addition as presented in plan C (page II-19 under "Allocation of Use - Temporary Float Permits Sub-Element" #3), would impact my business by the raduction or elimination of potential booking opportunity. Our prime booking season runs from February through July, with close to one quarter coming after June 1st. If one-day operators were allowed to withdraw up to 50% of their historic base period use after March 16 and the other 50% 30 days in advance of the launch, they would do as they now do, instantaneously withdraw every available launch, leaving the rest of us who withdraw pool launches only as we book, with very limited opportunity to utilize them. These two one-day permits were "Temporary" Permits and should be treated as such, eliminated as planned at the inception of a new management plan. At most, they should receive the right to utilize truly "unused" launches, those not taken 1 week prior to launch. Even this, would impact the private floaters, by limiting their use opportunity, given that they often can and will utilize last minute cancellations. The one-day passenger bese is supposed to be "made up of a transient tourist population which often books trips on short notice" so the need for more advance withdrawal could only be for "banking" purpose anyway, and thus unnecessary. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 415-7. The one-day temporary permits should not be re-issued. Allowing this use to use already scarce pool dates for commercial float outfitters is not acceptable. From an economic viewpoint (and your supposed concern for local economies) there is much more to be gained in having these dates available for multi-day trips. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***The use allocation for commercial one-day float trips has been modified in Alternative C. The permit holders will no longer be able to acquire 50% of their historic use following the confirmation period in March. However, they will be able to pick up available dates 30 days prior to launch. Experience indicates that commercial float outfitters who have not booked a launch date 30 days prior to launch for a multi-day trip, seldom utilize the pool after that date except for one-day trips. In those instances, priority use permit holders can utilize the waiting list prior to the 30 day time period, while the temporary use permit holders cannot. All waiting lists must be exhausted before any launches can be assigned to the temporary use permit holders.***

With a maximum allocation of one launch per day that can be acquired 30 days prior to launch, there will still be some days where there are vacant launches available for last minute trips by private floaters. Overall, this will provide better utilization of the float reservation system and provide more visitors with a float experience in Hells Canyon. Any powerboat traffic associated with one-day floats will be within the allowable allocation for commercial powerboats. In addition, one-day floats may not occur on non-motorized days.

Subject 416
Fair and Equitable Use

Snake River users do not always agree on use levels, although some of the people who commented feel the river should be shared on an "equal basis." Some accuse commercial rafters of wanting to make more money, and others simply think commercial jetboating is the preferred method for touring the Canyon. There were proponents for unlimited motorized use on the Snake and Salmon Rivers because there are "31 rivers that provide the 'motorless experience' that some people seek." Representative examples have been responded to below:

Comment 416-1. It is clear that we are entering the age of "bans." There are radical proposals for gun bans, smoking bans, abortion bans, and many others. I would prefer that power boats stay off the ban wagon. I am opposed to the window extension and of the existing schedule. This has turned into a media push in support of the floating industry. It isn't right and it isn't fair. (Correspondent 29)

Comment 416-2. Why do float launches get multiple boats, while powerboats only get one? Why don't we have a non-raft period if we have a non-motorized period? (Correspondent 30)

Comment 416-3. If the need does require limitations, then put the same restrictions for the floaters. Close it down for them also, an equal number of days. (Correspondent 55)

Comment 416-4. What I am asking you to consider is the following: Keep the wild part for rafters. Keep a permit system so there is control. On the scenic part of the Snake, both types of craft can enjoy. Again, using a permit system so there can be some control. (Correspondent 78)

Comment 416-5. If there is any damage to the environment of Hells Canyon, then the number of both power boaters and floaters should be reduced but not just one group without restrictions on the other. (Correspondent 90)

Comment 416-6. If there is a non-motorized window then there should be a non-floater window. (Correspondent 90)

Comment 416-7. It seems that over the last few years, a group of radical floaters are trying to influence all other float boaters that power boaters are evil. I feel that by implementing a limited power boat closure you are just playing into their scheme. Once that has happened, then it will be an all out assault to make a total ban of power boats. (Correspondent 96)

Comment 416-8. As a Washington County Commissioner of Idaho, I urge that the HCNRA remain open to the public. That there not be a set aside time for non-motorized use and all user groups be allowed access anytime of the year. (Correspondent 116)

Comment 416-9. I am very much opposed to the stringent restrictions in alternative "C." It is not fair or reasonable to give one taxpsyer preference over another in using the HCNRA area. I am for responsible shared use of the HCNRA as it exists now and for the past several years. Your visitor facilities at Hells Canyon Dam are outstanding and they promote the tourist visitor to visit Hells Canyon by jet boat or by the 1-day float boat services for short term visits and to enhance longer visits by extended day trips by both float and jet boat trips into the HCNRA. (Correspondent 117)

Comment 416-10. I personally believe that the rafters and floaters should be banned from Hells Canyon and the canyon preserved for power boat use only. You may find this is a radical statement which puts me in the same class as the rafters. There are presently over 30 rivers designated as wild and scenic in the western United States. To my knowledge the Snake River below Hells Canyon and portions of the Clearwater and Salmon Rivers are the only whitewater rivers in Idaho where powerboats may be used. It seems only fair that we should be given the same consideration, and have exclusive use of at least one river where we do not have to contend with rafters. (Correspondent 119)

Comment 416-11. I ask that you remove the nonmotorized window from the Plan and reconsider the 1 Day Whitewater Rafting elimination. I know by experience and expertise of living for the last 24 years in the area that the American people will not be served by your current decision. The American government should not prefer anyone of its taxpayers over another. (Correspondent 122)

Comment 416-12. The powerboat community has had unrestrained growth opportunity since the last time the Forest Service was unable to control its use levels, while the float boat community has been tightly controlled. Now you recommend cutting our allocation by more than 20% and increasing the powerboat levels even higher than ever. (Correspondent 168)

Comment 416-13. The recently released EA appears to only address social issues for a small percentage of the river users. Why do you continue to favor one user group over another by giving this one river user group an exclusive time to themselves in the canyon? (Correspondent 177)

Comment 416-14. The use limits fail to recognize established patterns of use and are far too low. As long as the plan contains a closure to power boating, it is unacceptable. We oppose the unfair elimination of one valid use to exclusively benefit another valid use. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 416-15. Mitchell's comment that floaters have 31 other rivers without motors to run has nothing to do with Hells Canyon. My answer is so what? We are not talking about other rivers, only this one, and here the Forest Service is trying to offer a balanced plan that includes everyone. It's interesting to note that some commercial floaters may lose some business, and yet they support the plan. It's obvious to me that powerboaters aren't playing fair by twisting the facts and crying foul. If they really want to get along, then they should support this plan. (Correspondent 212)

Comment 416-16. I have even called and talked to a Wallowa-Whitman National Forest representative about the issues. To summarize, he said the issue was not fish habitat or river pollution or bank erosion or any other environmental impact. The issue was one of personal preference. Rafters prefer not to see a boat or hear a motor while they float the river. How can one group (especially a minority group) have their views and preferences imposed on another group? What if I would "prefer" not to see rafts on the river while I am boating? As a rafter, if I did not want to see or hear a powerboat, I would just go to one of the many rivers in the northwest that currently do not allow powerboats. (Correspondent 237)

Comment 416-17. It is unclear to us, the reason for the Economic Analysis. It clearly shows major losses in the new plan for powerboat operators, and massive gains to floaters. Why was the time taken to do this analysis if the results have no bearing on the final plan? It is our hope that any decision you come to will have a more equal distribution of revenue to both sides. Our type of business is no less important than another. How can laws be made that clearly are one-sided? Please look at the analysis. It shows our greatest fear. We cannot stay in business with this plan. (Correspondent 246)

Comment 416-18. If Alternative C is to be adopted, allowing much more liberal power boat use and scheduling flexibility, then the Forest Service must treat the float boat community with equality and provide us with similar economic advantages by changing the restrictions as noted above. (Correspondent 254)

Comment 416-19. If the current proposal goes into effect the only people affected will be the power boat users. This is unfair. Restrictions need to effect everyone equally. If there are going to be days power boats cannot be used, then there also should be days that floaters cannot be on the water. (Correspondent 256)

Forest Service Response: ***One of the major issues in the FEIS was managing for the intended recreation experience. A key indicator of this issue was evaluation of each alternative's degree of fairness and equitability among all user groups. This issue was covered in detail in the FEIS. Refer to Chapters II and IV of the FEIS for discussion of this issue. See "Recreational Experience" (Subject 401), "Use Levels" (Subject 402), "Fair and Equitable Use" (Subject 403), "Encounters and Congestion" (Subject 405), and "Conflicts Between User Groups" (Subject 417) in Appendix K of the FEIS for more information.***

The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed that the allocation system for all users was fair, including the decision to provide a non-motorized window.

Comment 416-20. Page III-4 third paragraph, line 7. Commercial floaters would have an unequal access to availability of non-motorized launches. Greater or lesser and why? (Correspondent 82)

Forest Service Response: ***Commercial floaters are initially assigned to a rotating schedule on an eight-day turnaround, i.e., each outfitter can launch a new trip every eight days based on the two commercial launches per day schedule. Refer to the outfitter and guide operating guidelines for the commercial float launch calendar. As a result of the eight day rotation, seven days occurring in each week, and the non-motorized periods occurring on alternating weeks for three days at a time, the number of opportunities per outfitter for launches during the non-motorized periods varies on a yearly basis depending on which day of the week each outfitter's assigned launch dates fall on each year's calendar. With an eight-day turnaround, it is mathematically impossible to have an equal number of launch opportunities per outfitter unless the three-day periods total 24 days and occur in consecutive weeks. The EA reduces the number of non-motorized days to 21, from 24 in the FEIS/ROD.***

Subject 417
Jet Boat Allocation

Comment 417-1. Objectionable facet of the preferred alternative: increase in commercial jet boat launches by 173 boat days per year.

The OEA locks in problems of concentration of use in specific areas by prioritizing "traditional use" by commercial jet boat operators and by allocating boat days on a time period basis rather than a launch calendar.

The crowding that occurs on the river is a problem that should be solved by limiting use in specific areas, not institutionalizing use patterns.

The argument over the "public need" for jet boat tours, and the harm that would be done to the public if there were fewer opportunities than have been available in the past, is largely subjective. However, the agency has failed to disclose the need for commercial jet boat access to particular parts of the canyon. Do jet boat tour customers usually ask to visit the wild section of the river? Do they wish to see a particular place like Kirkwood Ranch? (I would add that the historic significance of Kirkwood Ranch is grossly overstated and is being used to justify more jet boat use in the wild section of the river.) (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The increase of 173 boat days was the result of the Regional Forester's appeal decision that directed the Forest Supervisor to verify use and refine the cap without a new decision. He also affirmed the method used for setting the maximum total commercial powerboat capacity, including the base period of 1988-1992.***

Alternative C has been modified to reduce the blocks of time for the larger outfitters to use their boat days in bi-weekly instead of monthly time periods. The peak use analysis for this modification indicated that commercial use did not play a significant role in creating peak use. The rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters in conjunction with boat day limits for each outfitter should resolve any peak use issues in the wild river.

Comment 417-2. The reallocation of the 88 Pittsburg to Kirkwood launches to the entire scenic river and the wild river to Kirkwood is a big improvement. However, we question the way that you distributed them.

It is obvious that you were trying to use them to improve the lot of the mid-sized outfitters, a laudable objective. However, the method of allocation was neither fair or consistent with the rest of the EA's approach.

Throughout the rest of the allocation process you roughly based everything on historic use. So, why didn't you proportion out these launches based on historic use also? Those of us who have worked hard to build our businesses find other outfitter operations that have been marginal or less than marginal suddenly elevated to allocations almost as large as ours by this windfall. Suddenly we have several competitors who haven't earned their boat days as we have. Please allocate the boat days in a fair and consistent manner. That means proportioning out the newly distributed launches to everyone on an equitable basis.

All of the businesses need more access to maintain their financial health; that includes large, medium, and small, not just the medium sized ones. (Correspondent 120)

Forest Service Response: ***The decision notice describes the rationale for distributing the 88 boat days. Also reference the outfitter and guide operating guidelines. These trips are limited to travel between Cache Creek and Kirkwood only. Other outfitters who have built up their businesses by accessing the wild river above Kirkwood over a number of years have been credited with this use (by a modification of Alternative C) through increased boat day allocations for that section of the wild river. This gives them a distinct marketing advantage over outfitters who have been allocated additional trips that are limited to Kirkwood only. No outfitter has been allocated a greater number of total boat days that an outfitter that was historically larger, and no outfitter has been allocated more launches upstream from Kirkwood than an outfitter who historically ran more trips in that section of the river based on the 1988-1992 base period data.***

The 88 boat days are in addition to historic use per their original intent in the FEIS as new trips for Pittsburg Landing-based outfitters. As such, they are discretionary in regard to how the Forest Service chooses to distribute them since they do not reflect historic use of any outfitter.

The Need for Wild River Access

Comment 417-3. After reviewing your use allocations, it appears that the bigger power boat outfitters will get all the use in the upper canyon and will not use it. You have cut the heart of River Adventures Ltd. use from the upper canyon. This will be an economic impact to Riggins, Idaho County and the public. The problem with the launch calendar is that you are giving the bigger outfitters use that could be given to the smaller outfitters so they may continue to stay in business. For example, you allow Heller Bar to use the river from Lewiston to the Hells Canyon Dam (over 90 miles of river) and want River Adventures Ltd. to try and market a 4 mile section of river. How long do you think we will stay in business trying to sell a 8 mile round trip tour or fishing trip compared to a 180 mile round trip tour or fishing? River Adventures Ltd. has historical use of fishing from Pittsburg Landing to Granite Creek for the last 16 years. We leave Pittsburg Landing and move from fishing spot to fishing spot spending 1/2 hour to 1 hour at each spot. Eighty percent of the time our boat is tied up to the bank and other users just pass by and we are unnoticed. We feel we could be on the river every day from the National Recreation Area Boundary to Hells Canyon Dam and would not be in anyone's way. (Correspondent 147)

Comment 417-4. Our record of trips in the base period shows that 98% of tham went into the wild river. Heller Bar Excursions, during the same period of time, took only 55% of their trips into the wild section. Why then were both of our businesses allocated a flat 41.5% of our trips into the "Kirkwood Wild" section? We have built our business around wild river trips; HBE has not. We have the history of use in this section; HBE does not. This is patently unfair and wrong. It should be corrected and our allocation of wild river trips increased. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 417-5. There seems to be a contradiction here. On one hand, the establishment of maximum and minimum numbers of outfitters at specific portals "is needed to provide a diversity of commercial outfitted services for the public to choose from." With the other hand, the plan reduces access for the Pittsburg based outfitters to the point they no longer have viable businesses. The wild river, their meat and potatoes, is denied them for a sizable portion of their allocation and all together for three days every other week during the primary use season. Red Woods cannot provide a service with 9 days a season, only 3 of which can go into the wild river. For HC Fishing Charters the figures are 31 and 10 and for the River Adventures 40 and 13. All three Pittsburg outfitters combined can access the river for a total of 80 boat days and only 26 trips can go above Kirkwood. Nearly all of their trips in the past have been conducted in the wild river segment. By forcing most of their trips into the scenic segment you have increased congestion there. The allocations for all three combined are hardly adequate for one viable business and the service to the public suffers as a result because of lack of diversity of commercial services.

It was beneficial to reallocate and redefine the 88 launches. It was also better to allocate boat days by months in alternative C instead of B's inflexible daily calendar. The biggest problem is, of course, the drastic reductions in access to the wild river destinations as outlined on this page. Those reductions have gutted those many businesses built up around access to the upper river, with its fishing, scenery, rapids and Hells Canyon. If it was necessary, we would support you in this action. But it is not necessary. It is done to meet unrealistic and needless objectives. The overall numbers are too low to maintain a flourishing and viable commercial power boat industry. The result of your plan, even with the improvements of C, will be several businesses closing up shop. The remainder will jockey for a competitive position. The losers will be the American people who use their services. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 417-6. The outfitter that never goes above Rush Creek and prefers to turn around at Kirkwood to save fuel expense and time was give the most "wild" days (above Kirkwood in Alternative C) 44% of total boat days: and the one with all historical boat days (Snake River Outfitters) above Rush Creek was given 7 days or 27%. Why would the team do that except to reduce actual power boat use in the wild section above Kirkwood and above Rush Creek?(Correspondent 250)

Comment 417-7. I respectfully request you reallocate 100% of my boat days into the wild section between Pittsburg and the Dam as that is the only destination Snake River Outfitters has EVER marketed and sold. (Correspondent 250)

Forest Service Response: ***This element of Alternative C has been modified. Each outfitter will be allocated a percentage of use in the wild river upstream from Kirkwood based on the total number of commercial powerboat trips in that section of the river between 1988-1995. As a result, outfitters who used that section of the river on a more frequent basis will have their allocation in that section of the river increased, and their use in the Cache Creek to Kirkwood section decreased to stay within the total commercial powerboat use cap. Use records provided by the outfitters over the years substantiate***

individual claims of where each outfitter operated their trips and whether and what percentage of their total use occurred in the primary season.

Comment 417-8. The last paragraph on page III-4 which states "this alternative reallocates a portion of commercial powerboat use occurring in the base pariod to the area between Hells Canyon Creek and the top of Wild Sheep Rapid. This action will REDUCE the number of encounters between groups in the more remote sections of the wild river between Wild Sheep Rapid and Rush Creek Rapid.", is confusing to me in light of the data presented in table II-3 on page II-25. While this statement is true from the point of view of the comparison of base period to Plan C, it is not true in comparison to Plan B from which, use is in fact, up in all three segments. (over 3 times greater use in the Pittsburg to Kirkwood section, 2+ times in the Hells Canyon to Wild Sheep section, and 1.1 times in the Wild Sheep to Kirkwood section. This increase is use over that of Plan B, is simply unacceptable to me. (Correspondent 245)

Forest Service Response: ***For analysis purposes, Alternatives B and C are compared to Alternative A, the no-action alternative. Alternative B does not reallocate the 173 additional boat days to Hells Canyon Adventures that were identified as a result of the Regional Forester's appeal decision to verify use and refine the cap without a new decision. The use identified in Alternatives A and C reflects the total use that the business should have been credited with in the FEIS. Therefore, Alternative C credits the outfitter with the total use that occurred in the base period years, but allocates a much reduced level of that total use to travel downstream from Wild Sheep Rapid. The numbers in Alternative B reflect the proposed action which went out to the public for scoping prior to completion of verification of commercial use and any necessary adjustments to the use cap as a result of the verification process. Alternative B used the boat day allocation for the business that was used in the FEIS/ROD.***

Comment 417-9. The granting of additional commercial powerboat use (from an average of 7 to 10) up to Kirkwood is unacceptable. At the onset of the establishment of the HCNRA, the Federal Government authorized the purchase of all private land, with the exception of 1/4 acre, within the wild section of the river. This effort and expense, was gone to, to prevent inholder problems such as inappropriate or conflicting use, and the egress and ingress demands that so often complicate the management of a Wild River. It is mind boggling to me, that the managing agency, has since recreated that exact problem, by the inappropriate establishment of a Public Museum at Kirkwood, (a comparatively insignificant historical and cultural site within the canyon, given its history and age, and a "major component of the Cultural ORV, only because the managing agency so deems it), and the outfitter lease of the cabin at sheep creek. Egress demands are now used as justification for additional powerboat use in an already overcrowded resource. It is time to allow both sites, to return to their natural state, as was intended at the establishment of the HCNRA. A museum dedicated to the culture and history of this spectacular resource would be more appropriately established at the HCNRA headquarters, allowing unlimited Public access. The allowance of all commercial launches from all Scenic river portals access to Kirkwood increases the use in the Pittsburg to Kirkwood section of the wild river to unacceptable levels. (Correspondent 245)

Forest Service Response: ***Both Kirkwood and Sheep Creek are identified as Management Area 16, Administrative and Recreation Sites, in the FEIS/ROD. The ROD acknowledges that these sites, plus several others are anomalies in the wild river corridor (reference page 25 of the ROD). The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed their designation as Management Area 16 sites, in consideration of the language in the HCNRA Act to protect historic sites. Both locations are National Register Sites.***

While commercial powerboat access to Kirkwood would increase, the conversion of use to allow more access to Sheep Creek has been dropped as a result of a modification to Alternative C. The level of commercial powerboat access in the wild river upstream from Kirkwood would decrease, especially as a result of non-motorized days. Overall commercial powerboat use in the wild river would still meet the ROS guidelines in the FEIS and meet the intended recreation experience for all users.

Comment 417-10. Paragraph 8 presents a need to reduce trip duration for powerboats. This statement seems to contradict the premise of paragraph 6 that many power boat customers are "walk-ins" presumably taking day trips. Given the fact that there are clearly a greater percentage of multi-day float trips than power boat trips, it would seem that any restriction on trip length should not single out power boats but should address all users. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***Trip duration for powerboats references limitations to how they have operated historically, i.e., whether they have primarily operated trips for day-use versus overnight use. Overnight use would require the use of consecutive boat days. Boat days were used to determine use allocations for commercial powerboats because they credited outfitters with the total number of boats and total days involved in their trips during the base period years. The need to limit trip duration is a method of managing use within historic use patterns, and not encourage new types of use. Historically, the majority of commercial powerboat use has been one day trips and the majority of commercial float use has been multi-day trips. The EA has treated each of these commercial uses in the manner which they have developed over time in allocating use.***

Comment 417-11. Forest Service policy requires that the permittee charge reasonable rates and furnish such services as may be necessary in the public interest. We do not understand how, by specifying launch locations, the availability of a desired mix of visitor services can be better assured. The majority of commercial outfitters use the Cache Creek portal. The reason for this is because the preferred method of seeing the canyon is by jetboat, and the outfitters are located where it is most convenient for the public to utilize their services. If your policy requires that we furnish these services then why are you undeniably trying to restrict them.

The majority of the general public using jetboat services utilize the outfitters that use either the Cache Creek portal, or Hells Canyon Creek. I believe it is safe to say that there is adequate commercial competition to ensure quality services at these portals. We certainly would not want to try and make a living out of using portals such as Pittsburg Landing, or Dug Bar. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C provides maximum and minimum numbers of outfitters at each portal to assure the continuation of competition in order to assure quality services and choices in services and prices for customers. The maximum number of outfitters listed for each portal generally represents the existing situation. The Pittsburg Landing portal provides access for a different clientele than either Hells Canyon Creek or Cache Creek and provides tourism support to Idaho County. Dug Bar is no longer considered a potential portal for basing commercial services, and no currently outfitters base their operations from that site. The intent is to assure that, when businesses are sold, most businesses continue to operate from the portal where they now provide service. Reference page II-8 of the EA for additional information.***

Determination of Average Use

Comment 417-12. The calculation of base year average use was done in an inconsistent manner. Cougar Country and River Quest had their low use years dropped, basing their allocation on the average of their 4 good years; this gave them more boat days than they had earned. The rest of us were allocated use based on our flat 5 year average, good years and bad years alike. This affects how the limited boat days were distributed and appears to us unfair. All businesses should have been handled in the same way. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 417-13. Why is the historic use of some outfitters calculated with an average of the 5 years between 1988 and 92, while others have their use based on an average of 4 years with a low use year dropped from the average? The playing field should be level, with all figures being calculated by the same formula.

We can make it on our own and do quite well in the long run, providing quality service to our customers. We can do it, that is, if we have some room for growth and access to the river. Being limited in perpetuity to the use level of 5 years ago is going to make that mighty tough to accomplish. (Correspondent 251)

Comment 417-14. The determination of average use is also unfair. Cougar Country Lodge and Rivercrest had zero use years taken out of their averaging, and when looking at the total number of days, that of course would take days away from Snake River Adventures and add them to Cougar Country Lodge. If we're using a five-year average for some and a four-year average for others, it's entirely unfair--the worst year for everyone should be dropped out and let everyone average the best four years or everyone has the best five years. It is not fair to make a determination using some for bad years and others for not. (Correspondent 259)

Forest Service Response: ***Several outfitters could not operate in a given year due to an ongoing sale of business. Without state outfitting licenses and Forest Service special use permits, they could not legally operate. This would be the equivalent of approved non-use per Forest Service policy. The inability to operate was the result of factors beyond the control of the purchaser. In those cases, particular years were not used because they did not accurately reflect a continuing level of use that would have occurred if trips had continued to operate under the previous owner. In other circumstances, outfitters who were licensed simply chose not to conduct any trips during the primary season or not obtain a special use permit. However, since they had the ability to conduct business and simply chose not to, these zero-use years were counted when calculating primary season use during the base period.***

Specific to Individual Businesses

Comment 417-15. Our first concern is the number of user days that has been allocated to us for the 1997 primary season. We bought into this business in 1992 with growth being the specific reason in mind, and have been using our operating revenue to pay for it. As you can see from your figures we have indeed grown, increasing our business by 350% in the last 4 years and had planned on continued growth. By using the 1988-1992 guidelines, which was before we bought this business, we have been allocated 6 user days. We cannot survive on that. (Correspondent 202)

Forest Service Response: ***The respondent bought into an existing business (forming a partnership) which had primarily operated as a secondary season steelhead fishing business. This resulted in a low amount of historic base period use. The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the method of using the 1988-1992 base period to determine the total commercial powerboat capacity. Alternative C, as modified, only uses more recent use to allocate the distribution of boat days for trips between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep, and then only as a component of total use of that section of the river from 1988-1995. Credit for recent growth of small businesses could have only occurred at the expense of businesses that had a proven track record of higher levels of use over many years. The purpose and need for the FEIS addressed the need to manage growth, reduce encounters between users and protect and enhance ORVs in the river corridor during the primary season as a component of allocating powerboat use levels. Growth in the primary season will be limited primarily to filling vacant seating capacity or by purchasing other businesses. Growth in the secondary season remains unlimited, and this business historically has been a secondary season business.***

Comment 417-16. We feel it unjust not to look at the 1992 to 1996 period of time when allocating user days. Not just for us. There are businesses that showed relatively high use in 1988-1992 which have since sold and are no longer using those high numbers of days, if any. Yet they have been given a large number of days. (Correspondent 202)

Forest Service Response: ***When a business is purchased, the business track record is also purchased, and is often the basis of the sale, i.e,, what level of activity has this business been capable of generating in the past? Approximately 25 different methods of allocating use over the years from 1988-1995 were considered in analysis (reference Analysis File). The reasons for choosing Alternative C are documented in the DN and the Outfitter and Guide Operating Guidelines. In order to reflect more recent use, Alternative C has been modified to credit outfitters for their use of the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section of the wild river from 1988-1995.***

Comment 417-17. I respectfully request you restore my allocation to the wild section to at least 3 days per week during the primary season. (Correspondent 250)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference the outfitter and guide operating guidelines that have been changed per modification of Alternative C for a description of each outfitter's allocation during the primary season.***

Comment 417-18. The flexibility of days is not as flexible as it should be to ensure trip scheduling workable. People cancel trips or some days just do not sell. We do not target "walk-in" guests, and need more lead time for some dates especially toward the end of the month. Sometimes we have to change a trip date due to high water flows which effect the quality of fishing. Weather is another consideration. We have had to postpone a trip because the heat was too severe for a physically challenged group of guests. Due to the small number of days I have been assigned, I will have to have every opportunity to sell them. I respectfully request my wild boat days be flexible throughout the control season and not restricted to a certain month. (Correspondent 250)

Forest Service Response: ***Flexibility in scheduling is based on the size of each outfitter, in part to manage potential peaks in use caused by commercial powerboaters. Refer to the Outfitter and Guide Operating Guidelines for a complete description of the time period allocation for each outfitter. Alternative C has been modified to reduce the flexibility for the larger outfitters from monthly to bi-weekly scheduling flexibility. This respondent, based on size of the operation, remained on a schedule that was flexible on a monthly basis.***

Comment 417-19. Our allocation of 31 trips into the wild river is simply too low! So is the total of 85 for the season, with 54 turning around at Kirkwood. We are running just about every day this summer and need to continue to do the same in the future. (Correspondent 251)

Forest Service Response: ***The allocation for this outfitter for trips above Kirkwood has been increased to 53 based on the modification of Alternative C which credited outfitters for their percentage of total wild river between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep in the years of 1988-1995. The total allocation for this outfitter has not increased, remaining at 85 total boat days.***

Fishing Outfitters

Comment 417-20. We use the river almost daily during May, June, and July although not August, and we are the fastest growing fishing business, as the figures bear out. Even so, businesses that are operating very little have been given many more days than we have. This is a very major concern of ours.

Forest Service Response: ***The allocation of use among powerboat outfitters is based on the 1988-1992 period historic use. As a result, business history is a component of the allocation. Boat day allocations***

reflect the business activity of each business for those years. More recent use is reflected in the allocations of use for each outfitter between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep as a component of use in that section of the river between 1988-1995.

Comment 417-21. The scenic tour boat operations have been allocated a large number of days and can survive on them. We are strictly fishing outfitters, not scenic and cannot survive on 6 days. Our schedule is filled from year to year. We run 3 night/4 day trips and overnight at our cabins located below Cache Creek. Mike has to run above Cache Creek at least 2 days of each trip and rarely runs as far as Pittsburg, much less past it. The reason being there is so much good fishing water from there down. With well over 50% of the float traffic taking out at Pittsburg, there is a long stretch of river down to Cache Creek that is hardly used except as a pass through zone. Why use Cache Creek in defining the lowest area of operation? (Correspondent 202)

Forest Service Response: ***The purpose and need for the FEIS addressed the need to manage growth, reduce encounters between users, and protect and enhance ORVs in the river corridor during the primary season as a component of allocating powerboat use levels. Different sections of the river are managed due to different elements that affect this use, such as the influx of unlimited float use into the scenic river from the Lower Salmon River that affects total use levels in the Cache Creek area. In addition, use has been spread throughout the season to manage total and peak use, reduce encounters between users, and assure that outfitters are providing service to the public throughout the primary season.***

Comment 417-22. Forest Service records indicate we run at least eight (8) fishing trips in the primary season in the wild section at least to Granite Rapids and Hells Canyon Creek. Alternative C arbitrarily cuts our trips into the wild section to five (5). This allocation reduction is not based on any formula and is arbitrary. Also, no allowance is made for any increase in business. At the very least, small fishing outfitters like us should have a reasonable pool of launches into the wild section to draw upon so our businesses will be allowed some measure of flexibility and natural growth. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***In response to scoping, the powerboat outfitters did not want a pool of launches, but wanted all available boat days allocated so they would know how many trips they would be able to sell. Refer to the Outfitter and Guide Operating Guidelines for details on the provision of a pool that could develop over time within the total cap of use. Alternative C as modified changes the allocation of use in the wild river between Kirkwood and Wild Sheep based on each outfitters percentage of use in this section of the river in comparison with all commercial powerboat trips in this river section from 1988-1995.***

Subject 418
Float Allocation

Comment 418-1. Even in 1973, the Forest Service had little inclination to manage the river for the benefit of the public. It was, in fact, the outfitters who drew the Forest Service into the original meetings which resulted in the outfitters establishing the commercial limitations, the allocation for the float outfitters, and an outfitters' calendar. Because outfitter use before limitations was greatly inflated, float outfitters were awarded generous allocations which they have consistently under utilized. Actual commercial float boat use is only a fraction of the total allocation.

Assigning allocations to outfitters changes the special use permit from allowing an outfitter to provide service to the public to allowing him ownership of public access. This has direct and undesirable consequences for the public, especially for private boaters. It establishes a percentage division of allocation between outfitters and private boaters that could only accidentally reflect real demand. Private float boaters must go through a lottery to obtain river access, while commercial outfitters have been given an allocation exceeding their marketing ability and client demand. In effect, only private floaters have limited access on the Snake River, and they are not able to obtain any of the unused commercial allocation as "cross over" between the two groups is not allowed. (Correspondent 135)

Forest Service Response: ***Special use permits are a privilege, not a right. Outfitters must meet specific requirements or risk forfeiture of their permits. They are not a private property right. The purpose of outfitter permits is to provide service to the public which do not have the skills or equipment necessary to travel on the Snake River for a recreation experience.***

Private floaters do have access to un-utilized commercial float launches via cross-over between the commercial and private allocation 30 days prior to launch. This system is in place to provide flexibility to increase utilization of the reservation system and access to float opportunities for all users.

Comment 418-2. There is no intrinsic need to limit floating on the scenic river. Some 75% of Hells Canyon's floaters choose not to go beyond Pittsburg. They have done this on their own without government intervention. The only reason to limit their access in the future is that you have forced power boaters to concentrate their activities into a smaller portion of the river. The fact is, there is presently no need to limit access by either commercial or private floaters or power boaters in the scenic river segment. You have developed a massively regulatory plan that accomplishes unnecessary objectives. There is no evidence of a need in either your EIS or this EA. Float use coming in from the Salmon generally moves quickly through the HCNRA segment of the Snake. The river is mostly wide and flat; the problems created on this short section or river do not warrant heavy duty restrictions on either floaters or power boaters. The Lower Salmon is one of the few rivers where floaters can take a spontaneous trip; this is worth preserving as long as possible. Power boaters, commercial and private, also want to maintain the opportunity for spontaneity in their recreation as long as possible. Unfortunately, this plan attempts to remove every vestige of that opportunity, at great expense to all! (Correspondent 184)

Comment 418-3. The issues which you have failed to respond to for float boaters ... no longer allowing launches from Pittsburg Landing. There is absolutely no justification for this management decision. You have eliminated this possibility for float outfitters and private boaters while increasing opportunity and use in the Scenic river for power boaters. While there is little historic use for this launch site for float boaters, there is also no quantifiable need for eliminating the possibility. This year for example, high water on the lower Salmon made launching at Pittsburg Landing a viable alternative for many groups. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***The rationale for limiting use in the scenic river is described in detail in the FEIS. This includes protection of the ORVs including the recreation experience. Reference Chapters II and IV of the FEIS and Appendix K, Pages K-118 through K-120.***

Private floaters would still be able to launch float trips from Pittsburg Landing and Dug Bar. Commercial float trips have never developed a business from these portals during the primary season. This activity would represent a new use with potential for new commercial growth, and would not meet the purpose and need to adjust commercial recreational use levels to meet the desired recreation experiences as described in the FEIS.

Comment 418-4. Capping the float use below Pittsburg Landing to 25% of total float use. I have objected to this provision from the beginning, yet it has never been addressed or justified. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***This monitoring element of the outfitter and guide operating guidelines has been modified in Alternative C as a result of verification of commercial use. This monitoring element will***

be changed to 30% prior to implementing limitations on float use below Pittsburg Landing based on historic use patterns.

Vacant Launch Pool

Comment 418-5. The current 60% private & 40% outfitter launch schedule for floaters in Hells Canyon is the most generous management plan for private floaters among the West's best managed rivers. For instance, the Middle Fork of the Salmon provides for a 56% private & 44% outfitter launch schedule. There is no need to give the private floating sector more launches in Hells Canyon, at the expense of the outfitters who run the area. 60% of the use is plenty. My business, and others have used the vacant launch to considerable advantage through the years. This vacant launch is one of the key items for offering any flexibility to our launch schedules. You seem very concerned with powerboat outfitter flexibility, but you show no concern for our flexibility. What gives? Private floaters do not need 8 extra launches per river season. What private floaters need is GOOD management of powerboats with launch schedules, and real limits on weekends and holidays. (Correspondent 158)

Comment 418-6. The plan hes reduced the number of outfitter launches from the float pool from 14 to 6. I have objected to this provision since it first appeared in the management plan. These 14 launches have historically been used by commercial float outfitters and were part of the original plan's intent back when use was allocated back in 1975 or so. Commercial float outfitters have made full use of this allocation in recent years. Private users already have a significantly larger percentage of launches in Hells Canyon. There is no reason or justification to penalize commercial float outfitters by removing these 8 launches from our allocation. The balance of private to commercial launches is already highly skewed and this only worsens the balance. (Correspondent 254)

Comment 418-7. Alternative C, the preferred alternative, has many, many, well researched and thought out provisions. Chief among these is providing for the non-motorized period in a section of the Wild River. There is no doubt that all the float permits available during these non-motorized periods will be highly sought and highly treasured. Perhaps the additional launch dates allocated to private float parties can be made available during these non-motorized periods. (Correspondent 163)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C has been modified and does not re-allocate any of the outfitter pool dates to private floaters. Outfitters maintain the 14 launches to provide scheduling flexibility.***

Subject 421
Non-Motorized Period

Many commenters objected to the non-motorized period. Representative examples have been responded to below:

Comment 421-1. I want to express my objection to this non-motorized window. (Correspondent 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 30, 56)

Comment 421-2. Why are rafters so special that they need the whole Snake River access by themselves for three days a week every other week? Why don't you stop and look at what this is going to do to the businesses that rely on the river to make a living. (Correspondent 7)

Comment 421-3. Please do not implement the non-motorized window on the Hells Canyon Recreation Area. Powerboats can accept limitations but closure is unacceptable. (Correspondent 11)

Comment 421-4. I personally cannot accept the Forest Service recommendation of shutting off jet boat traffic for three days a week every other week. This is unjust and unfair to the private jet boaters. (Correspondent 22)

Comment 421-5. As a new jetboat owner, my family and I was planning to enjoy the Hells Canyon area this year. Unfortunately with the closure in effect it will be harder to use the area because of the fact that my friend that was going to show me the area has the first part of the week off, making it almost impossible for us together to enjoy the beautiful area of Hells Canyon. I would appreciate it if you would consider removing the closure. (Correspondent 45)

Comment 421-6. On behalf of all the residents of our county, we the elected representatives ask you to eliminate the non-motorized window and to reevaluate the use levels for motorized craft - both commercial and private. (Correspondent 79)

Comment 421-7. Eliminate the non-motorized experience. There is nothing in any of your preferred alternatives that has evoked the kind of negative response as this proposal. It is divisive, contemptible, and contentious. If enacted, relations between motorized and non-motorized will deteriorate dramatically. The successful efforts of the last few years to bring together the groups will have been wasted. (Correspondent 162)

Comment 421-8. The Forest Service has stated that a "segment of the public" has expressed a desire to have a period free of motorized activity" within the wild corridor of Hells Canyon. No facts have been furnished to clarify what percentage of the general public contacted expressed such a desire. Also, it is not made available what the commercial interests of this "segment of the public" might be in regards to their desire to enjoy a motorless period. (Correspondent 180)

Comment 421-9. I would like to request that you eliminate the non-motorized window because: I applaud your efforts at soliciting and receiving input from the various user groups. I am surprised that a non-motorized solution could be an option. Elimination of a specific user group from any resource for any length of time (mid week or week end) is unacceptable. (Correspondent 188)

Comment 421-10. We still do not understand why the decision was made in the ROD to have a non-motorized period at all. The opinions and numbers in the reports used, are biased. It would be interesting to see the result of such a study done today with people from both groups, offering their views of the visitor experience. (Correspondent 246)

Comment 421-11. We remain of the opinion that commercial and private powerboaters, as well as many floatcraft users, will simply not support any form of a non-motorized period on any portion of the river. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 421-12. Please do away with the nonmotorized periods. This is a river that has always been shared. It was a power boating river used for commerce long before floating became popular. Congress recognized the traditions of this navigable river by excluding its corridor from the wilderness and recognizing both motorized and nonmotorized river craft as equally valid uses. The nonmotorized window is neither needed or appropriate. (Correspondent 251)

Comment 421-13. There is no need for a non-motorized experience. Do you believe that it is fair to allow a select group of individuals the opportunity to experience Hells Canyon's solitude and remoteness without offering this opportunity to everyone. Who said that the only way you can experience the solitude and remoteness of Hells Canyon is without a motor? Don't you think the general public who take a jet boat tour, would like to enjoy their day on the river without having to constantly stop for floaters. (Correspondent 252)

Comment 421-14. So why are we being excluded for three days every other week for three months? Of course we know the pat reasons given in the EA--to provide some floaters who don't like power boats an opportunity to play without us being around and to move the river towards a nebulously defined "desired recreation experience." But these reasons just aren't good enough to justify ruining businesses, denying our guests the experience of Hells Canyon, its major rapids, most spectacular scenery and best fishing. This price is too high for the tiny payoff. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 421-15. Isn't it enough that the rafters are being given every other Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday? Why are we also limited to distance that we travel? The rafters have no more right to see the true Hells Canyon than the majority of our population. Floaters do not own the river. Not yet, at least! They have their 3 days of the "Wild section" all to themselves, yet they want more. (Correspondent 246)

Comment 421-16. Paragraph 5 discusses timing of a non-motorized window. First, the lack of data is apparent again, as the agency vaguely describes a "segment of the public" without providing insight into the volume and nature of use of these individuals. Without this preliminary information, one cannot assess whether the agency has reasonably created a solution with very specific elements (e.g., no motors on one portion of the river, during precise time periods) to address the purported need. Arguably, the legislation creating the NRA not only allows motorized use, but actually selects that use, given the specific language and legislative history of the Act. The agency reveals a significant flaw in the decisionmaking structure by noting that the decision to implement a non- motorized period has already been made in the ROD, and the Outfitter EA will only address the timing of that period. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***Based on content analysis of the DEIS and FEIS, there was a distinct group or respondents who favored some level of non-motorized recreational experience opportunity. The non-motorized period in this proposal provides a reasonable opportunity for interested private and commercial floatboaters, has a minimal effect on private powerboaters, and minimizes potentially adverse economic impacts on commercial powerboaters. The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the provision of a non-motorized window subject to analyzing the effects of the window on commercial users in regard to timing and duration of the non-motorized period.***

Length/Location of Non-Motorized Section of River

Comment 421-17. If a window is mandatory try from Wild Sheep Rapids to Rush Creek Rapids only, 99% of the boats do not or should not navigate this. Guides excluded. (Correspondent 46)

Forest Service Response: ***This element of the non-motorized window was examined as part of the alternative development process, but was not incorporated in an action alternative. Reference the analysis file.***

Duration of Non-Motorized Period

Comment 421-18. We feel that the primary season should start late June or early July when the river use starts to pick up. Check your use records and see that River Adventures Ltd. fishes in Hells Canyon from Pittsburg Landing to Granite Creek Rapids more than any other outfitter. We see the actual use that is going on in this section of river this time of year. In June of 1996 we fished over 15 days on that section and there was very little use because of high water and low air temperatures. If you look at your use records you will see that the canyon is not being used in June. We suggest that the primary season starts late June early July when use of the river starts to pick up. (Check your use records.) (Correspondent 147)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference Chapter II, page 7 of the FEIS. The primary season dates were common to all action alternatives in the FEIS and affirmed in the Regional Forester's appeal decision.***

Redistribution of Non-Motorized Period

Comment 421-19. If the non-motorized window were expanded to include June, it would be an unreasonable limitation. The use in June for both float and power users is often restricted by high run off. We feel reasonable limitation would be more effective during a high use month such as July and August. (Correspondent 114)

Comment 421-20. Spreading of the "motorized" period to include June, would be acceptable, but not so the resulting reduction in the number of motorless days. Given this years calendar my operation would go from having 4 trips with 3-days of no motors and 4 trips with 2-days of no motors under plan B the old preferred alternative, to having 2 trips with 3-days of no motors, and 2 trips with 2-days of no motors, under plan C. This is a significant decrease, given that this motorless opportunity was the major identified want and need expressed by my guests the commercial floatboat users, in the planning stage of this process. In addition, the unequal access to non-motor launches inherent in this plan is a potential source of conflict within the commercial float segment, and is unacceptable for this reason. Possible mitigation of this might be achieved by the addition of Sunday and Monday afternoon launches prior to the "motorless" period on a 4-day-Sunday, 3-day-Monday only basis. Overall impact shouldn't be too significant given with the elimination of the powerboat segment during this period. This additional opportunity might also mitigate the negative impact both to the economy of the outfitter, and use opportunity of the commercial floatboat user of the group size reduction. I personally support the Week-on/week-off plan, as the only way to equitably satisfy both groups, the one's desire for quantity of experience, the other's for quality. If the powerboats want quantity, let them pay the price in quality, and we will pay the price of quantity to gain quality. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 421-21. Your preferred alternative proposed a significant decrease in the motorless window. A reduction from 24 motorless days to 21 or even 18 days annually is a dramatic cut back over a 110 day control season. The motorless window, from the Draft EIS stage on to the present (one week motors only vs. one week motorless) was a huge issue for private floaters. All the compromises that have occurred since then have taken this private floater interest in a motorless window into account. I don't think the agency can back away from a motorless window without making other compromises on the float side of the equation. Commercial float outfitters have made a huge 20% sacrifice in accepting a reduction from 30 to 24 people/trip. The 8 float boat per trip limit is a huge bitter pill for both outfitted & private floaters. The only way the agency can back away from the motorless window is to reinstate the 30 person group size for all floaters, with a 10 craft/trip (or more) limit. Kayaking is more and more popular and your current 8 boat limit is the most restrictive float limit on any Western River. I think it is time to rethink this 8 boat/trip limit if the agency intends to make any changes in the motorless window. (Correspondent 158)

Comment 421-22. The motorless window was something the private float boat community identified as a highly desirable condition. From the Draft EIS stage on to present there has been much support for the one week on/one week off concept. The change to a mere 24 days per season was a big sacrifice. Now, you are reducing this further and in the process, completely shunning the earlier input on the plan. Under Alternative C floaters have give up a tremendous amount, and gotten nothing in return. If you are going to concede more days of motorless opportunity then you must give something back to all floaters, including larger group size, more craft per trip, and other issues as identified above as floater needs. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C has modified the schedule to begin on the first Monday in June for three days per week (Monday through Wednesday), on alternating weeks for a total of 21 days. The schedule will include the July 4th holiday if the non-motorized schedule coincides with that holiday in any given year. Due to the alternating week schedule and eight day turn-around for commercial floaters, there will continue to be an unequal level of access to this opportunity among all float outfitters on a yearly basis.***

Support for Non-Motorized Period

Comment 421-23. I support the proposed ban on jet boat traffic during certain times. In fact, I consider this option the minimum necessary to try to return sanity to the river corridor. (Correspondent 195)

Comment 421-24. I support the non-motorized period. 18 to 21 days reserved for peace and quiet on the upper stretch over about 14 weeks (98 days) is fair and is not asking too much of the powerboaters. The plan has compromised enough by allowing boats to go as far as Kirkwood Ranch. Furthermore the economic analysis clearly shows that most outfitters will not lose money with this plan. (Correspondent 212)

Comment 421-25. Believe there can be days when jet boats do not need to be on the river. (Correspondent 257)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comment.***

Comment 421-26. The Appeal Decision affirmed the need for a non-motorized window but remanded the decision to the Forest Supervisor to assess the economic affect on commercial outfitters. The EA concludes that the "economic analysis showed very little effect of the 24 non-motorized days on commercial outfitters." Therefore the reduction in days of the non-motorized window is unwarranted and outside the scope of the remand. The 24 day non-motorized window as proposed in the ROD should be implemented in order to comply with the HCNRA and WSRA.

Alternative C proposes every other weekend for the non-motorized window from June through August except for the 4th of July weekend. If the 4th of July coincides with a non-motorized window period, then that week would be skipped and the non-motorized window would recommence the next weekend. The EA states this would provide for a non-motorized recreational experience spread across the primary season. This would be confusing and decreases the number of days of a non-motorized experience which does not protect the ORVs. Additionally, there is no analysis that the non-motorized period has an economic effect on commercial outfitters, therefore, the reduction in the number of non-motorized period days available and the change in days is outside the scope of the remand.

This is contrary to the original ROD directive to provide levels of shared use by non-motorized and motorized users that protect and enhance the ORVs. ROD, p. 9. (Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***Scheduling the non-motorized period through June, July, and August provides a fair method of providing different recreation opportunities to all users. Although the economic effect to commercial powerboaters is small, it does exist. By scheduling the non-motorized days every other week starting on the first Monday in June, there are a total of 21 motorized days available prior to the Labor Day holiday. Alternative C has been modified to include the July 4th holiday in those years when that date falls on a non-motorized period.***

Comment 421-27. I am sure that you are well aware that one of the driving forces for the exclusion of powerboats is by a minority group of the commercial float outfitters which would enable them to market their trips as "wilderness floats." This is not a wilderness and you should not allow it to become a de-facto wilderness by implementation of Alternative "C." (Correspondent 143)

Forest Service Response: ***Reference Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-50 through K-54 for a discussion on the issue of wilderness experience.***

Subject 423
Salmon River

Comment 423-1. We have a Salmon River permit and we need to access it from the Snake and our cabins where we nightly lodge our clients. Being able to use this permit is very important to us. (Correspondent 202)

Forest Service Response: ***Access to the Salmon River via the Snake River will be limited during the primary season to the total allocation of each outfitter. Access to the Salmon River during the secondary season will continue to be unlimited.***

Comment 423-2. While we understand that this EA addresses management of commercial outfitting on the Snake River, we feel that there are some underlying issues that need to be addressed that have a direct bearing on Lower Salmon River management. Most importantly, we do not feel that the EA adequately addresses the impact of the non-motorized period on Lower Salmon boaters, both outfitter and non-outfitted. We believe that there is a strong potential for displacement of the motorized activity from the Snake to the Salmon, thereby impacting Lower Salmon boaters and disrupting historic use patterns. We believe that reasonable use limits on motorized boating would be far preferable to the probable displacement caused by a non-motorized period.

We also believe that the probable displacement to the Lower Salmon would result in adverse economic impacts to Lower Salmon outfitters, since that displacement, when it occurs, will result in speedier implementation of use limits on the Lower Salmon. In addition to the displacement to the Lower Salmon, we believe that the other boaters will be displaced to the Scenic portion of the Snake, thereby increasing the congestion in that area and further impacting Lower Salmon boaters. (Correspondent 255)

Comment 423-3. As we have expressed in earlier comments and conversations, Lower Salmon boaters are already chafing under the new party size limits and boats per party limits on the Snake. This is particularly true for this season with the limits being applicable only to non-outfitted floaters--a very difficult thing to explain to people on the river. We agree that the section of the Snake below the mouth of the Salmon is frequently congested, and for that reason worked with Kurt and Woody to arrive at an acceptable solution and agreement on implementation procedures for these new ragulations. However, we feel that displacing Wild section boaters to this area during the non-motorized period will only add to the congestion we were trying to reduce. (Correspondent 255)

Forest Service Response: ***The Snake River limitations on private floaters entering from the Lower Salmon River were never implemented by the BLM as part of the Lower Salmon River permit system for the 1996 season. Therefore, this comment is inaccurate in regard to impacts that private floaters are dealing with concerning implementation of new restrictions. In addition, the average number of private powerboats that would have been displaced in 1993 through 1995 had the non-motorized period been in effect would have averaged only two boats per day, three days per week, every other week on the slowest days of the week (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday). It is doubtful that all of these private powerboaters would have decided to go to the Lower Salmon River instead, especially when they could enter the scenic Snake River with a self-issued permit until reservations were implemented. Unlimited float use of the Lower Salmon River has grown more than 15 fold in the past 20 years. The effect of displaced private powerboat use as a result of non-motorized periods will be inconsequential on the Lower Salmon River in comparison to the congestion already occurring there as a result of the current unlimited float use.***

Subject 424
Party Size/Craft Limit

Party Size

Comment 424-1. I do not see any way that downsizing the commercial trip numbers on the Salmon River by 6 people will have any significant effect on anything except restricting the historical use of commercial parties from 30 to 24. There is no reason to change the present status of 30 people party size including guides. (Correspondent 117)

Comment 424-2. Further reductions in float party size from 30 to 24 and limitation of crafts/party would seem to have insignificant impact when coupled with the increased powerboat allocations and the potential peak impacts under the flexible launch schedule granted the powerboats under this plan. I have supported this reduction, and limitation in past plans, because of the gain in the Desired Recreational Experience of the overall plan. I am not willing to pay this price if I don't get the gain. The price is significant to my business, as 1) the last few bookings/launch contribute a disproportionate share to the overall profit margin due to economies of scale, and 2) the 30 person group size allows for a camp helper which greatly adds to the quality of our trips. (Correspondent 245)

Forest Service Response: ***All impacts are cumulative. Higher numbers of people per party and numbers of boats per party add to increased encounters on the river and/or greater impacts to campsites. These issues were addressed in the FEIS in Chapters II and IV. Also reference Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-138 through K-145 for specific information on party size and boat numbers.***

In addition, the peak use analysis for Alternative C modified, in consideration of the flexible schedule for commercial powerboats, indicated that the primary cause of peak use was attributed to the number of daily entries into the river corridor by private powerboats that will now be limited by reservation per the decision in the FEIS/ROD as affirmed by the Regional Forester.

Comment 424-3. Do you have data that shows a significant difference in evironmental impacts between float parties of 24 and parties of 30 that supports your decision to make that change, or is it an arbitrary figure pulled out of space? Why 24 and not parties of 26, or 22, or 15? Work by Cole on the Middle Fork of the Salmon found that most of the impacts to a site occurred with the first few parties to utilize that site. Continuing use expanded the impact only slightly. What are the unacceptable conditions currently experienced at the campsites that you hope to correct; what are those onshore impacts you hope to minimize and why do you think the selected limits will accomplish that goal? (Correspondent 184)

Comment 424-4. With regard to the size restrictions of paragraph 7, the agency has consistently spoken of the environmental impact attributable to larger parties, without supporting these statements with data. Assuming the agency can produce data that establishes a direct relationship between number of campers and environmental impact, this finding does not justify size restrictions since several parties under the size limit might result in more people at one site than a single group having more campers than any one of the smaller groups. If group size is the sole concern, the need should address private groups as well as commercial groups. Once again, a campsite reservation system would provide the greatest control over any alleged environmental impact associated with camping. There are some campsites that probably cannot be properly used by larger groups, but a generic limit on group size does not provide this site-specific protection. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 424-5. You have responded to power boat demands for larger boats which can carry larger groups, allowed them to launch whenever they want within each month's allocation and made other concessions, yet ignored the huge economic impact that the reduction of group size from 30 to 24 will make for the float outfitters. While many outfitters had smaller groups during the 1988-92 study period, the 1993-95 period has shown much more frequent occurrence of full trips with 24 guests. How do you justify the inequity of meeting power boat outfitters requests for larger groups and boats and flexible launches while ignoring float outfitters request for a viable economic group size of 30? This number of 24 was pulled from a hat. If in fact there is any environmental reason for this reduction, the economic impact should be more heavily weighed. I am totally against this reduction. Even an increase to a party size of 27 (while maintaining 24 for private groups) would improve the economic viability of float trips-but no reasonable person could quantify an environmental advantage to a party size of 27 versus 30 (or 24 versus 30 for that matter), so the party size of 30 should be maintained for commercial float boat outfitters. As possible compromises for the issues identified in #3 and #4 above, float outfitters should be allowed at least 50% of our launches to carry a party size of 30 and have 10 boats. And/or allowing us to have 27 people on every launch. (Correspondent 254)

Comment 424-6. There is little environmental justification for this, but some sociological reason. It is extremely unfair to kayak groups who have little sociological impact as they are small and fast. For commercial float interests 10 boats would be more appropriate. If our groups are limited to 24, then we would need 4-5 rafts, leaving the possibility of only 3-4 inflatable kayaks [IKs]. These IKs have become very popular over the last decade and in high demand from the outfitted public. If our group size is 30 (es it should be), then we need 6 rafts and could only have 2 IKs with an eight craft limit. Being able to take 4 IKs would be better. At a minimum I would suggest you modify the plan to allow only 8 rafts, but up to 10 craft, as long as at least 2 were inflatable kayaks. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***The reduction in maximum party size and correlating limit on maximum boats per party is not only related to impacts to campsites, but also related to social encounters on the river. Reference Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-138 through K-145 for specific information on party size and boat numbers. Cole's study on the Middle Fork is referenced on pages K-266 and K-267.***

Subject 425
Campsite Management (Social Impacts)

Support for Reservation System

A number of respondents voiced their support for a reservation system to reduce camp site competition. The Forest Service response follows several comments:

Comment 425-1. We realize that the issue of "camp running" has become a point of contention among both private and commercial float groups, with the limited amount of camping in the canyon, competition for certain choice sites is inevitable. Certainly our J-Rig provides us with the option of reaching desired campsites before those in oar powered craft. However, that is not normally the case. We regularly discuss our camp plans with other groups who are launching on the same date and devise an equitable plan regarding campsites. We rarely have a conflict with other floaters over this issue.

The real competition comes when those campsites are occupied by groups in power boats, and on horsepacking, or backpacking trips. As a result, floaters have no way of knowing which sites will be avaliable, or occupied. This raises the issue of a campsite reservation system similar to those being successfully used on other western rivers such as the Middle Fork of the Salmon and the Grand Canyon. In this scenario, floaters assigned campsites before leaving the visitors center at Hells Canyon Dam thereby eliminating the need for competition and camp running. Similarity power boats launching from Pittsburg, Dug Bar, Heller Bar, and Lewiston would need to stop at Cache Creek or Pittsburg Landing to register for a campsite. (Correspondent 38)

Comment 425-2. Kicker motors are not the reason for campsite competition in the wild section of the river corridor. This problem is the direct result of some parties sending a raft ahead to secure the best campsite.

This is a common practice of many commercial float operators. This problem could easily be solved by assigning campsites to float parties. (Correspondent 180)

Comment 425-3. The "keen competition for campsites in the wild corridor" can be easily addressed by implementing a campsite reservation system. This was mandated in Assistant Secretary Crowell's 1983 decision, but was never done.

Alternative A mandates campsite reservations for the wild section of river although this directive has never been implemented. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 425-4. If you wanted to limit "impacts at and competition for campsites," you would limit multi-day trips for all users. You have all but eliminated one day floats, which offer the experience without the impacts and you have severely limited one day power boat trips which have no campsite impacts and pose no competition for those sites. The Hells Canyon market today provides a wide range of choices for the public, commercial and private multi-day and one-day float and powerboat trips. The trip supply is varied because the demand is varied. Would it not make more sense to simply adopt a campsite reservation system instead of adding more regulations? The severe access restrictions are unnecessary in accomplishing this objective. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 425-5. The race to campsites prompting the restriction on kickers in paragraph 12 would be better curtailed by a campsite reservation system that would end any incentive to race other users to a specific location, regardless of whether one relied on a jet boat, an outboard motor, or hard rowing/paddling to get there.

The agency consistently mentions that "keen competition for campsites" is a concern necessitating action, but has never adequately explained why a campsite reservation system such as those utilized on other major rivers would not present the most workable solution. This system seems especially appropriate on the Snake, where powerboats can access many areas of the river and use is, therefore, less predictable than on a river like the Middle Fork of the Salmon where group progress down the river is more predictable given the fact that all parties are floating the river. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 425-6. Competition for campsites is cited as a concern throughout the EA. We don't use campsites, so this hardly seems a reason to slash our access. Why don't you implement a campsite reservation system and dispose of this issue once and for all? (Correspondent 251)

Comment 425-7. Campsite competition will always be high, you need to have a reservation system. Eliminating kickers will do nothing to prevent cargo rafts from racing down river to claim the best campsites. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***Campsite competition was discussed in Chapter IV of the FEIS. Also reference Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-157 through K-163 in regard to campsite reservations. The Regional Forester has affirmed that a campsite reservation system will only be implemented if mitigation measures fail to resolve campsite competition.***

Eliminate Camping as an Option

Comment 425-8. No overnight trips allowed, that is no camping along the banks. (Correspondent 40)

Comment 425-9. I feel that you are way out of line with your proposal. All users of Hells Canyon have the right to use the river. Now if you have a problem with the overnighters, then make it illegal to camp in the section of river above Pittsburg Landing. Use of the river by either floaters or jet boaters is not the issue of impact. It is when people stay in the canyon and use and sometimes abuse a site. (Correspondent 49)

Forest Service Response: ***Elimination of overnight camping in the river corridor would not provide the intended or desired recreation experiences of users that have been key elements in formulation of the decisions made in both the FEIS and the EA.***

What's the Problem, and Whose Is It?

Comment 425-10. If there is a real concern for the canyon's resources, competition for campsites, loss of remoteness and solitude, why didn't you eliminate float parties from the wild river for 3 days a week, every other week. They are the source of campsite conflict, not power boaters. They are the ones with multiple boats and big parties. They are the ones that spend more than 20 hours every day on the land, camping, hiking, disturbing cultural sites, playing volleyball, screaming, drinking, defecating and all the other things humans do when having fun. We power boaters could do with a quiet time on the river. (Correspondent 120)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative E of the Draft EIS provided for alternating weeks of exclusive use by floaters and powerboaters in the wild river which would have provided for non-float periods as well as non-motorized periods. Public comment received on the DEIS did not support this alternative, but a component of users who commented did support some period of non-motorized use.***

Comment 425-11. I question, how disallowance of camping by commercial powerboaters, in a section that has been used but little, to begin with, can mitigate increased overall additional use. It is also, never specifically or clearly stated whether "drop-camps" by commercial outfitters, (the primary camping use by the commercial powerboater in the Hells Canyon Creek to Wild Sheep rapids section of the river), is considered commercial use. If not, than once again I see little, if any, real mitigation involved in this concession. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 425-12. We do not understand how commercial powerboaters can be blamed for the undesirable concentration of use associated with competition for campsites. Our company reports the most overnight use of all the outfitters, powerboat or floatboat, and we overnight at our Copper Creek facility; we do not camp unless we are running a float trip, which we do 3 times a year. We camp 1 night at the dam, 1 night at Rush Creek, and the final night at Copper Creek and that is it. I think you will find that you could settle this problem with a reservation system among the floaters. (Correspondent 252)

Comment 425-13. The restrictions do nothing to affect campsite competition. It seems to us that over use is really an issue of campsites in the wild section, and again we ask you, what does this have to do with commercial jetboat outfitters? (Correspondent 252)

Comment 425-14. What does limiting trip duration for commercial powerboats have to do with the need for reducing campsite competition? You want to severely limit one day powerboat trips which have no impact on campsites and pose no competition for those sites. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***Limiting trip duration is a function of managing use activities that currently exist, and eliminating new types of use that could contribute to competition for campsites in some river sections in the future. The primary use of the river corridor by commercial powerboats is conducting trips that last one day or less.***

Drop camps remain an option available for all outfitters. They were identified in the Regional Forester's appeal decision as operational limitations, but were deferred from further analysis in the EA per the decision of the Forest Supervisor. In providing drop camp service, the commercial outfitters function primarily as a taxi service for private users who must complete a self-issue permit for access to the river corridor, subject to the same camping and use restrictions as floaters and powerboaters.

Comment 425-15. The FEIS, and more recently, the preferred Alternative C did not take into consideration how Kirby Creek Lodge helped protect the Canyon corridor and the River. Opening our doors to the public has taken some of the pressure off the limited campsites. We have always been a good neighbor to the USFS and other governmental agencies working in the canyon as well as other fellow river users. (Correspondent 248)

Forest Service Response: ***Under Alternative C, the outfitter at Kirby Creek can continue to overnight both private and commercial guests. The outfitter and guide operating guidelines do acknowledge the benefit of overnight use at lodges as reducing impacts to, and competition for, river campsites.***

Subject 426
Boat Size

Comment 426-1. An objectionable facet of the preferred alternative is: increase in the maximum size of jet boats to 42 feet in length. (Correspondent 53)

Comment 425-2. Page III-I heading "Environmental Consequences." Of the seven items listed not one speaks of the canyon, only money, and then I see an indication of why. Page III-37, New boats under construction will be allowed." Are you really going to allow a 55 foot boat into this canyon? The forty footers are tearing it apart right now. Especially during high water when their wakes rip at unprotected shorelines. (Correspondent 82)

Comment 426-3. The ROD stated the maximum powerboat length for new boats is 39.6 feet. The Appeal Decision does not authorize a change in this decision. A regulation on length was arrived at to limit the potential boat wake effect on other recreationists. The length as proposed in Alternative B should not be increased. (Correspondent 159)

Comment 426-4. We believe that placing limits on size [of commercial powerboats] will ensure that less people will see Hells Canyon, not that they will receive the desired recreational opportunity experience, as you claim. The number of people in a boat has never been a concern. In fact, larger boats are one of the few ways outfitters have to deal with restrictions on numbers of launches. (Correspondent 252)

Comment 426-5. Powerboat length is not clarified. We currently have a 55 ft. boat under construction and must have clarification that it will be in use even though it exceeds the 42 ft. length limit stated in Alternative C. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester's appeal decision directed the Forest Supervisor to analyze the effects of operational limitations on commercial uses. Boat length is an operational limitation and was included in the proposed action that was sent out to the public for scoping comments. Alternative C would allow boats that were 42 feet in length, an increase of 2.5 feet from the boat length in preferred Alternative G of the FEIS. In addition, boats larger than 42 feet in use or under construction that can be confirmed through documentation within 30 days of issuance of the decision notice will be allowed to operate until they are replaced.***

Appendix E of the FEIS provides information on the effects of boat wakes on sand bars in Hells Canyon. Appendix K of the FEIS, pages K-180 and K-181 provide information on boat wakes. Also, the Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the establishment of "no wake" zones at administrative and developed recreation sites.

Comment 426-6. From where did the concern about double-decked boats come? We hope that you do not define boats with two levels of seating as double decked. Every commercial tour boat on the river has seating in the cabin and on the engine compartment level. This split-level arrangement is a necessity and, while at two levels, is certainly not double decked with one deck of passenger seating directly above the other. Please clarify this so that no over-zealous official will try to eliminate split level boats. Is there any data available that shows why one size of boat is acceptable and another is not? (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Eliminating the potential for double-decked boats was a component of allocation of powerboat use levels in the purpose and need in the FEIS (Page I-3). It was carried over as part of the Limits of Acceptable Change Task Force which recommended single deck boats only to minimize their effect on other users. Part of the negative effect of double-decked boats is their visual impact in the river corridor. The existing type of powerboats used in the canyon, with a split-level seating arrangement to facilitate use of seating over the engine compartment, is acceptable.***

Comment 426-7. Paragraph 9 discusses boat size restriction exclusive to power boats. In response to a vaguely-worded need citing "concerns about the potential negative appearance of large double decked boats" the agency proposes to restrict length of power boats. In response to unquantified concerns about height of boats (double-decked), the agency action would impose a length restriction. Nowhere does the agency explain how the specific length figure was determined. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***A 42-foot length limit fully utilizes two aluminum sheets used in jetboat manufacturing without any waste. The effective use of raw materials in construction, without waste, and the potential to increase seating capacity to reduce economic effects of allocation limits were both factors in this decision. The information on utilization of raw materials in jetboat manufacturing was information that was obtained during scoping. Reference pages III-15 and III-37 of the EA.***

Comment 426-8. There is no disclosure of how many, if any, of the customers would be willing and able to make reservations in advance before they run a jet boat tour. There is also no reason to believe that in the event that a predetermined launch schedule were implemented, most or all of the potential customers of jet boat outfitters could be accommodated using allocated launches.

The OEA fails to disclose how many jet boat customers are "transient" tourists, how many of such customers exist per individual outfitting company, and whether these customers are able to take a jet boat trip the next day, or three or four days later if the seats on the allocated launches for the day they walk in are filled. It fails also to consider that a customer who is turned away by one jet boat outfitter whose launches are full, could buy a trip from a different outfitter.

Comment 426-8. In paragraph 6, the agency once again generalizes without hard data by stating that "many" power boat clients are "walk-in" customers ("walk-in" is undefined). Without having the specific data to determine how placing the non-motorized period on Monday-Wednesday will affect this behavior, it seems questionable that the agency can draw any conclusion about the interplay between response to customer needs and management of "total use to meet recreation objectives." (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***Since the existing situation reflects use patterns that are dependent upon unlimited commercial powerboat use, much of it can only be based upon professional judgment pending implementation and monitoring to determine specific effects of all allocations under the new river plan. The allocation of boat days is provided on a flexible schedule to accommodate all types of visitors who use commercial powerboat services. A peak use analysis was conducted based on modified Alternative C which indicated that the primary factor creating peak use was not commercial powerboat traffic, but private powerboat use.***

Subject 427
Kickers

Do Not Prohibit Kickers

Comment 427-1. I am writing in regard to our conversation regarding the new management plan which calls for the elimination of kicker motors on float craft year round. We feel that this decision should be reversed for several reasons. Foremost among these is the safety issue involved in running Hells Canyon at high flows. The high water conditions we have experienced in the last two years substantially raises the chances for flipping boats, and makes rescue efforts increasingly difficult.

The use of kicker motors on both the Snake and Salmon Rivers also increases the efficiency of evacuating an injured or sick person.(Correspondent 38)

Comment 427-2. NORS has strongly advocated for the prohibition of power vehicles in the Wild section of the Snake. Amazingly, the EA prohibits "kickers", motors for float boaters, to reduce noise and to protect the environment and the quality of experience for the river user, and, at the same time, the EA allows for an increase in jetboat use which surely will have an adverse effect on the environment and the quality of experience. These recommendations are just another example of the flawed logic governing the decisions on the Snake throughout the history of the Forest Service's management of this Wild and Scenic River. (Correspondent 135)

Comment 427-3. The folly of eliminating kickers on motorized days demonstrates a complete lack of management sense on behalf of the Forest Service. On these days there may be five parties, of up to 24 people each, floating the river. Also power boats will be allowed use of the same corridor, at the same time. Even so, the Forest Service claims that eliminating kickers on these motorized days will: "increase the opportunity for solitude on motorized days." If there is already an opportunity for solitude on motorized days, why is the Forest Service, by their own admission, eliminating power boats in order to provide "an enhanced perception of solitude and remoteness."? (Correspondent 180)

Comment 427-4. During the nonmotorized periods it would seem unlikely that there could be any question about kickers; we assume that nonmotorized probably means no motors. During motorized period there should not be any question either; motors should be allowed, including kickers. Most certainly motors must be compatible with the desired recreation experience during those times. And, how in the world is the use of kickers related in any way to increasing opportunities for solitude on motorized days? (Correspondent 184)

Comment 427-5. Kickers have nothing to do with solitude when you are allowing float parties of up to 24 people and 8 boats. The American Heritage dictionary defines solitude as "the state or quality of being along or remote from others." Congress recognized that even wilderness would not always be able to provide solitude in its definition of the kind of recreation experience wilderness was to provide, one with opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The "or" in that definition was not accidental. The W&SRA does not even mention solitude or another kind of recreation experience. It does not prohibit motors. Elimination of kickers will do nothing to prevent cargo rafts from racing down river to claim the best campsites. Some float outfitters do it now without kickers. There is no reason to prohibit kickers on your motorized days and there should be no nonmotorized days at all. Again, a campsite reservation system would resolve the campsite concerns once and for all without limiting access or the use of motors. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***The prohibition of use of floatboat kickers in the wild river helps meet the intended primitive and semi-primitive recreation experience. This action will increase opportunities for periods where visitors are isolated from the sights and sounds of other users. For more information on this subject, see the FEIS Appendix K-Noise From Kickers, pages K-194 and 195, page A-26 of the ROD and page III-15 of the EA.***

Comment 427-7. The floater who use trolling motors, are they considered boaters or motor floaters? (Correspondent 52)

Forest Service Response: ***They are floaters. The Snake River Plan allows "valid non-motorized craft" to use outboard motors of up to 15 horsepower. Their use is restricted to downstream propulsion and maneuverability. Valid motorized craft are rivercraft with rigid hulls, watercooled exhausts, mufflers, etc. For complete rivercraft definitions specific to the Snake River see page 5 of the Snake River Plan.***

Subject 428
Jet Boat Launch Schedule

Comment 428-1. There is no disclosure of how many, if any, of the customers would be willing and able to make reservations in advance before they run a jet boat tour. There is also no reason to believe that in the event that a predetermined launch schedule were implemented, most or all of the potential customers of jet boat outfitters could be accommodated using allocated launches. The OEA fails to disclose how many jet boat customers are "transient" tourists, how many of such customers exist per individual outfitting company, and whether these customers are able to take a jet boat trip the next day, or three or four days later if the seats on the allocated launches for the day they walk in are filled. It fails also to consider that a customer who is turned away by one jet boat outfitter whose launches are full, could buy a trip from a different outfitter. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***Currently, powerboat outfitters as a group, are only utilizing approximately 50% of the seating capacity that their boat day allocation allows. This is based upon current boats in use or currently under construction. (See analysis files which are available for public review). Although it is unrealistic to think that powerboat outfitters could sell 100% of their seats on 100% of their trips, this unused seating capacity combined with flexible launch schedules will allow a considerable degree of responsiveness to people wishing to take jetboat tours into Hells Canyon.***

Comments in Support of Rigid Schedule

People expressed views in support of rigid launch schedules. The Forest Service response follows several comments.

Comment 428-2. Objectionable facets of the preferred alternative are: elimination of daily launch caps for commercial jet boats, substituting a launch schedule that allows boat days to be used at any time during a given month or season. (Correspondent 53)

Comment 428-3. [Crowding on the river] will only be exacerbated by allowing "flexibility" for commercial jet boat launches. The preferred alternative's proposal to allow jet boat launches to be used by the permit holder selectively over vast time periods rather than a definitive launch schedule will result in much higher concentrations of use when walk-in business is highest. It will also eliminate any predictability on the part of those seeking a nonmotorized experience as to how many jet boats they might encounter during a given time and/or in a specific place.

Commercial float operators have worked under a rigid launch schedule for 18 years and there is no good reason commercial jet boat operators could not do the same. The OEA fails to disclose whether commercial float business would benefit if they were on a "flexible" schedule that allowed them to run trips as customers came to them rather than on a calendar that only allows launches on specific days.

In a bizarre twist, the OEA states that jet boat outfitters need flexibility, yet it turns around and says that walk-in business is fairly steady. If it is fairly steady, why do they need the flexibility provided by allowing them to use their launches whenever they wish?

The OEA admits that under the revised commercial jet boat use allocation it proposes, there would only be a "moderate" potential of achieving the desired recreation experience due to increased levels of powerboat use on weekends. (Correspondent 53)

Comment 428-4. My biggest concern is the abandonment of the strict launch schedule for jetboat outfitters. Floaters (both private & outfitter) live with strict launch schedules for the Wild & Scenic Snake River and on every major river in the West. There is absolutely no reason to feel that powerboaters cannot do the same. In 1972, float outfitters complained that they could not book the Middle Fork unless they had launches on Sunday or Monday so that people could travel through a single week. Today we all outfit on the Middle Fork on a rotating 8 day cycle, and we have figured out how to book our dates regardless of which dey of the week the launch date falls on. Your economic study contradicts itself when you state that powerboaters need flexibility, and then follow with the statement that demand is steady and constant for powerboat outfitter services during the prime season. Powerboat outfitters can figure out how to best utilize a limited allocation. After all, that is what float outfitters have done for over 20 years.

No river can have meaningful management without launch schedules. The Wild & Scenic Snake in Halls Canyon is no exception. The key problem is incredible over crowding on weekends and holidays by both private and commercial powerboats. The agency plan provides for a limit of 6 private powerboat launches on a daily basis into the Wild River, and we all know that those launches will focus on weekends and that these boat parties will largely lay over for 1, 2, or 3 nights of camping in the Wild River. That means that we can expect to see around 18-24 private powerboats on the Wild Snake on weekend days. The only reason floaters could accept such a flexible private jetboater schadule was that we had been led to expect a strict launch schedule for commercial powerboaters. Now, your plan gives powerboat outfitters a monthly flexible schedule (unless you are a small jetboat outfitter who can use his/her days anytime he/she wants under the preferred alternative). All that means is that all weekends and all holideys will be over crowded just as they have been in the past. Your preferred alternative locks in place the problems we have all experienced in the past. The preferred alternative locks in place the very problems that have forced the agency to begin to manage the Hells Canyon resource.

To say that powerboat outfitters cannot survive without a flexible schedule is ludicrous. I must admit I admire them for their claim, but I can only scoff at their request. Launch schedules force an outfitters to market their services. Launch schedules force outfitters to cooperate among themselves and to share clients. The Hells Canyon jetboat outfitters haven't figured any of that out yet. They would rather run a 4 guest trip up the river that loses money than refer clients to a competitor who has a launch on that particular day. Floaters have figured out that referring clients goes and comes both ways. We regularly refer customers to one of the Hells Canyon outfitters who has the date a customer needs. Powerboat outfitters would be economically better off if they made fewer boat moves, and if every boat move was a full trip. A strict launch schedule will force them to work together so that happens. A strict launch schedule forces outfitters to aggressively market their trips, and it conversely allows them to operate fewer boats and to spread their use. Living with launch schedules is not easy, but it does work for every other river outfitter I know of, and it will work for Hells Canyon powerboat outfitters. The key to launch schedules is that you have a certain quality of experience that every Hells Canyon user can count on. Without launch schedules over crowding will occur on every weekend and holiday, just as in the past.

The only way I can support a flexible jetboat outfitter schedule is if the time frame is reduced from one month allocations to one week allocations, and if a monitoring system is put in place to make sure the outfitter powerboat business is not focusing heavy use on weekends and holidays. The monitoring system should be designad to make sure that powerboat outfitting use was not focusing on weekends and holidays. If the use is so focused, it should be spread out by a strict launch schedule. (Correspondent 158)

Comment 428-5. Floaters have been forced by heavy jetboat traffic to abandon the Scenic River section of Hells Canyon. That means that each outfitter with a regular 14 start allocation can usually only use the river 3 for 4 (the normal number of days to float from Hells Canyon Cr. to Pittsburg Land) of every 8 days during the control season. How can you be sympathetic to the demands of jetboaters for a flexible schedule when floaters work on such a strict launch date schedule. Floaters have been carefully and extensively managed for over 20 years in Hells Canyon by the Forest Service. We don't agree that jetboaters should not be managed in a similar manner to us.

In addition to giving up the Scenic River, floaters have been forced to abandon the three summer holiday weekends - Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day. Floating on these weekends has always meant encountering an incredible number of powerboats. By abandoning a launch schedule, your preferred alternative locks in this over crowding and abuse of the Hells Canyon resource for the next term of management. (Correspondent 158)

Comment 428-6. Throughout the ROD, the reduction in severity of peak levels is stressed. Allowing the jet boat operators to allocate their own launch days is directly in contradiction to this stated objective.

This is also contrary to the ROD directive to "limit the number of powerboat launches to resolve user crowding on peak use days and to spread use more evenly throughout the primary season" and to "provide a variety of recreation opportunities to meet user expectations whenever possible but managed at spatial and temporal levels that would have the least impact on other users' opportunities." ROD, p. 10.

In assessing the need for additional jet back launches the Forest Service commented "convenience is not a sound rationale for determining powerboat numbers when the purpose and need for action place a priority on managing a wild river for quality recreation opportunities." ROD, p. 13. The same rationale would apply to launch schedules. There is a need for a launch schedule to protect the resources. Convenience to the outfitter or walk-in customers is not the paramount consideration.

Alternative B assigned launch dates to each commercial jet boat outfitter as is done with the commercial float outfitters. To allow the outfitter to allocate its own launch days within the month to accommodate walk-in customers will only cause to increase congestion on popular days - such as weekends - and would definitely not protect ORVs nor would it be a fair and equitable allocation of use when float outfitters are assigned specific launch dates. It is not a fair and equitable allocation of use to reduce the number of people and boats in this plan for floaters and not place similar restriction on jet boat use. (Correspondent 159)

Comment 428-7. It is absurd to think you will achieve meaningful control of the numbers of jet boats on any given day in the wild section when the allocation is flexible in month long blocks. As far as I can deduce from your preferred Alternative C, there is no cap on the number of power boats on the river on a daily basis. There is no way I can support a plan which does not control numbers of boats. (Correspondent 168)

Comment 428-8. The flexible launch schedule found in plan C is unacceptable to me. No proof of necessity is given, save the commercial powerboater's say so. This schedule allows for "peak" periods which could significantly impact the recreational experience of the floatboat users and ultimately result in a negative economic impact to my business. No hard numbers are given to define the potential peak period impact. Averages are all the "proof" given that I will not be significantly impacted by "peak" usage. Experience refutes this. A guaranteed cap on peak powerboat numbers, no greater than the guaranteed powerboat/day limits in plan B, is an absolute necessity. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 428-9. In paragraph 7 Page III-5, it states "While the number of encounters may fluctuate slightly day to day due to the flexible launch schedule for commercial powerboats, this fluctuation is expected to meet the objective to minimize the effects of peak use because demand for commercial powerboat trips is a fairly steady daily market throughout the primary season." This argument in support of the flexible schedule would seem to contradict the argument made in justification of the need for flexibility. (pg III-4 P6 and page III-7 P9)

"This flexible launch schedule would allow commercial powerboaters the opportunity to schedule trips to accommodate the bulk of their historic passenger base, which is made up of a transient tourist population which often book trips on short notice." and (pg III-2 P8) in reference to Alt. A. That "commercial powerboat use has historically fluctuated on a daily basis". It would seem that the demand could either fluctuate enough to necessitate a flexible schedule, or, not fluctuate enough to prevent peaks, but not both. I find it interesting that nowhere in this plan is there any hard figure as to just exactly what the maximum potential powerboat use might be, given the flexible schedule. Without knowing this, and thus what the potential impact of this flexible scheduling might be for me, I can not accept it. There must be a concrete maximum number or cap. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 428-10. The problem with Alternative C is use peaks by commercial jet boat traffic. Without a daily schedule there are no concrete controls on any given day. Excessive use on a given day forfeits river safety, due to congestion. Wilderness values are compromised as is environmental protection. Additionally, there is no way to know when these peaks will occur. Thus, any trip potentially would run into congestion of problematic proportions. Camp site competition would become intense, indeed there would not be enough camps for all users. All these problems would become greater as time goes on and use increases.

As a float outfitter, I have been on a rigid schedule since I began in 86. Sure did like the freedom to take my launches whenever I want, but the rigid schedule is not a major impediment to doing business profitably. (Correspondent 253)

Comment 428-11. Specifically you have removed the most meaningful elements of power boat management, which was a strict launch schedule for jetboat outfitters. This was designed to spread use out evenly throughout the peak season, and avoid the congestion that has developed on weekends and holidays. You have responded to power boat outfitter claims that the bulk of their business is walk-in business from tourists which do not plan ahead. Obviously the large groups, tour bus groups, cruise ship groups, etc., are not planning at the last minute. While some segment of the market does sign up at the last minute, changing the plan as you have from Alternative B to Alternative C and allowing power boat use to occur without reasonable daily caps, is not acceptable. (Correspondent 254)

Comment 428-12. I urge you to stick with the allocation system developed for power boats in Alternative B, which addressed the very real need for spreading out use in Hells Canyon. The allocation should be used as planned on a per day basis, not a per month basis. At the very least, (to allow for some flexibility for commercial power boaters), it should be on a per week basis. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***The launch schedule has been modified to allow for seasonal, monthly, and bi-weekly schedules for small, medium, and large outfitters, respectively. A weekly allocation was considered but rejected due to the potential that on weeks with non-motorized periods, the commercial powerboat allocation for boat days upstream of Kirkwood would be utilized during only a four day period, with potentially higher peak use than a bi-weekly allocation.***

Alternative C was modified to provide a bi-weekly allocation to the larger outfitters versus a monthly allocation. This change was based on concerns that the proposed monthly flexible launch schedule for large outfitters would lead to peaks of use that may not meet semi-primitive experience levels.

For additional information, see the peak use discussions on pages 10 and 11 of the ROD and the peak use discussion in the decision notice. The analysis displayed in the decision notice indicates that the combination of a rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters and seasonal, monthly, and bi-weekly blocks of use for commercial powerboaters, along with the other operational limits contained in this decision, will resolve this peak use problem.

Comments Supporting a More Flexible Schedule

There were also comments supporting a more flexible schedule.

Comment 428-13. We appreciate the attempts in Alternative C to improve management direction in the FEIS as it affects outfitters. The added flexibility of allocating boat days by months instead of a daily calendar is a big improvement over B. We are better off with trips turning around at Kirkwood instead of Pittsburg, a nowhere destination for tours. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 428-14. Why does a launch schedule allow outfitters to be responsible to customer's needs? A tight schedule does just the opposite when you are dealing with walk-ins. The outfitter needs the flexibility to respond to demand, not just for a trip, but for a trip that meets the customers needs and desires. It is a schedule that takes away that flexibility. This makes no sense at all. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C was modified to provide a bi-weekly allocation to the larger outfitters versus a monthly allocation. This change was based on concerns that the proposed monthly flexible launch schedule for large outfitters would lead to peaks of use that may not meet semi-primitive experience levels. The decision notice indicates that the combination of a rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters and seasonal, monthly, and bi-weekly blocks of use for commercial powerboaters, along with the other operational limits contained in this decision, provides flexibility for outfitters yet resolves peak use problems.***

Subject 429
Noise

Comment 429-1. There are so few places anymore to just "hear" nature - the wind, the water, the wildlife, etc., without roaring engines and smelly fumes. Let's maximize quiet and minimize noise. Give us quiet folks some time! (Correspondent 37)

Comment 429-2. Noise from boat and raft parties has never been troublesome to us. The sounds are only present a few short seconds. (Correspondent 46)

Comment 429-3. Here you bring in the "amount of noise." We would assume, therefore that you have somehow quantified the amount of noise presently in the canyon and have some amount in mind that you want to target. What are these amounts? (Correspondent 184)

Comment 429-4. I passionately hope for more restrictions, I don't like the noise! (Correspondent 205)

Comment 429-5. Noise pollution - few days without jetboats is desirable. (Correspondent 257)

Comment 429-6. Jet boats are noisy and the wake scours the shoreline. (Correspondent 258)

Forest Service Response: ***Refer to the FEIS and ROD for discussion regarding the issue of noise and the FEIS Appendix E-Boat Wake Study for effects of boat wakes.***

Subject 430
Launching Floatcraft from Powercraft

Comment 430-1. An objectionable facets of the preferred alternative is: allowance of the launching of floatcraft from jet boats. (Correspondent 53)

Comment 430-2. You currently have all of the tools you need to control launching of float craft from commercial power boats. You require a float permit to provide that kind of service. The Idaho Outfitters and Guides Board requires a float license and licensed float guides. The statements made here are incorrect. If a power boater has a float permit, they should be permitted to launch float craft within the limits of whatever allocation affect their operation. This can be covered in a simple operating plan. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 430-3. Paragraph 10 addresses the launch of floatcraft from jet boats. Other methods of regulation would more effectively address the location and number of people on the river, which are presumably aspects influencing the "achievement of the desired recreation experience" that the agency is evaluating. Issuance of float permits and a campsite reservation system are more narrowly-tailored means that would better promote these same ends. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 430-4. A float permit is required to launch floatcraft from powerboats. If a powerboat has a float permit, they should be permitted to launch float craft within the limits of whatever allocation affects their operation. (Correspondent 252)

Comment 430-5. The ROD restricted the launching of inflatables from jet boats. The Appeal Decision did not authorize a change in this decision. The regulation was arrived at to reduce congestion and peak use. This restriction should not be changed. (Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***The launching of inflatables from commercial powerboats was considered an operational limitation in the Regional Forester's appeal decision. Alternative C will allow the launching of inflatable watercraft and transportation of people and equipment with a valid float launch permit by commercial powerboat only. These activities will take place within the existing and applicable float and powerboat allocations thus meeting the intended semi-primitive recreation experience.***

Subject 431
Necessity of Use Limitations

There are still some people who believe there is no need to limit use of the river or that the restrictions go too far:

Comment 431-1. Any restriction of motorized river craft on the Snake River in Hells Canyon is preposterous. (Correspondent 2)

Comment 431-2. I do not believe that there should be restrictions yet on boats between Cache Creek and Pittsburg. (Correspondent 3)

Comment 431-3. I would appreciate it if you would not put a closure to power boats on the Snake River. (Correspondent 5)

Comment 431-4. Unnecessary restrictions placed on power-boaters and recreationists alike, Certainly! (Correspondent 19)

Comment 431-5. The artificial boat day cap should be raised in the wild river and eliminated altogether on the scenic river until a real need is demonstrated. There is no need today to limit use on the scenic river; nothing in this EA or its parent FEIS demonstrates a current need on any real world basis. Few of Hells Canyon's floaters, 25% or less, go below Pittsburg. Float traffic from the Lower Salmon moves through the Snake quickly in a wide, flat section of water that poses little conflict with power boating. So why is powerboating on the scenic river so severely curtailed? We suspect it is because some people thought it would be easier to do now, in conjunction with the wild river's even more severe limits, rather than later when it is actually needed.

Please don't regulate unless it is absolutely necessary. Regulation takes away our freedoms and we have precious little of those left already. Define conditions people want to exist in the scenic river, monitor those conditions and regulate only when they are threatened and other measures are no longer effective. We aren't there yet. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 431-6. Your Alternative C is the wrong choice! You still don't get the point that closures are not needed to control use on the river. Closures should be the very last choice if and when nothing else works. (Correspondent 134)

Comment 431-7. I can see no reason for some meddler that probably has never seen a day in Hells Canyon trying to put a bunch of restrictions on something that seems to be taking care of itself and offering so much recreation to so many people of all categories. (Correspondent 138)

Comment 431-8. The entire plan to eliminate power boats, for any period of time, in the wild corridor of Hells Canyon is needless. (Correspondent 180)

Forest Service Response: ***The purpose and need for action in Chapter I of the FEIS, displays the indications that increasing use was affecting recreational experiences within the wild and scenic river. Refer to Chapter I in the FEIS for a complete discussion regarding purpose and need for action. Chapter IV of the FEIS provides detailed information concerning the effect of use levels upon a variety of the river's outstandingly remarkable values, including the intended recreation experience. The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the FEIS's environmental analysis process, efforts to maintain the desired recreational experience, and the overall carrying capacity of the river.***

Although powerboat use levels will be managed upon implementation of this decision, the ROD for the FEIS stressed that there is not a need to eliminate powerboat use in either the wild or scenic rivers, "not now and not in the future."

Subject 432
Shared Use

As indicated by the responses below, it is evident that most people who commented agree that the river should be shared. They are not as universal in their view on what "shared use" means:

Comment 432-1. There should be absolutely no restrictions on boaters use, and it is fine that floaters can enjoy the river as well. (Correspondent 12)

Comment 432-2. The majority of the people want to share - let us have the opportunity. (Correspondent 14)

Comment 432-3. Keep the river open to all users. (Correspondent 16)

Comment 432-4. It appears everyone wants for the most part, Less Government Control and Interference. I know there are people who want it all to themselves, but I don't feel it's theirs to keep. (Correspondent 17)

Comment 432-5. We believe we have options for floating and powerboating and that Hells Canyon should remain accessible by power boat at all times. (Correspondent 18)

Comment 432-6. The majority of people want to share; please give us that opportunity. (Correspondent 23)

Comment 432-7. Our observation is that there is plenty of room on this Snake River and in the Hells Canyon for ALL of the current users. There appears to be no infringement on one-another's enjoyment. (Correspondent 32)

Comment 432-8. There is no reason that the power boat people and the float boat people cannot get along. There is no reason the "private groups" and the "Outfitted groups" cannot get along in Hells Canyon. (Correspondent 42)

Comment 432-9. My family uses the river during the weekdays and we do not understand why we must change our recreational habits because a few object to us. The majority of people want to share; please give us that opportunity. Don't deny us use of our incredible river and canyon - not for one hour, not for one day. (Correspondent 56)

Comment 432-10. Motorized users want no greater rights than their non-motorized friends, we recognize both are legitimate forms of recreation but we will never accept lesser rights. (Correspondent 162)

Comment 432-11. Public preference as expressed in the U of I study does not support the actions taken in this plan. The majority of public input during the planning process has overwhelmingly supported shared use at reasonable levels. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 432-12. There is a place for both floaters and jet boaters. (Correspondent 258)

Forest Service Response: ***Modified Alternative C provides for a mix of recreation experiences that include opportunities for both powerboaters and floaters, while protecting the river's outstandingly remarkable values and assuring that the intended recreational experiences will be available for future generations. All river miles can be shared by both motorized and non-motorized rivercraft users 344 days per year. On the remaining 21 days, all river portals and 70% of the river miles are available for shared use.***

Refer to Chapters II and IV of the FEIS for a complete discussion and analysis of the appropriate levels of river use.

Subject 433
Area of Operation

Comment 433-1. In the economic analysis your team put together, you showed a -71%, in revenue for our business with this new and improved plan. We would say that this is very accurate, since only 22% of our allotted days go past Kirkwood. As a new business, that is already struggling to survive, how will we overcome an obstacle such as this. We have been told by Forest Service people to be creative, and we are trying, but you can only be so creative, when you are limited, unjustly, to what you can offer your customers. We have to be able to go to Rush Creek. (Correspondent 246)

Forest Service Response: ***Table III-9 in the EA displays levels of gross revenue effects for Alternative A, B, and C as well as a scenario where the outfitter chose not to sell or is unable to sell any of the new market opportunities created by both Alternatives B and C. This last scenario is titled "No New Market Opportunities" and is provided for comparative purposes.***

For this correspondent's business, the EA predicted a 30% reduction in gross revenue under Alternative C and a 71% reduction if the outfitter chose not to sell or is unable to sell any of the new market opportunities associated with Alternatives B and C.

The updated analysis in Table III in the decision notice incorporates business operations during the period 1993-95. Alternative C with modifications shows a projected 14% decline in gross revenue for this business. The amount of boat days allocated above Kirkwood was determined to meet the intended recreation experience for that river segment. Refer to Appendix C, Outfitter and Guide Operating Guidelines for further description of the allocation of boat days. The projected decline in gross revenue

may be mitigated by a raise in prices, better marketing and utilization of boat seating capacity, and/or more use of the secondary season.

Comment 433-2. There is no good reason to keep any of us out of the "Wild Section" at all. We hope that you will come to the conclusion that, we should not be additionally limited to Kirkwood on any of our allocated days. (Correspondent 246)

Comment 433-3. With regard to paragraph 3 addressing specific portals, there does not seem to presently be a need to further specify the allowable portals for outfitter services. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 433-4. It will be especially rough if we are denied access to the part of the river this business was built upon over 25 years ago. Our trips have always gone through Rush Creek, not just to Rush Creek. We should be allowed to continue to run through that class IV rapid, a highlight of our tours that has made them special. (Correspondent 251)

Comment 433-5. Forest Service policy requires that the permittee charge reasonable rates and furnish such services as may be necessary in the public interest. We do not understand how, by specifying launch locations, the availability of a desired mix of visitor services can be better assured. The majority of commercial outfitters use the Cache Creek portal. The reason for this is because the preferred method of seeing the canyon is by jetboat, and the outfitters are located where it is most convenient for the public to utilize their services. If your policy requires that we furnish these services then why are you undeniably trying to restrict them. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***The various operational limitations in this decision are needed in order to move the river settings and use levels towards a semi-primitive recreation experience and to assure an appropriate level and quality of outfitted services are available at river portals. Please see the EA, Chapter III, and the DN for more detailed information.***

Comment 433-6. With regard to paragraph 2, "Areas of operation," what data does the agency believe establishes the "undesirable concentration of use" and "associated levels of encounters" in some river segments? The changes contained in the proposed action must be reasonably tied to the ends identified by the agency, but the lack of specific data establishing the desired concentration and encounter levels prevents one from reviewing the agency findings. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service analysis concerning use levels and encounters is displayed in the FEIS Chapter IV and further explained in Appendix K. The Regional Forester's appeal decision affirmed the FEIS's environmental analysis process, efforts to maintain the desired recreational experience, and the overall carrying capacity of the river.***

Subject 440
Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

Comment 440-1. The real problem is that there is a small group of environmentalists, and float trip guides which are causing trouble for everybody, and reporting of this issue is slanted in favor of the rafters. An example is a recent editorial in the Statesman on March 11, 1996 titled "Recreations tell each other to take a hike" reporting on the conflict between rafters and power boat users in Hells Canyon. The editorial stated that 19,223 rafts and kayaks, and 56,317 power boats used the canyon in 1992. The article implies these are the number of boat launches, when in truth they must be numbers of persons. The power boat number also seems to be incorrect. The real truth is that on any day, the number of rafts using the river far exceeds the number of power boats. Assuming 15 small power boats on the river in any given day with 6 people per boat, which I believe represents an above average day of power boat usage in the stretch between Hells Canyon

Dam and Pittsburg Landing, results in 60 people on the river using small power boats a day. Now add 4 trips per day for the guide boats that carry 40 people per boat, which results in an additional 160 people per day. It would take 256 days a year at this level of powerboat usage to get 56,317 people on the river. This is not a realistic use figure. (Correspondent 119)

Forest Service Response: ***Public interest and perceptions about the Snake River are diverse. Please refer to the FEIS, Appendix K, Introduction and pages K-176-177, Regional Versus National Use.***

Daily use levels on the river have been highly variable. Please see the peak use discussions in the ROD and the decision notice. Detailed use level information is contained in the FEIS and EA analysis files and available for public review. The use numbers this correspondent is relying upon have not been accurately conveyed. The numbers refer to service days rather than boats.

Comment 440-2. Page I-2, 5 addresses a need for nonmotorized experience. There is no need! The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is silent on issues such as solitude and remoteness. These terms fall in the realm of wilderness where a very specific kind of recreation is clearly specified, a place where mechanized transportation is prohibited. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 440-3. The condition of solitude is addressed in the Wilderness Act, but it is not a designated desired condition of either the W&SR Act or the HCNRA language. It is ludicrous of the Forest Service to attempt to justify elimination of motorized use in the river corridor of Hells Canyon, for any period of time, in order to achieve a "desired condition" which does not exist within the purview of any congressionally designated management mandate for the Hells Canyon Area. (Correspondent 180)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed the decision to provide a limited duration non-motorized period. The EA and this decision adjusts the timing and duration of the non-motorized period per the Regional Forester's direction. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act states that Wild Rivers "represent vestiges of primitive America." The non-motorized periods contribute to the diversity of recreation opportunities and outfitter services on the Snake River. Analysis (reference the analysis file) indicates that implementation of the non-motorized period will have a 2% or less impact upon the gross revenues of powerboat outfitters, as a group.***

Comment 440-4. If the purpose of this plan is to reduce campsite competition, and impacts on the land while enhancing solitude and remoteness, you have selected the wrong sectors to reduce and eliminate. Day use power boating has virtually no land based impacts and we don't use campsites. We move quickly through the river corridor and don't dillydally around the rapids and other attractions. We don't spread our people out over miles of river and divide our parties to get the best campsites. So why then were we targeted for reduction and partial elimination while floaters went unscathed? What kind of solitude can you find on a raft trip with 24 other laughing and screaming people? What is your sense of remoteness in a crowd such as this? Are you more primitive in your ABS plastic kayak or pink hypalon raft than in a jet boat? This is senseless and the actions taken in the plan to achieve these misdirected goals are unjustified. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 440-5. The level of commercial boating use levels proposed in the EA's preferred alternative (Alternative C) does not allow the corridor to meet primitive or semi-primitive recreational settings and institutionalizes historic use patterns. Commercial jet boat use has increased exponentially since enactment of the HCNRA in 1975 and by institutionalizing historic use patterns, the recreational ORV is not protected and enhanced but instead degraded because of congestion, loss of a sense of remoteness, serenity and solitude. (Correspondent 159)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed the carrying capacity (subject to the adjustments contained in this decision) for the Snake River within the HCNRA in relation to a wide variety of outstandingly remarkable river values. Factors that contribute to managing for the intended recreation***

experience associated with the recreation ORV include use levels, party size, boat size, encounters, congestion, noise, and many others. Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter IV, Environmental Consequences to the Recreation Resources Outstandingly Remarkable Value and Related Social Conditions, pages IV-9 through 81.

Comment 440-6. Goal: limit the number of daily powerboat launches to resolve user crowding on peak use days, and to spread use more evenly throughout the primary season.

Goal #2 as listed above is of utmost importance. Crowding on peak use days is probably the most volatile ingredient in the social conflicts that develop at major rapids, campsites and popular visitation sites. More emphasis needs to be placed in this issue with provisions written into the plan for annual monitoring and mandatory annual adjustment of daily boat days in all sections of the river to eliminate peak use days and to spread use more evenly throughout the primary season. Some business flexibility may be appropriate, but not to the extent that the flexibility would result in peak use days or fail to evenly distribute use throughout the primary season. (Correspondent 163)

Forest Service Response: ***Please see the peak use discussions in the the ROD and decision notice. The peak use analysis displayed in the decision notice indicates that the combination of a rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters and seasonal, monthly, and bi-weekly blocks of use for commercial powerboaters, along with the other operational limits contained in this decision, will resolve the peak use problems.***

Comment 440-7. Comments on Summary: Table II-2 -- Capability to achieve Desired Recreation Experience (page II-23) The values assigned for all three alternatives, in all four categories, seem arbitrary. The two primary user segments, the powerboat, and floatboat, are so divergent in wants and needs that no chart combining these two segements, such as this one can offer any meaningful information and valuation, Those values assigned for Alt C under both the Wild and Scenic categories for the Desired Recreation Experience might well represent that of the powerboat user, but certainly cannot be defended for that of the floatboat user. Averaging them could at a maximum, make a Moderate potential and would then accurately represent neither, since one wants a quantity of experience, the other quality, defined by solitude. Each group's desired experience devalues that of the others. The same can be said of the Visitor management, Campsite Competition and the Diversity of Outfitter\Services Categories. Certainly for the Floatboat segment, whatever valuation is assigned in Alt B must decrease in Alt C., given the lack of powerboat guarantee limits, and the decrease in number of motorless days. (Correspondent 245)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comments about how divergent the user groups are and the challenge of considering both groups' needs in evaluating the alternatives. Please see the peak use discussions in the ROD and DN. The peak use analysis displayed in the decision notices indicates that the combination of a rigid launch schedule for private powerboaters and seasonal, monthly, and bi-weekly blocks of use for commercial powerboaters, along with the other operational limits contained in this decision, will resolve the peak use problem. Moreover, the number of days with a non-motorized period in Alternative C as modified by this decision has been raised to 21 days and dispersed in 3 day blocks, every other week, in June, July and August.***

Comment 440-8. The diverse spectrum of needed services is presently being provided in the NRA, and there is no demonstrated need for the proposed action. Furthermore, by placing the smaller powerboat outfitters at financial risk, the proposed action is likely to disrupt the present balance and cause a void in the variety of outfitter services available to the public. In particular, members of the public will find it extremely difficult to find a personalized, outfitted trip utilizing power boats which parallels the experience that private individuals who have the necessary experience, knowledge, equipment, and time are able to enjoy. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***The need for the specific proposed action is addressed in the EA, Chapter I and for the overall changes to Snake River management in the FEIS, Chapter I. Table III in the decision notice displays a positive effect upon gross revenue for three of the smallest outfitters and a negative effect for four of this group. The reason the smallest outfitters are allocated limited primary season use is that historically these business have had limited operations and low levels of primary season use on the Snake River. In some cases, they have specialized in secondary season use and/or divide their time between the Snake and other other area rivers.***

In addition, this group of outfitters have the flexibility of using their primary season boat days throughout the primary season, and like all outfitters, have unlimited use during the secondary season. The flexible schedules for powerboat outfitters and other factors have contributed to Alternative C being evaluated in Chapter III of the Snake River Outfitter EA as having a high capability of providing a diverse outfitted experience by offering a variety of outfitted services.

Subject 441
Desired Future Condition (Carrying Capacity)

Comment 441-1. There needs to be a complete reevaluation of the allocations for all user sectors, and along with it the "desired recreation experience." It seems to us that the primary public expressing their desires here is the Forest Service planning team, not the people. The people expressed their desires very clearly in the way they use and access the canyon, overwhelmingly by power boat. Yet the plan ignores the public preferences, trying to reengineer the river towards floating, so it can be like every other wild and scenic river managed by the Forest Service. There seems to be a real fear of being different, of preserving an experience in Hells Canyon found nowhere else. It is the public who suffers from this lack of agency flexibility and creativity. You have something great today in Hells Canyon that can be found no where else, and experience that adds to the national and international diversity of recreation opportunities. Why ruin it? (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service has balanced the comments received from the local, regional and national sources with the laws and regulations of Congress. The Snake River will continue to have significantly more powerboat use than any of the rivers considered in the FEIS, Appendix H, Regional River Recreation Opportunities. See page K-46 of Appendix K of the FEIS for a more comprehensive response to the issue of public input.***

Comment 441-2. Paragraph 4 addresses allocation of use, and once again presents conclusions about a "desired recreation experience" without explaining how any data allow observation and control of this variable. Throughout the Outfitter EA, the agency has failed to identify whose "desired recreational experience" is being selected as the primary goal, and has failed to provide the data that justifies elevation of the subjective values of this user group, assuming such a group can be identified. Certain variables seem to be ignored, such as private use levels, time effects within the primary season, and trip length. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***The desired recreation experience has been determined by the analysis documented in the FEIS, the decision displayed in the ROD and affirmed by the Regional Forester's appeal decision. See the FEIS, Chapter IV-9 through IV-82, Environmental Consequences to the Recreation Resources Outstandingly Remarkable Value And Related Social Conditions, and Appendix K, pages 54-55 for information regarding the desired recreation experience.***

Comment 441-3. Floaters are once again going to obtain exclusive use of a portion of a river at a cost to the general public. Access will be allowed only to those persons who have the financial wherewithal to outfit their own trips or to hire onto multiple day trips. Although the "restricted" use is not total and does allow for continued access to the river by powerboats, at the risk of sounding somewhat like Chicken Little, we want to posit that this is the first step. Ultimately the vocal minority will not be satisfied until the wild and scenic portion of Hells Canyon above Pittsburg is in the same status as the middle fork of the Salmon, the Locsaw, the Selway and upper Clearwater. (Correspondent 259)

Forest Service Response: ***On page 12 of the ROD for the FEIS, the Forest Supervisor makes it very clear that he does not feel "there is a need to eliminate powerboat use in either the wild or scenic rivers--not now and not in the future." Floaters are considered one of the many sub-groups that comprise the "general public" for the purposes of this planning process.***

Subject 442
Ability to Obtain Expected Experience

Comment 442-1. We're certainly not in the land of freedom anymore, when you folks have no regards for the working person, operating their own business, when customers have the freedom to book a trip and go with who they want, when they want, we don't plan their vacations, or they will take their vacations out of State, and that will be less revenue for USFS and the State of Idaho. (Correspondent 10)

Forest Service Response: ***Many areas are experiencing growth in numbers of visitors and have had to restrict use to protect resources. More and more people are seeking outdoor experiences during their vacations, and continue to look for less populated settings. On a national and regional level, recreation demands are beginning to exceed opportunities in the more primitive types of settings--like those offered in Hells Canyon. Unlimited growth is not a feasible option if the resources of the Canyon are to be protected for future generations. The preferred alternative would protect resources and maintain a valuable recreational setting, while allowing traditional river use to continue.***

Comment 442-2. To restrict the canyon below Hells Canyon Dam effectively limits the choice of countless more individuals whose circumstances do not allow travel by any other means. Entire classes of our students, for example, who have toured the canyon as part of an environmental studies curriculum, would be less likely to continue this part of their program if access is limited during the spring. (Correspondent 25)

Comment 442-3. Our older citizens, the crippled, the families who only have a few days free, are having their rights taken away from them.

You should go and watch this river. The excursion boats are full daily of people over 60. Now you are truly considering taking their rights away from them. They have worked all their lives to be able to tour and see our country and enjoy our fantastical sights.

To consider taking away these peoples rights would make my conscience hurt. Is not the Forest Service made up of individuals like us, who believe "one for all, and all for one"? (Correspondent 28)

Comment 442-4. I do not want the outfitter services banned. (Correspondent 39)

Comment 442-5. The experience of Hells Canyon and its history should not be restricted to the younger more fit people - but should also include senior citizens and the handicapped. (Correspondent 90)

Comment 442-6. An aspect that concerns me is the effect on older persons, those in poor health and others who cannot, or may not want to camp overnight, to see the Canyon. As best as I can determine, during the control period, there will be essentially no way to get out, short of floating to Pittsburg, or at least Kirkwood Bar. This will force an overnight or a long trip by road back to the Dam in one day, and eliminate all the visitors who currently float part way to Kirkwood, and jetboat back to the Dam. I have seen and talked to people who take one day trips for that very reason. (Correspondent 102)

Comment 442-7. Many of the people we take into the canyon couldn't tolerate a rafting experience. Some are too old, disabled or infirm; others don't have enough time or can't afford a multi-day raft trip. Using our services they can see this unique river and canyon, traveling 180 to 208 miles through our continent's deepest canyon, experiencing its whitewater rapids. They treasure the opportunity. Many have told us that their day in Hells Canyon was the finest of their lives. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 442-8. We have a lot of people in the world today who enjoy recreation and visiting scenic places. They cannot all travel by float boat. Floaters always know they can get help from the outside, if necessary, when the jet boats come up in the morning. (Correspondent 126)

Comment 442-9. As users of the canyon, we depend upon power boats to transport clients and equipment to points providing access to our operation areas. We also are part of Hells Canyon "package vacations" being offered which include a combination of rafting, jatboating and trailrides. Closure of the river would virtually eliminate this type of vacation for the public. Many of the people wanting to experience Hells Canyon do not have the physical ability, time or inclination to spend several days on a river float, and elimination of the power boats will effectively deny them a Hells Canyon experience. (Correspondent 157)

Comment 442-10. This plan steps in and micro manages these once competitive power boating business, limiting their growth, scope, origin, amount, timing and type of service. Some of this is done directly and some indirectly. It essentially re-orders the wealth from these services, forcing consumers from power boating to floating, making the canyon less accessible for those with modest financial means, and the older and handicapped citizens. Instead the plan favors the young and wealthy who can afford and tolerate a multi-day trip. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 442-11. The average household has both husband and wife working. Do you think they can take a 6-day trip for their family of four? A 3-day? They can afford to come and take a 2 to 3 hour trip. I know, I've seen it. Again you are creating a place only a few can see. A few with money. The average family cannot afford your proposal. This community cannot afford to lose this service. (Correspondent 185)

Comment 442-12. The agency implies that it is responsible for providing the appropriate "diversity of commercial outfitter services for the public to choose from." This places the agency in a position of micro-managing changes in river use both between and within seasons to determine the desired level of services, and arguably makes the agency responsible for providing the appropriate services in the event that the heavily regulated market envisioned by the proposed action becomes economically unjustified to all outfitters at a portal. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 442-13. In paragraph 6, the agency once again generalizes without hard data by stating that "many" power boat clients are "walk-in" customers ("walk-in" is undefined). Without having the specific data to determine how placing the non-motorized period on Monday-Wednesday will affect this behavior, it seems questionable that the agency can draw any conclusion about the interplay between response to customer needs and management of "total use to meet recreation objectives." (Correspondent 249)

Comment 442-14. A large share of the people we take into the canyon could never experience such a resource if they had to go by raft. They simply couldn't handle an overnight float trip. This includes the elderly and disabled. But on our boats they can travel 190 miles of river in a day and run a class IV rapid in North America's deepest canyon. To deny some of them that experience to cater to a few rafters that don't like power boats is too high a price to pay. (Correspondent 251)

Comment 442-15. There are a lot of people whose only opportunity to see Hells Canyon is from a tour boat. A lot of these people are elderly and probably would not go see the Canyon another way. (Correspondent 256)

Forest Service Response: ***Access for the handicapped and/or elderly is addressed in the FEIS, Appendix K, pages 177-180. Commercial jetboat services will continue to be available on the Snake River every day of the primary season upon implementation of this decision. Comments on the economic effects of this decision are addressed under Subject 600, in this document.***

Restrict/Eliminate Powerboats

Comment 442-16. Though I have used jet boats to return from float trips in the Canyon, I am more than willing to arrange alternative shuttle services in order to reduce the number of people, the noise, the water disturbance to shore and river bottom caused by jet boats. (Correspondent 31)

Comment 442-17. I do not went powerboats of any kind used on the Snake or in the HCNRA, that includes kickers... (Correspondent 40)

Comment 442-18. I support your proposal to limit powerboat use on the Snake. When I am in the developed areas, I accept powerboats as part of the deal. In the remote sections of the river, I find powerboats to be intrusive and out of character. There is plenty of river for me to use my powerboat, why can't there be some sections where we can experience the river in a wilderness setting. (Correspondent 41)

Comment 442-19. To implement either Alternative B or C would be to deprive citizens access to THEIR river via commercial powerboat so that a privileged few can float as they wish, without regard to the fact that ALL Americans "own" the Netional Recreation Area. (Correspondent 48)

Comment 442-20. Power boaters readily accept reasonable limitations on their numbers but object to the closure. We have been reduced to second-class citizens who must stand aside while others enjoy the true Hells Canyon. (Correspondent 56)

Comment 442-21. Please stand up to the political pressure and do what is right for the wilderness and its non-motorized users. Don't let jetboaters ruin the quiet, the solitude, and the natural scenery. Please keep in mind all the recreationists who no longer raft or hike Hells Canyon because of the ear-shattering jet boats. The Forest Service has an obligation to them as well. (Correspondent 193)

Comment 442-22. The current volume of jet boat traffic has made the Snake River corridor an unpleasant place to be. I applaud the Forest Service efforts to re-establish the integrity of the river corridor for all users. (Correspondent 209)

Comment 442-23. I support your Alternative C and think that it should be implemented next summer. Sandra F. Mitchell of the Hells Canyon Alliance is wrong when she repeatedly says that floaters and powerboaters get along. This is the myth she is trying to make into a fact by endless repetition and by co-opting RAFT in support of this. We private rafters don't have an organization like the Alliance. Let me assure you, however, that most private rafters that I know strongly disagree with her position. (Correspondent 212)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service approach for managing overall use levels of both powerboats and floatboats has been affirmed by the Regional Forester's appeal decision. This decision responds to issues specific to the need to further analyze economic effects on individual commercial river permits including the timing and duration of the non-motorized period.***

Other Rivers Available for Noiseless and/or non-motorized experience

Comment 442-24. Please leave us [power] boaters who use it regularly this pleasure. The rafters (guided parties) probably use it only once in a lifetime. If this little noise bothers the guides themselves, then so should the car noise, etc. (Correspondent 46)

Comment 442-25. Jet boats are especially important to our business because they serve a large volume of locals and tourists. We were assured when that area was set aside that motorized boats would keep priority that they have had for a long time. Forest Service should work to maximize use opportunities, not limit them and should definitely not work for special interest groups that are trying to stop or limit motorized boats. (Correspondent 47)

Comment 442-26. The floaters who think that jet boats are loud and unsightly can certainly go to another damned river. You and the State Parks have already given them enough. (Correspondent 49)

Comment 442-27. My view of the Snake since 1980 has been "there's room for everyone and nice people including the Forest Service." Rules are needed as numbers increase but we all adapt! The specialty users have other rivers to use while the Snake should be the star example of Public Multiple Use! (Correspondent 68)

Comment 442-28. We feel that there are many more rivers that provide a non-motorized experience than rivers that provide a non-float experience. We feel that it will not be fair to take this away from the public or commercial power boaters. If you check your use records, people would rather see Hells Canyon by power boat than by float boat. You would be acting against the public to have a non-motorized period in Hells Canyon. Hells Canyon is not a good float river because it is too short. You can float it in three days and most outfitting companies are trying to stretch it out to 5 or 6 days. This is creating more use than there should be. My suggestion is to make float trips 3 days long with NO non-motorized period. (Correspondent 147)

Comment 442-29. Please reconsider and don't set Hells Canyon aside for any one particular user group. The proposed nonmotorized period entirely cuts out some river user groups out of Hells Canyon. How would you feel if your employer, the public, didn't allow you, the Forest Service, to go into Hells Canyon? Would this make it so you could look at this from another point of view. Or do you people no longer have to listen to the public? Please can you listen to the majority of the public and not a vocal minority groups, who appear to be very greedy? (Correspondent 177)

Comment 442-30. Powerboating the Snake is a very special experience that can't be equaled anywhere else in this country or, perhaps the world. By comparison, it is just a so-so rafting trip; all of the big rapids are located in the top 16 miles and most of the beaches are gone because of the upstream dams. Floaters already have exclusive use of just about all of the region's premiere white water rivers, including some that offer a top quality wilderness experience. You don't need to destroy businesses like mine and deny my customers access to provide rafters with more of the same they can find elsewhere. (Correspondent 251)

Comment 442-31. The initials HCNRA stand for Recreation Area. They do not say Wilderness Area. Since there are very few unrestricted rivers for boating, I am in favor of allowing the Snake to continue to be one of them. (Correspondent 149)

Comment 442-32. If this river was meant to be a "wilderness" river Congress should and could have said so. They chose to withdraw the river corridor from the wilderness and declared both motorized and non-motorized uses as valid. Too many years have passed, too many people have experienced the thrill of powerboating to now change the pattern of use. This river is a shared river. The sooner the Forest Service admits that, the sooner we can get on with working together and healing the wounds caused by the proposed "non-motorized" window. (Correspondent 162)

Forest Service Response: ***This decision allows powerboaters to continue to be able to access the river corridor from all portals 365 days per year. However, the Regional Forester affirmed the decision to manage use levels, to manage the river towards a semi-primitive recreational experience, to provide a non-motorized period, and to manage the river for both powerboating and floatboating recreation. See the FEIS, Appendix K, page 56 for a discussion of regional river opportunities and the intent to provide a variety of different levels of recreation experiences.***

Powerboaters Accept Limitations, But....

Comment 442-33. Many of our board members have boated Hells Canyon and cannot understand the necessity to remove any one of the user groups from the canyon. They unanimously agree that if studies indicate a need to restrict use in the canyon that all user groups should be restricted equally. Power boaters of the 90's are responsible individuals with high quality equipment and pose no threat to other river users. The power boat associations in the Hells Canyon area have gone to great lengths to educate power boat users on proper operation in the canyon. (Correspondent 63)

Comment 442-34. OSSA would like to go on record as opposing the preferred Alternative C which includes an expanded non-motorized window. Motorized recreationists have willingly compromised to attain workable solutions in areas where there are objections to their activities. However, motorized recreationists are faced more and more with decisions that go beyond a reasonable concession, forcing their growing numbers into reduced time frames and/or areas. In addition, it appears the Forest Service is ignoring the economic impact on the area and the people whose income is derived from motorized guiding. (Correspondent 72)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed the decision to manage use levels and to include a non-motorized period. Powerboaters will continue to be able to use the river corridor in larger numbers than any other user group during the primary season. Non-motorized periods contribute to the diversity of recreation opportunities and outfitter services on the Snake River. The non-motorized period has been reduced from 24 days in the FEIS and associated ROD to 21 days and been distributed evenly throughout June, July, and August to reduce the impact in July and August and to further increase the diversity of recreational opportunity in June.***

Comment 442-35. I would once again like to state "there is no way to stop these continuing battles until you regulate this public property with EQUAL TREATMENT FOR ALL. If I need a permit, so do you, if I don't, neither do you. (Correspondent 82)

Forest Service Response: ***Currently, all commercial and recreational floaters and powerboaters are required to have a trip permit, a self-issue permit or a special use permit. Upon full implementation of this decision, private and commercial river user groups (except those originating on the Salmon River) will have their use level managed through either a reservation system or a use allocation schedule, respectively. All river users will have managed levels of access.***

Comment 442-36. The public speaks loudly with it's expenditures and it is impossible to misunderstand their preference. It is for a motorized experience; that does not preclude non-motorized use. Where is the data supporting the statement that a segment of the public desires this experience? What proportion of the public has expressed this desire andd how did they do it? (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Appendix K of the FEIS displays the public comment on this issue in many of the "Areas of Concern" including 401-Recreational Experience, 403-Fair and Equitable Use, and 419-Noise.***

Comment 442-37. I believe there are many more reasons that powerboats should be allowed continuous access to the wild section of river than there are for excluding them. I will not enumerate them at this time as they apparently have been disregarded previously. (Correspondent 247)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester affirmed the decision to provide a non-motorized period. Analysis (reference the analysis file, available for public review) indicates that implementation of the non-motorized period will have a 2% or less impact upon the gross revenues of powerboat outfitters, as a group. The non-motorized periods contribute to the diversity of recreation opportunities and outfitter services on the Snake River.***

Diversity/Quality of Outfitted Services

Comment 442-38. The limits on boat days and growth force outfitters at every portal to concentrate on the services that pay best. This does not lend itself to diversity. If, for example, a Lewiston based outfitter has a choice between using a boat day for hauling 24 passengers on a day tour or taking 4 passengers on a fishing trip, there is no contest. The fishing trips are down the tubes. If an outfitter runs a small 18 passenger boat for excitement in the rapids and a personal touch, but could run 40 passengers with that same boat day on a larger boat, he will find himself moving to the larger boat, the only method of expansion available. When you start micro-regulating an industry which has been operating in a free market driven by demand, diversity of services will suffer. That is the case here at all of the portals. It is especially true when you factor in the power boat closure. On those days the only show in town is the multi-day float. How does this lend to diversity of services and choices? Lots of rivers offer exclusive whitewater float use; the Snake is one of the few that offers the whitewater power boating experience.

It is absolutely ludicrous that alternative A is listed in table II-2 as low and medium in diversity of outfitter services. It reflects a diversity far beyond that engineered in B or C. The severe limits in boat days associated with B and C will force outfitters to larger boats and away from fishing trips and other low payoff services that some members of the public like. The wild river power boat trips into the real Hells Canyon and through the class IV rapids are severely curtailed. Areas of operation are limited and overnight services virtually eliminated. The one bread and breakfast operation based on private land is locked up from free access by customers and the owners. The best fishing in the canyon is totally off limits to power boaters for a significant portion of the season. B eliminates the popular one day floats allowed under A; C permits them, but gives no allocation of launches. The popular jet-backs and jet-outs for floaters can not be offered on some days, and only at the expense of higher pay-off services on others. The only way businesses can grow is to buy up small operators. This will eventually lead to a few, large operations who can set their own prices. Current prices will have to go up if the current outfitters are to survive. Alternatives B and C level out the diversity of services and virtually ruin the businesses based at Pittsburg. Outfitters will not have the flexibility to adjust to demand that they now enjoy. A should be rated high, B low- and C low+ at best. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 442-39. It would be a sad thing to see the smaller operators forced out of business, to only have a few larger operators in the canyon. There is room for all of us and a need for all of us. (Correspondent 246)

Comment 442-40. The quality of our trips will suffer as a result of this management action. So will the diversity of services available to the public. The owners of this business have always prided themselves in running a very special kind of trip, a family experience with lots of individual attention. However, with the loss of access imposed by this management plan, we will be forced to go to a larger boat and offer the same kind of trip other outfitters run. The individuality of Snake Dancer Excursions will be lost. The evaluations of diversity in the EA by alternative are dead wrong. Alternative A is the only one that provides high diversity of services. B and C ravage the marvelous diversity of services now found. (Correspondent 251)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C, as modified by this decision, provides for a full range of outfitter services including multi-day fishing trips and tours, day tours, jetbacks, multi-day float trips, one day float***

trips, and limited-duration non-motorized opportunities. Without the management direction provided by this decision, there would be the potential for businesses to move away from specific portals and/or for monopolies at the Cache Creek or Pittsburg portals. Business owners will still be able to focus upon maximum business growth within the primary season constraints and/or absence-of-use-constraints during the secondary season. Many businesses will continue to focus their activities during the secondary season. Even the smallest businesses could choose to continue to operate at historic levels or expand their operations during the secondary season. The customer base for the lodges will continue to exist because the combined seasonal allocation for private and commercial use is above historic levels.

Alternative A Looks Good

Comment 442-41. We would advocate the adoption of Alternative A as set forth in the Environmental Assessment. We believe that, with some minor problems, operation on the river without the type of regulation being proposed has generally been beneficial to the greatest number of people. While a certain vocal minority of floaters have expressed some dissatisfaction with the current operation in the river, that is again a vocal minority and the use of powerboats in this particular section of the river has had minimal environmental impact while maximizing the availability of this very wild and scenic stretch of river to the greatest number of people. (Correspondent 259)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative A does not meet the purpose and need for action. It also does not resolve the issue of providing appropriate levels of access to the intended recreation experience.***

Subject 500
Resources (General Comments)

Comment 500-1. Do everything to reduce impact of humans on the HCNRA. (Correspondent 40)

Forest Service Response: ***The Snake River Plan and accompanying FEIS and ROD established management direction that ensures the protection and enhancement of the river's ORVs.***

Comment 500-2. The OEA provides no disclosure of changes in impacts, particularly on wilderness values, that will result from the OEA's increase in and concentration of motorized use.

The OEA fails to re-analyze the ecological and social impacts of increased jet boat use it enables, primarily the reduction of the nonmotorized window, and greater concentrations of jet boat use.

At issue is the erosion of river beaches caused by jet boat wakes, the displacement of wildlife by jet boat noise, the disruption of the spawning routines and migration of salmon. In general, the impacts to wilderness values based on the specific numbers, concentrations, and areas of jet boat must be fully analyzed. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The effects of Alternative C, as modified by the decision notice are within the effects and management prescriptions disclosed in the 1994 Snake River Plan and its accompanying FEIS and ROD. The increase in the primary season cap for commercial powerboats, reflecting actual 1988 to 1992 use, was evaluated against the effects on cultural resources and fisheries in the FEIS and found to be within those originally disclosed for Alternative G. Reference the analysis file for copies of those specialists' reports. Reference Forest Service responses to comment 101-1 concerning wilderness values.***

Comment 500-3. We would like to point out float use, with its shorter time on the water and extensive activity on the land at campsites and other areas within the river corridor, has a vastly larger environmental impact than powerboating.

While the discussions of consequences on vegetative and botanically outstandingly remarkable values alludes to potential impacts from camping, there has been a failure to realistically qualify or quantify impacts of the different uses of the river corridor or evaluate the real effects of different management alternatives with their mixes of use allocations. Commercial powerboat tours carry by far the largest numbers of people into the canyon, spend very little time on land.

All of their land time, about 2 hours and 20 minutes per day, is at naturally hard or hardened sites.

By contrast, the typical three-day float trip from Hells Canyon Creek to Pittsburg Landing, a distance of 32 miles, averages just over 10 miles per day on the water. (Correspondent 259)

Forest Service Response: ***The decisions in the 1994 Snake River Plan to establish use levels (seasonal caps) to protect and enhance the river's ORVs were appealed by various groups in 1995. The Regional Forester affirmed the Forest Supervisor's decision. Thus, the correspondent's concerns were considered and analyzed in the FEIS and ROD for the 1994 Snake River Plan. Therefore, these comments are outside the scope of the purpose and need for the proposed action as stated in Chapter I of this EA.***

Comment 500-4. Another example is the claim that power boats are causing erosion of the banks of Hells Canyon. The banks of Hells Canyon below the high water mark are probably 90% granite and basalt rock. Power boat wake is not eroding the banks of Hells Canyon between Hells Canyon Dam and Pittsburg Landing. (Correspondent 119)

Forest Service Response: ***This concern was addressed in the FEIS and ROD for the 1994 Snake River Plan (reference Appendix E).***

Subject 600
Economics

Comment 600-1. I have rafted the Snake River many times from Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing. Because I am familiar with both aspects of the river usage, and having telked with people while on the rivar, I am convinced that both sides can co-exist amicably. It hes always seemed to me to be a very small minority of rafters creating the controversy, many of whom are float boat guides who stand to gain financially from an exclusion of jet boats by being able to charge more for an "undisturbed, primitive experience." (Correspondent 183)

Comment 600-2. I also am aware of the power boat manufacturers powerful lobby - they want to sell more powerboat trailers etc. It's a subtle form of EXTRACTION. They are EXTRACTING the peaceful quiet sound of nature and gaining monetarily. (Correspondent 205)

Comment 600-3. This is just for the money. A select few floaters (outfitters) want exclusive use to be able to charge more for a float trip. (Correspondent 11)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comments.***

Subject 601
Economic Impacts Not Adequately Analyzed

Comment 601-1. The site-specific allocation system based on historical use, is inconsistent with the fact that most new use constraints are in one section of the river. Disproportionate impact is imposed on a few power operators. The operators who close will be those who have the highest percent reduction in permit value, not those who currently charge the highest prices per service day as suggested by the EA. The affected operators are misidentified. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C in the EA, page III-31, reduced boat days in the "Wild" section by over 50% to some outfitters and increased boat days by 100% to other outfitters compared to their average base period use. Alternative C has been modified to allocate use based on historical use between 1988-95 in the section of river above Kirkwood. Each outfitter experiences a 31 percent decrease in their boat days in that section compared to their average historic use. Gross revenue effects to outfitters identified in Table III-9, EA page III-40, have been updated to reflect these modifications compared to recent use during 1993-95. While boat days have been equally reduced in the section of river above Kirkwood, economic impacts vary between outfitters due to the differences in revenue per service day and service days per boat day achieved by each outfitter. In addition to effects identified in Table III-9, primary season revenue per service day was used as a proxy to assess the potential of each outfitter to adjust to changes in gross revenue, EA page III-41.***

Comment 601-2. The site-specific allocation system is a proportioning of historical use for power boat operators that stops expected growth. Float operators are allowed increased growth well beyond historical use to the limit of currently under utilized permit numbers. This arbitrarily transfers recreation opportunity from proven high demand recreational use to a historically lower demand one.

One recreational sector is being curtailed to enhance another. The analysis does imply some negative effects on power boat outfitters, but the transfer of opportunity should also appear as positive site-specific benefits to float outfitters who would capture the newly created values of wilderness floating in their pricing and who have protected capacity growth. This was ignored in both the site-specific and aggregate impact analysis. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***There is the potential for the float operators to charge a higher price for portions of their trips that provide a nonmotorized experience. Comparisons with rivers that allow only nonmotorized float trips show the average price per day is about 37 percent greater than float trip prices on the Snake River. However, the location of the nonmotorized portion of the Snake River will provide a maximum two days of nonmotorized experience for an average four day float trip that begins on the first day of the nonmotorized window. Only 11 percent of the float trips will have between one-half and two days of nonmotorized experience. This results in a maximum primary season revenue increase of four percent ($39,000 under Alternative C). Achieving this revenue increase is not likely due to the mix of motorized and nonmotorized experiences offered.***

Comment 601-3. There is no evidence of any economic efficiency analysis. The lack of even a rudimentary economic efficiency analysis in this large a policy change is a startling find. Neither the EIS nor the EA has any economic rationalization for lowering the carrying capacity of all use or reallocating specific uses within that cap. That cap appears to be arbitrarily set by an artificial process. There is little likelihood that the recreational opportunity spectrum technique used actually maximizes the total social benefits of such a unique natural resource.

Forest Service Response: ***Economic efficiency of the different alternatives was not identified as an issue in this analysis. Of concern was the economic effects to individual outfitters as noted in the Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995, and protection and enhancement of the outstandingly remarkable values of the Snake River corridor. A detailed analysis of those effects is provided in Chapter III. For purposes of complying with NEPA, the weighing of the merits and drawbacks of the various alternatives need not be displayed in a monetary cost-benefit analysis and should not be when there are important qualitative considerations (40 CFR 1502.23).***

Although the decision to establish a maximum carrying capacity was made through the ROD and was outside the scope of this EA, we continue to consider information received regarding whether or not a cap was appropriate. No information has been received to date which would indicate that the intent of the HCNRA Act or the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act could better be met without an established maximum capacity. The FEIS, Chapter I, and the ROD, page 8-14, identify the need for the cap and provide the rationale for its establishment. Refer to Appendix I of the FEIS for the process used to determine the cap.

Comment 601-4. The EA expresses financial impact as reductions of gross revenues only. Changes in seasonal gross revenue NEVER reflect economic viability. Viability must be evaluated in NET terms. Where most of the costs of operation are fixed and borne over the entire year, reductions of gross revenues imply relatively small reductions of costs so impacts on profits are proportionally much larger. Reduced profits is what determines viability. The EA never addressed this, even though the Hells Canyon Alliance offered to make net revenues available to the analysis team.

The EA expresses financial impacts only as single year reductions of revenues. The accepted practice of evaluating financial changes uses a discounted net income appraisal which capitalizes the continuous future stream of financial changes into an equivalent change in the present value of the operation or the permit. This one oversight means that the effect on existing power operators may be losses measured in millions of dollars instead of tens of thousands. The new EA use allocation will close many marginal operators. The highest effect could be on jet boat fishing. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 601-5. The economic analysis is a sham. Whether or not a business can survive depends on the bottom line, not gross receipts. There is no way to determine effects of this plan on each business' viability without looking at revenues left after all costs are covered. If you aren't in the black, your fate is sealed regardless of the amount of cash that runs through your hands. This plan has profound affects on all of our businesses. Some of us will survive it and many will not. But, this EA's analysis doesn't adequately disclose those effects to have complied with the Regional Forester's charge in the appeal decision. (Correspondent 120)

Comment 601-6. The economic analysis seems to assume that an increase or decrease in gross revenues corresponds directly with a positive or negative economic impact. This is not necessarily so. A very critical part of economic impact, as any businessman can readily tell you, is not gross receipts, but efficiency and profit margin. It has been the experience of the commercial floatboaters, once again through forced experimentation due to government regulation, that full trips, usually found on regulated rivers with rigid schedules, such as the Middle Fork of the Salmon, are considerably more profitable than partial trips, usually found on relatively unregulated rivers with flexible launch schedules, such as the Lower Salmon Gorge.

There can be no direct correlation between a decrease in gross receipts and a negative economic impact. This cannot be automatically assumed, if accurate results are to be determined. Efficiencies, economies of scale, and ultimately profit margins must also be considered. It could also be legitimately debated if an outfitter ought to have an automatic right to the opportunity to generate the equivalent gross revenues regardless of the level of efficiency at which he choose to operate. I think not. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 601-7. You modeled your outfitter impacts using gross revenue, to be accurate you should have used net revenue. In an industry where fixed costs accumulate all year and revenues are concentrated in 3 months, net revenue paints a clearer picture of the business. (Correspondent 252)

Comment 601-8. There is no analysis in this EA that determines the affects of alternatives on economic viability of individual businesses. My business exists in the real world of today, not 5 years ago. That is ancient history as far as economic viability is concerned. Gross receipts are meaningless in a determination of viability; only the bottom line counts. Does the money coming in exceed the money going out? This EA totally fails to do what the Regional Forester directed be done. This is a total flaw that must be corrected if affects on commercial outfitters are to be disclosed. (Correspondent 251)

Comment 601-9. I question the validity of this economic analysis as presented in the environmental assessment and of the resulting necessity for changes from plan B. This analysis is not properly explained, defended or presented. It would appear too simplistic to accurately predict economic impacts. In addition, I believe these changes are not only unnecessary, but if implemented, will negatively impact the resource, reduce the potential for achieving the Desired Recreational experience the the floatboat users, (my guests), and I have consistently sought (as found in the 1989 visitor use study, and expressed by letter to the planning team throughout the last 5 year planning process), and ultimately have a negative economic impact on my business.

In the twenty years I have been in business, all under government permit and thus ever-changing regulations and restrictions, I have had ample opportunity to observe first hand the factors that determine its economic health. Any analysis of economic impact would have to be complex and thorough. A simple comparison of gross revenues of a base period with projected gross revenues (base period gross receipts/user day times the allotted use under a given plan) will not readily yield accurate predictions of true economic impact. There are simply too many other interacting variables, including but not necessarily limited to, the elasticity of demand and price, efficiency of operation, and quality and quantity of product, in this case the resource, and access service. The tables within this document give no adequate explanation and how the presented data was determined. (Correspondent 245)

Forest Service Response: ***Several commenters had concerns that a gross revenue analysis does not adequately analyze effects of the alternatives impacts to outfitters and that a net revenue analysis using net profit margins should have been used. Analyzing effects to net revenue includes knowledge of net profit margins, fixed and variable costs, break-even points, business investments, and debt service. Forest Service concerns with this approach included obtaining adequate information from individual business owners to determine profit margins. Outfitters did not want to provide individual business records to determine or verify information necessary to conduct a net profit analysis due to expressed concerns about revealing proprietary information through subsequent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Concerns with this approach also included that it may not provide an adequate method since some businesses said they have been profitable and others stated that they have not been operating at a profit. It also appeared that some businesses operated as part-time activities, or simply at a sufficient level to allow for future sale of the business. In addition, as commenters point out, the businesses vary greatly in size, gross revenue, net profit margins, number and size of boats, type of business, level of investment, and operating efficiency. A net revenue analysis would be impossible without individual business information, and highly controversial with it.***

A comparative economic analysis of changes to gross revenue was used to compare operations as they occurred during the base period to projected operations under the alternatives. Reliable gross revenue data was available from individual actual use reports submitted by the outfitters. The direction from the Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995, was to disclose how the alternatives affected the

economic viability of outfitters. This does not imply that outfitters were making a profit during the base period. The EA analysis, page III-21 to 54, addresses all operational limitations, provides adequate information to disclose whether the alternatives are expected to have a positive or negative effects on the individual outfitter businesses, and the magnitude and intensity of those effects, and their capability to adapt to changes in gross revenue. The gross revenue analysis was updated to use more recent data from 1993-95 based on public comments, and was considered prior to making a decision. Refer to the EA page III-38 to 43, III-49 to 53, and the analysis file for more information on the methodology used and the updated economic effects.

Comment 601-10. Page III-41: You state that, "It is important to understand that a rigorous determination of individual business viability is not possible due to the private nature of each businesses financial records." Submission of each Outfitter's financials to the USFS is not possible due to FOA precedents; however, you have been given several other viable rigorous methods to determine individual business viability by the HCA, a CPA and most recently a PhD Forest Resources Economist. The HCA gave you a model concept based on Investment Return which you dismissed mainly due to concerns over inflated Investment Amounts. You were offered the opportunity to audit each Outfitter's Investment calculation and the supporting data - you refused. Bradley D. Swan, CPA affirmed the validity of the HCA model with specific adjustments and suggested a Market Valuation Basis for the Investment Amount. You again refused to devote USFS efforts to his approach. Most recently, Charley McKetta, PhD, an expert Forest Resources Economist suggested that the Outfitters submit their financials to a CPA who would perform the necessary audits and produce the needed ratios and Investment or Revenue Amounts and verifications for use by the E.A. Team as the basis for an "Outfitter Specific - Net Revenue Based Analysis" that he states is absolutely "possible" and necessary to fulfill your charge as outlined in the response to our appeal. His approach would insulate detailed individual Outfitter Financial Information from the FOA process because that level of information would only be given to the CPA and only summary information given to the USFS. This would facilitate the needed analysis and insulate the Outfitter Financials from FOA access. Again, there was no indication from the E.A. Team that the USFS would be willing to step-up to this method. Three viable, objective, practical suggestions - all refused and none of these details disclosed in the E.A. Documents. Your decisions will certainly be ratified without ruffle if you are not required to disclose any real and relevant opposing facts in your documents. (Correspondent 13)

Comment 601-11. Page II-2: You state that permission to use the HCA information in your analysis was withdrawn, but you conveniently fail to include that the reason that permission was withdrawn was because you refused to abandon your disjointed and subjective approach and use the HCA model as an objective, verifiable, integrated unit that presented conclusions different from your own. You focused on extracting and utilizing (out of context) mainly the data and components that supported your pre-drawn conclusions and disqualified anything that suggested the necessity of major variations. HCA data was withdrawn. Almost any valid data can be taken out of context and used improperly by spin specialists to yield mandated results. We have painfully learned that you are experts at this and it was obvious that any information in your possession would be used to validate your fixed conclusions or disqualified as "unreasonable" as measured against the fixed conclusion itself! How can you honestly use one of the possible outcomes as a validity standard by which to disqualify all others? This is so transparent that the only possible answer is that you must believe that fairness will never be enforced and you will never be held accountable for this. (Correspondent 13)

Comment 601-12. Re: EA Page II-2. The Alliance, by invitation at the January meeting, did propose an economic model for consideration by the planners. It was not perfect, but in our opinion, was better than the Forest's proposed model based solely on gross receipts with no base line. We attempted to work with the planners in good faith to correct problems with our model, only to find that a decision had been made to reject it a month before we were told and while we were still making adjustments, thinking the model was a possibility. We did not want information given to us by outfitters in the context of our model to be used in a different context, therefore permission to use the model and its information was withdrawn.

It was, of course, the responsibility of the Forest Service to analyze the economic viability of each outfitter operation, not ours; the EA failed to accomplish that charge. We were also told that the results of the analysis probably would make no difference in the plan; the forest was under no obligation to assure that businesses remained viable. That being the case, there was no justification for us to waste any more time on our model. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***The Hells Canyon Alliance Outfitter Investment Return Model was given serious consideration for use in the analysis process. Forest Service concerns were primarily related to determination and reliability of the initial investment figures used in the model and the reasonableness of the results in terms of boat days needed for viability in the base period and future use. Additional concerns related to revenue not accounted for from other business activities used to support the investment, and the physical capacity and ability of outfitters to actually achieve the needed use within the defined investment. In addition, the model did not address all of the operational limitations identified in the Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995. Refer to the "Review of the Hells Canyon Alliance Outfitter Investment Return Model" in the analysis file for more information.***

As pointed out by the commenter, intensive examination of each outfitter's business records by a qualified CPA was necessary to produce information needed for revising the model. Three audits were conducted during the planning process to verify use and gross revenue. Conducting audits to determine net revenues and profit margins on 35 permitted businesses was determined to be too costly and prohibitive in terms of time and resources and of marginal benefit given that the ID team analysis process provided adequate information to make a decision and addressed all operational limitations.

In subsequent meetings with HCA, the Forest Service strongly encouraged HCA to revise their model based on our recommendations, and the recommendations of their CPA, Mr. Swan. In order to be responsive to the Court's instructions for completing the EA by June 10, we discussed with HCA the urgency for any revisions of the model to be completed in a timely manner. We continued to use the model's information in conjunction with our analysis process, given the noted limitations, but would not agree to the sole use of the HCA model to determine economic effects. HCA subsequently withdrew all information provided by them in relation to the model. Modifications to investment figures in the model as suggested by Dr. McKetta have not been provided to the planning team by HCA. Refer to the analysis file for details of correspondence between Hells Canyon Alliance and the ID team.

Comment 601-13. The affected outfitters have persistently opposed the type of permit reallocation proposed by the agency, and there is little danger that the flawed economic analysis of the outfitter EA will mislead the outfitters themselves into believing that the proposed action will avoid significant economic harm. More importantly, the misleading picture painted by the Outfitter EA economic analysis has the effect of limiting meaningful comment from other users and the "neutral" interests of those whose livelihood is not directly threatened. Many of the outfitters feel their very livelihood is sufficiently jeopardized to hire someone such as Dr. McKetta to decipher the agency's economic analysis and reveal the true impact of the proposed action. Members of the general public and less affected user groups will not undertake such efforts, and will conceivably be lulled into complacently adopting the agency's conclusion without significant inquiry into the methodology producing that result. The interest at stake and NEPA demand more from the agency. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 601-14. The agency has undertaken an economic analysis of the impacts of the Proposed Alternative, and it has failed to conduct that analysis in a manner that complies with NEPA. An EIS must allow the agency to take a "hard look" at the environmental effects of a proposed action. Hughes River Watershed Conservency v. Glickman &1 F.3d 437 (4th Cir. 1996). "Effects" can include direct, indirect, or cumulative economic or social effects. 40 CFR & 1508.8 (1995). An EIS evaluating impacts on the "human environment" must consider economic and social effects when they are interrelated with physical environmental effects. 40 CFR & 1508.14 (1995). The agency has admitted in public meetings and in the FEIS and ROD that the non-motorized window would exist solely for social engineering purposes since powerboating does not adversely affect the environmental features of the NRA. Accordingly, a harder look must be taken with regard to the adverse impacts of the proposal on the human environment factors of culture, historical use, economics, and locale. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 601-15. The agency has presented an economic analysis that is based on misleading assumptions and, therefore, produces misleading results. In similar cases, courts have determined that NEPA goals were sufficiently clouded to declare the resulting agency decisions invalid. The agency is required to take a hard look at the environmental effects of a proposed action, and must also ensure that the information has enough technical substance to enlighten the public as to the agency's analysis without being misleading. While an agency is not always required to perform a particular type of economic analysis, once the agency undertakes an economic reckoning of the impact of a project the agency must present a product that meets the NEPA requirements. When the agency's economic analysis is tied to flawed basis assumptions, both the agency analysis and the public's ability to participate can be fatally impacted. See Hughes River Watershed Conservancy v. Glickman, 81 F.3d 437 (4th Cir. 1996). (Correspondent 249)

Comment 601-16. At the level that the Outfitter EA analysis attempts study, it paints an unsupportable optimistic picture that tends to prevent the Responsible Officer from properly recognizing the true impacts of the proposed action. Additionally, members of the public will be prevented from reacting to the relatively neutral findings of the Outfitter EA, contrary to the intent of NEPA. The agency has decided to conduct an economic analysis, and they have failed to conduct that analysis in a manner that complies with the mandates of NEPA. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***The economic analysis utilizes the best available information in estimating the potential economic impacts of alternative implementation. Projecting what commercial outfitters will do in response to the actual implementation of an alternative is difficult at best. However, the methodology and data used in the analysis provides a reasonably accurate range of economic impacts to assist management in the decision-making process. The economic effects on outfitters is addressed in Chapter III of the EA.***

Chapter 40, Section 1508.9 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Council on Environmental Quality National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Regulations (CEQ and NEPA) reveals that the purpose of an Environmental Assessment is threefold. First, it provides evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Second, it aids agency compliance with NEPA when no EIS is necessary. Third, it facilitates preparation of an EIS when one is necessary. Preparation of an EA does not preclude preparation of an EIS should that be found necessary based on the results of the analysis. Economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an EIS (40 CFR 1508.14). All of the above factors indicate that an EA addressing the remanded elements and tiered to the FEIS was appropriate. Refer to the decision notice for the EA.

Comment 601-17. Re: EA Page III-25 & 26. You say that boat days have increased 82%, yet the table shows an increase of 3%. The amount of revenue earned per service day tells you nothing about an individual business's performance, unless you know what their expenses are. The wide range from 155% to -75% gives some indication of reliability. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Secondary season boat days have increased 82 percent comparing the average from 1988-92 to the average from 1993-94. The amount of primary season revenue earned per service day was used as a proxy to assess the potential of each outfitter to adjust to changes. The range of changes referred to in the EA, page III-23 to 25, indicate the wide range of variability that has occurred in ownership, revenue, boat days, and service days comparing business to business within the outfitting industry on the Snake River.***

Comment 601-18. The economic data that is presented is highly questionable and implies that management direction should consider the micro-economics of a small group of outfitters, both float and power. One of the flaws in your economic data, as described in table III-10, is that the small number of float outfitters and the trends which have occurred in the study periods cited, have much to do with individual company ownership. Float companies that have been owned by the same owner from 1988 on have shown only upward trends. Specifically, Grubb, Hughes, Stewart, Davis, Peavey, and Hauptman. The point is that those businesses which show downward trends were those which changed ownership between or during the base period of 1988-92 and the 1993-94 period. (The figures you show for Hauptman are erroneous. He did not have a 89% decrease in revenue between the two periods). Those businesses with stable ownership and management have in fact shown a steady increase in revenue and guest numbers. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995, directed the Forest Supervisor to conduct a permit-by-permit analysis of effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual permits and then make a new decision relative to commercial use. The purpose of the trend analysis was to illustrate the degree of variability for each business and for all outfitter businesses on the Snake River accounting for changes in ownership, management ability, marketing, services, weather conditions, water flows, customer demands, prices, and numerous other factors that affected each business. You are correct as illustrated in Table III-10, the businesses with stable ownership and management have experienced a steady increase in revenue and guests. The change in revenue for Hauptman should have been -8% instead of -87%.***

Comment 601-19. Re: EA Page II-26. We question the "Change in Gross Revenues" column in Table II-4 for float businesses. Both B and C give them exclusive use for a significant part of the season. That makes them the only show in town for people wanting to see Hells Canyon and its major rapids. They will be able to fill up their trips and charge a higher price. While the drop in party size, a questionable action, affects their potential, commercial floaters have never come close to filling even the 24 person per party limit in the past. During the base period they averaged less that 12 customers per party. So, why do you show a loss for B and C? (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative B eliminates the temporary one-day float permits accounting for three percent of the total decrease in gross revenue, EA page II-26 and III-51. Limiting party size to 24 and limiting craft numbers to eight accounts for the remaining five percent decrease in gross revenue in Alternative B and the five percent decrease in gross revenue in Alternative C. During the base period, several individual businesses had trips with an average 8-10 people more than the 24 limit. Craft numbers greater than eight for individual businesses ranged from one to six during the base period.***

Over the last three years (1993-1995), outfitters have increased the number of trips with more than 24 people by over 30 percent and increased the number of trips with more than eight craft by over 40 percent compared to the base period. During 1993-1995, average number of people over 24 for individual businesses ranged from three to 19. Average craft numbers greater than eight for individual businesses ranged from one to 34. The updated analysis for Alternatives B and C (modified) using the 1993-1995 period of operations, shows a total decrease in gross revenue of 13 percent and eight percent, respectively. Refer to the analysis file for more details on the updated analysis.

Comment 601-20. Comments on Table II-4 Summary of Economic Effects Pg II-26. While I am not certain (since no explanation is given) how these total changes in gross revenues are determined, the resulting averages presented in this table are misleading, especially if used to compare the impacts of the different plans on the two sides. The "temporary" use permittees included in both use groups should have been excluded from the averages, since all three permits were issued to expire when the new management plan was implemented, thus assuring a 100% negative impact. Their inclusions in the averages calculations, cannot be proper, they skew the figures for both users. The figures on the Floatboat side should remain constant at -8%, (however determined). The effect for the Powerboat side would, however, then appear to go from a less negative number to a positive one. Regardless of the legitimacy of their inclusion, extreme highs and lows need to be removed in figuring averages so as not to skew results. This table does not fairly represent the economic effects of either side, and certainly leads to unjustifiable conclusions when these figures are compared. Plan C would appear to maintain a steady economic (negative) effect for the Float Segment, but definitely decreases the negative economic effect of the Power segment to a positive one, verifying my suspicion that this plan was designed in a suspiciously lop-sided manner, and prepared in whatever manner necessary to defend it. (Correspondent 245)

Forest Service Response: ***Refer to the EA page III-38 to 39, and III-49 to 51 for an explanation of gross revenue figures. The temporary use permits were included in the economic analysis because the Regional Forester's appeal decision directed a permit-by-permit analysis including temporary use permits. The one temporary powerboat permit accounts for four percent of the decrease in gross revenue under both alternatives compared to the base period. Compared to 1993-95, the permit accounts for one percent of the decrease in gross revenue. The two one-day float permits account for three percent of the decrease in gross revenue compared to the base period, and five percent of the decrease in gross revenue compared to 1993-95.***

Comment 601-21. Re: EA Page II-26. In addition to the potential increase in numbers of customers and price per customer, floaters have reaped a windfall in business value. When they sell their businesses they will now be worth considerably more because they have more potential. Giving them exclusive use for over 20 days of the primary season does that. If you were affecting float businesses by the percentages shown on this table, they would all be fighting for their financial lives. How many complaints have you had from floaters that they will be losing money? Of course, measuring anything in percentages is misleading. If you give a person a dollar and he already had a dime, you just increased his wealth by a 1000%, but he still cannot buy a jetboat. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comment.***

Comment 601-22. It cannot be overstated that the economic impacts to jet boat outfitters is a false dilemma that has in fact been caused by the Forest Service. The agency allowed these businesses to inflate to today's levels because it failed to set up rules to the game of jet boat outfitting in Hells Canyon despite a legal mandate to do so. It now looks at the gross receipts of the illegally-fattened business ventures as the prime factor in basing future management and protection of the river, focusing on the perpetuation of the traditional revenues of jet boat outfitters.

The economic analysis compares the effects of the ROD on commercial jet boat operators compared to their traditional income. Their traditional income is not a valid measuring stick to use because their use was required by law to be controlled and was not. Float use cannot be fairly measured using the same formula. Their financial situation should be a secondary issue, and their use allocation should be based on a a system that manages this high-impact use based on the overriding goal of protecting the resources of the river. This goal should consider the impacts to the experiences of those other recreationists who seek some relief from the noise, wakes, speed, and sheer numbers of jet boats.

How can an economic analysis be valid when it considers only one of two distinct economic activities on the river that operate under Forest Service permits, both of which are directly affected by the river plan? In fact, jet boat outfitters compete with float outfitters for customers seeking to view the Snake River in Hells Canyon. The economic analysis on float outfitters fails to note that their business growth has been restricted by the use cap they have operated under for 18 years, while there was no use cap restricting the growth of jet boat outfitting businesses.

The OEA gives no consideration to the fact that if float outfitters had a flexible launch schedule or unlimited use as jet boat outfitters have had, they would have had the option to build their businesses as the jet boat outfitters have. The economic analysis should have started from a clean slate in looking at business opportunities for outfitters and service to the public through outfitted access to the river. Instead, it assumes that the existing use patterns would have evolved as they are, or that float outfitters do not deserve an equal opportunity to allow their business to expand under a different allocation system. This is so obviously an issue, yet the Forest Service religiously avoids addressing it. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***The FEIS and ROD established maximum allowable use within the primary season, for both motorized and non-motorized, to ensure the protection and enhancement of the outstandingly remarkable values. The Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995, affirmed the maximum allowable use and the period 1988-92 as a baseline for analysis and directed the Forest Supervisor to further analyze the specific economic effects of allocation and operational limitations on individual commercial river permits. Changes to gross revenue were used as one key indicator to determine the magnitude and intensity of change to both float and powerboat outfitters in conjunction with other key indicators used to assess the impact to the primitive and semi-primitive recreation settings within the river corridor, page I-5.***

Comment 601-23. My final comment on the economic analysis itself, concerns the charts of economic impacts of the plans on the two segments of users, float and power boat outfitters. They invite comparison. While never specifically stated, it is implied, that these charts represent comparable data. I question the legitimacy of this implication, and doubt that a fair comparison can ever be made. While it is true that each commercial user segment (float and power) developed within the same resource, it can be legitimately argued that each developed in very different market situations. Making good comparisons of changes between base period figures and plan figures, between these two industries is grossly misleading. (Correspondent 245)

Forest Service Response: ***Table II-4 on page II-26 of the EA, merely summarizes the economic effects for powerboat outfitters from pages III-25 through III-43, and pages III-46 through III-51 for float outfitters. The effects were completed separately for each group. The table is included only for display simplicity and not to invite comparisons. This type of comparison is not made in the text of the EA.***

Subject 602
Impacts to Outfitter Businesses

Comment 602-1. One major concern is that although we were given more total days (85), we are only able to go past Kirkwood 25 days. How will we be able to sell a trip to Kirkwood only, when our competitor is able to make a fuller trip virtually every day of the "Primary Season"? We have to be able to take our people to Rush Creek every day. If not, they will go to another company. Most of our customers have come a long way to see Hells Canyon. They come from all across the United States, South America, Europe, Japan, Australia, and Canada. They have read about the history and the beauty of Hells Canyon and they want to see the deepest part, not a partial view. We have to be able to take them there. (Correspondent 246)

Comment 602-2. Ours is a small business and we provide a very personalized service with a medium sized boat. We don't want to get big and we don't want to be forced to use a large boat. But we do need access that will let us continue to serve the clientele that desires our type of service. We need to run a boat every day so that we can maintain a cash flow that allows us to meet our obligations. Our business is based on going into the real Hells Canyon at Johnson Bar and running through Rush Creek Rapid. We should be able to continue that 25 year tradition on all of our trips, not just 31 trips in the entire season. This totally disrupts our established marketing methods and trip features. We don't know if our established clientele will come back for the shorter tours or not. How well will a trip sell that doesn't even go into Hells Canyon, a trip where you can't see the continent's deepest gorge, a trip that doesn't even let you see a major rapid? Will they feel cheated? We certainly will feel that they have been. (Correspondent 251)

Forest Service Response: ***Powerboat use beyond Kirkwood for each outfitter was modified in Alternative C to more accurately reflect historical use patterns from 1988-95 based on comments received from the outfitters. The total amount of use allocated in this section of the river was affirmed with the Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995. There is a market for shorter scenic trips and fishing trips in the scenic river which is substantiated by annual use reports submitted by commercial powerboat outfitters. The economic analysis for each outfitter business was updated to reflect recent operations from 1993 to 1995. Refer to the analysis file and the decision notice for results of the updated analysis.***

Comment 602-3. The proposed action will significantly affect our outfitter business according to our best estimates. Even if we were to accept the allocated use levels, the fact remains that nearly all of our trips have historically been through the Wild River to the vicinity of Hells Canyon Creek. Even a significantly greater allocation of trips to the Scenic River would not offset our anticipated losses, because there is much better fishing in the Wild River and the demand is to see that section of the Canyon. We estimate that the proposed allocation of use in Alternatives B and C will cause our outfitter and guide business to lose over thirty-five percent (35%) of its revenue in the primary season. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***A loss in gross revenue of 35% is within the range of effects described for your business in Table III-9, EA page III-40, for both Alternatives B and C comparing effects to base period operations and to the 1993-95 average gross revenue. The updated analysis using data from your 1993-95 period of operations shows an 18-19% increase for Alternatives B and C. This is primarily because your business is allocated four more boat days than you averaged during the primary season in 1993-95.***

Comment 602-4. Alternative C (and Appendix C) allows us trips into the scenic section of the river which has never been utilized for outfitting purposes by Intermountain Excursions. While we do utilize the scenic river on our outfitting trips to access the lodge and to access the good fishing in the wild section, the scenic river has never been our fishing destination for outfitted trips during the primary season. Accordingly, Appendices A, B, and C are materially flawed and should be reconsidered eliminating the non-motorized period and adjusting the launch allocations for all commercial and private power boat and float boat users of the HCNRA at levels consistent with the current use levels and allowing for reasonable growth. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 602-5. As from when your survey was done, we have went from $6,565.00 to $14,048.00 with only one boat - so there will be no room for growth in our business, plus when survey was done - it was based on three jet boat businesses, out of Riggins, now there's two - that's less revenue for Riggins or surrounding communities - plus 31 less boat days - so who gets to use them? (Correspondent 10)

Forest Service Response: ***Total use allocated for powerboat outfitters was affirmed by the Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995, and subsequent review of the numerical estimate of the cap. Alternative C was modified to more accurately reflect historical use for each business in the section of river above Kirkwood within the numeric cap. The analysis in the EA, page III-43, acknowledges that outfitters heavily dependent on expansion in terms of boat days may find it difficult to adapt to limits imposed by Alternative C as modified. Based on our analysis, all outfitters will need to make some adjustments in a variety of factors including their operational procedures, marketing, and may have to adjust prices. Trading of boat days and non-use of boat days is described in Appendix C.***

Comment 602-6. The commercial outfitting history found at Appendix A of the Outfitter EA does not accurately describe the business plan for Intermountain Excursions and the lodge business established (and being established) on our private property. It is important that the Responsible Officer realize that we have consistently informed the Forest Service of our intent to complete the lodge facilities and increase our lodge and outfitting business. The lodge has only recently been completed and the Outfitter EA's Alternatives B and C completely thwart our intentions to build a viable outfitter and guide and lodging business. They further curtail our now existing jet boat manufacturing business in that the demand for new jet boats has been artificially decreased due to the arbitrary restrictions of the FEIS and the Outfitter EA. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***The effects to your lodge business as it relates to use and gross revenue associated with your powerboat permit were considered in the economic effects analysis, refer to EA page III-39 and "Economic Analysis Process" in the analysis file. Effects to jetboat manufacturing businesses were addressed in the FEIS, page IV-125 and 133. Several other economic factors such as the price of gas, interest rates for borrowing money to purchase boats, etc. would affect your boat manufacturing business and are outside the scope of this EA.***

Comment 602-7. Throughout the process, I and the other major Float outfitters have supported you and your planning team. With this preferred alternative you have pulled the rug out from under us and put forth a plan which fails to meet your own objectives and will have a negative effect on the quality of the Hells Canyon experience, and in the long run, a negative economic impact on our businesses. The assumptions your team has made concerning economic impacts ring of voodoo economics. No where have you demonstrated any real measure of impact to my business. We have watched the float business on the scenic section of the river erode a great deal over the years because of the power boat traffic and increasing numbers of encounters. As you stated in your outfitting history of Hells Canyon the float outfitters were given an eight day turn around because that was what worked with length of trips. You seem to assume that we are running three and four day trips because we want to. The truth is our businesses have degraded to three day trips because the scenic section of the river is smelly, noisy, and crowded. I am sure you have not taken this economic impact into your conclusions. I do about 75% of my use with three day trips. This means that for 75% of the time, I can only operate in Hells Canyon three out of eight days. Yet you seem to think it necessary to allocate a power boater use of the canyon every day in order to maintain economic viability, bull. (Correspondent 166)

Forest Service Response: ***Duration of trip length was considered in the economic analysis, EA page III-45, shows a decline in average trip length for all float outfitters of 13 percent comparing the base period (1988-92) to recent years, 1993-94. Average trips lengths for just multi-day trips has declined 10 percent from 4.1 to 3.7 during that period. Individually, some outfitters have increased their trips lengths while others have decreased trip lengths. Analysis of the 1988-95 use, shows that trip lengths consistently vary for all multi-day outfitters from 7 to 2 days. In 1995, approximately 52 percent of the multi-day float trips in 1995 were longer then 3 days (28% were longer than 4 days).***

Comment 602-8. When we talked about business capability to adapt to change, we talked about Rivers Navigation having a higher revenue to service day compared to other outfitters however they did not take into account that all use reported on this permit is overnight. This means that the information is wrong, and when we questioned the planning team about this, they replied that they could not take into account all the facts that separated the different trips among the outfitters. Why on earth not! If you are going to cut into our business with unnecessary restrictions you should have every angle covered. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***The analysis of powerboat businesses capability to adapt to change, EA page III-41 to 42, considered revenue to service days to compare earnings from services and trip durations that each business had historically provided. For example, one person on an overnight trip (two days) at $200 accounts for two service days and $100 per service day. One person on a day trip for $90 accounts for one service day and $90 per service day. This method does account for differences between trip duration and types and is a comparable measure of revenue earnings between businesses.***

Subject 603
Economic Viability

Comment 603-1. Launch allocations fall far short of that needed for "True" and not "USFS Redefined" Economic Viability. You keep asking the wrong question. The question you should be asking is, "Should we raise the Powerboat CAP for the high fixed-cost Powerboat Operations that need more launches to achieve Economic Viability (Solvency) for an equitable balance between Floaters and Powerboaters of opportunity, wealth and administrative fairness on this river?" Our answer would of course be a resounding "YES"! (Correspondent 13)

Comment 603-2. To implement B or C would basically run out of business the hard-working, honest, tax-paying entrepreneurs who make up the commercial powerboat outfitters. (Correspondent 48)

Comment 603-3. The Forest Service has put the Temperance Creek Sheep Ranch out of business and apparently has no compunction about putting some of the smaller commercial powerboaters out of business as this plan will do. (Correspondent 247)

Comment 603-4. While we appreciate the flexibility of the agency in recognizing the need for the Outfitter EA and in accommodating some of the concerns previously expressed by the Bentz's, the Outfitter EA still imposes restrictions on commercial powerboat use that will lead to the demise of many smaller outfitters. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 603-5. In 1992 we had 10 days above Cache Creek. That alone is more than our 1997 allocation. Our 1993-1994 average was 25 user days and in 1995 it was 36. The allocation of 6 days would be reducing our revenue by 5/6. What business could survive on 1/6 of their previous salary? Could you? It will virtually put us out of business. (Correspondent 202)

Comment 603-6. The economic study is a gross revenue study. The portion pertaining to me hes nothing to do with the reality of the situation. I have drafted my own economic analysis based on known data and one I will use for businesses planning and budget purposes. I respectfully request an allocation system be set up which will not put myself and other outfitters out of business, and will maintain and service our investments. (Correspondent 250)

Comment 603-7. As we have told you before, before purchasing this license, we spent many hours talking to Forest Service employees, that assured us that we would be able to make a living with this license. They knew that we planned this to be our livelihood, they knew how much it would cost us to even buy the license. Yet they assured us that it would work. Now, a plan comes out that shows a -71% in gross revenue to our business, and it has no bearing on the decision. What business can survive with a 71% loss in revenue? Everything we own is tied up in this business, we do not look forward to losing what we have worked all our lives to attain. (Correspondent 246)

Comment 603-8. Jetboating is a new industry, relatively speaking, and there needs to be compromise on their part. Whenever there are changes, someone wins and someone loses. Anytime there is a "niche" someone will come along to take advantage of it. (Correspondent 258)

Comment 603-9. There is no evidence in the EA that Alternative B will be detrimental to the outfitters' ability to fill the public need for services or that any outfitter will necessarily go out of business. The Appeal Decision remanded the decision back to the Forest Supervisor for two reasons: (1) to verify use caps, and (2) to perform an economic analysis on the viability of commercial outfitters.

The preferred alternative goes beyond this directive and actually reduces the regulations even more with no direct correlation to viability of the outfitters. The EA concludes there is an 11% decrease in gross revenues under Alternative B and a 5% decrease in gross revenue under Alternative C. Gross revenue is not the appropriate indicator of viability.

The EA does not analyze what effect this decrease in revenue will have on viability nor does it include the potential for increase in revenues in the secondary season or other variables for stabilizing or increasing revenues. The laws of supply and demand may actually allow for increased profit to outfitters in fewer trips with fuller capacities at higher prices. The economic analysis in the EA is grossly inadequate and there is no evidence to support the conclusion that powerboat use should increase and be flexible. There is no evidence in the EA to suggest that walk-in customers could not be accommodated by other jet boat operators or on another day, or that the jet boat operators could not adjust their prices, reduce their costs, maximize passengers per trip, expand their business opportunities in the secondary season or trade days with other operators. A reduction in gross revenues does not necessarily mean the operator will receive less profit, will go out of business or that overall the services offered by the commercial outfitters will not meet the public need.

There is also no guarantee that all outfitters are entitled to a certain profit or gross revenue. There is no evidence in the EA to substantiate that Alternative B, or a more restrictive model using 1975-1978 base year figures, will affect outfitter viability. The economic analysis is grossly deficient. And even if the rules as proposed in Alternative B do affect viability, the resources are the paramount concern, not the outfitters' profits. Alternative C increases powerboat use which definitely will not protect the resources. Alternative C does not provide meaningful management of the river but instead unnecessarily yields to political pressure from the jet boat operators. (Correspondent 159)

Comment 603-10. Re: EA Page I-1. You should have more specifically addressed the Regional Forester's appeal decision here. It is the driving force behind this EA and provides the specific charge of what must be addressed by further analysis. We believe this document has fallen short. For example, page 4 of the appeal decision says: "The results of permit-by-permit assessment will provide an understanding of how use allocation and operational limitations affect the economic viability of an outfitter, and, thus, the ability to provide the required level of service to the public." We do not feel this EA adequately addresses economic viability; it failed to define a bench mark at which each of these businesses moved from viable to non-viable. Without a bench mark against which to measure viability you cannot achieve the Regional Forester's charge. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***The Regional Forester's appeal decision, July 1995, directed the Forest Supervisor to complete a permit-by-permit analysis for commercial uses and disclose how the decision affects the economic viability of outfitter-guides. For purposes of this analysis, the base period (1988-92) was used as a benchmark for change to determine how the alternatives would affect the economic viability of businesses as they existed during the base period. This does not imply that outfitters were economically viable in terms of making a net profit during that time. Based on comments received from the outfitters, some have not been operating at a profit, and others have been operating as a part-time business. The EA analysis, Chapter III, shows whether the alternatives will have a positive or negative effect on how the outfitters operate, the magnitude of change, and includes consideration of recent use (1993-1994). The analysis included secondary season gross revenue maintained as a minimum at levels achieved in the historic use recognizing that use has increased 82 percent from 1988-1992 average to 1993-1994 average use. The analysis has been updated to use 1993-1995 as the baseline for comparison in response to comments by outfitters and recognizing changes that have occurred in business operations since the base period. Refer to the analysis file and the decision notice for the results of the updated analysis.***

The economic analysis, Chapter III, illustrates that some outfitters have experienced a higher degree of variability in their operations in the past for a variety of reasons. The alternatives will have a greater range of effects on operations, will reduce boat days, flexibility, and gross revenue. Some businesses are a higher risk for adapting to change by raising prices compared to other outfitters on the Snake River.

Further, the extent to which businesses are affected depends on a variety of factors, primarily the owner/operator's ability to adjust to changes in their respective operating environment. In the short-term, a decrease in revenue can place a business at risk if the business cannot mitigate or weather these losses. The longer-term effect may be a decrease in capability to adapt to future change. Each outfitter's response to change is highly variable depending on operator objectives, business ability and acumen, debt levels, and marketing ability. Some outfitters may increase their use of the unlimited secondary season. Some outfitters may increase their prices. Some outfitters who are no longer able or willing to operate under changed conditions may need to sell their businesses. The opportunity to operate a commercial business on National Forest System lands is a privilege, not a right. The goal of the Forest Service is to minimize economic impacts while protecting and enhancing the outstandingly remarkable values for the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor.

Comment 603-11. How are changes in boat days/float launches indicators of economic effects? They result in economic effects. The more restricted they are, the less likely a business is to be viable, but they are not indicators; they are management actions that result in effects that should be selected as indicators. How many businesses will a given level of allocation eliminate or make better? How much higher of lower will the price be to the customers? Change in total gross revenues by outfitter is somewhat of an indicator but the bottom line is what determines his or her survival. Scheduling flexibility is not an indicator, but it could affect the indicators by improving viability. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 603-12. Re: EA Page II-24. These are poor indicators of economic condition at best. Boat days by themselves are important, but equally important is where those boat days allow you to go. Businesses have been built around different services to various parts of the canyon. Allocated boat days in the scenic river do not help if your entire business is built around trips through the big white water or the upper canyon. A business featuring trout fishing is out of luck if they cannot go above Pittsburg to where the trout are. Gross receipts are a poor indicator of economic impact, although it does not take a rocket scientist to deduce that A is best and B is a disaster, with C a bit better than B. Flexibility is equally obvious; A is the winner hands down, that is until you impose a 5 year old base period, then none of them work well in today's economic reality. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***Changes in boat days or float launches were used to determine the range of economic effects on gross revenue. Where each boat day was allowed to travel was considered in the analysis, III-28 to 32 and III-38 to 40. Assessing flexibility of the alternatives in comparison to Alternative A was also used to assess potential effects on operations. These indicators provide measures of the magnitude and intensity of potential changes to each outfitter.***

Subject 604
Marketing, Pricing

Comment 604-1. Powerboat economic complaints about your management proposals have been based on some very faulty assumptions. The powerboat comments I have seen disregard "price elasticity". The US market economy clearly shows that price varies dramatically with availability/scarcity of services, and with quality of services. From what I see, jetboat outfitters in Hells Canyon have competed only in terms of how cheap their trip can be done with no focus on quality. A limited number of powerboat seats (total customers) in Hells Canyon won't necessarily hurt powerboat outfitter economics. It will allow the outfitters to run successful businesses with a focus on quality and what the public will pay for the experience. If you don't believe this, just look at how the float business has changed over the past years - services vary dramatically, as does cost. Outfitters try to secure a particular position in the floating market based on their price, their availability, and their style of service provided. This will work for jetboat outfitters also. (Correspondent 158)

Comment 604-2. The OEA fails to consider business flexibility as an option. The most glaring theme that sticks out consistently in the economic analysis is that in its treatment of impacts to jet boat outfitters, the Forest Service fails to consider any factor other than past gross receipts. It assumes that there is no elasticity in the use of their services and the schedules of their potential customers, and no flexibility in the prices they can charge for their services. (Correspondent 53)

Comment 604-3. I find no data or study presented in support of this assumption, nor do I believe it to be true. Any "unlimited" resource (such as unregulated and unrestricted Powerboat service) will fetch a lower price than a limited one, as will a lower quality product (such as a resource, no matter how spectacular, that is overused, and under protected or access services of poor quality). Price should, and I believe will respond to limitation, resource preservation and improved service. It has certainly been the experience of the highly regulated floatboat outfitters, the price responds to demand, influenced by both the quality and quantity of product, i.e., resource and quality service. Services on those rivers protected, preserved and limited in use, do in fact command higher prices. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 604-4. When you include a non-motorized time in the canyon, the price of a trip will escalate sharply. I am estimating that the cost of a trip will double. This is due to less time to get into the canyon and less operators in business to compete against one another and hold the price down. (Correspondent 103)

Comment 604-5. The economic analysis also disregards opportunities for jet boat outfitters to recoup reductions in business that might occur in a "rigid" launch schedule by better promotion of trips and better advertisement of their launch schedules. It reads as if the opportunity for the jet boat outfitters to charge more for a "showcase" trip that is promoted as a unique opportunity (e.g., "jet boat in and out in one day to the depths of the deepest canyon in North America!") and is thus worth a higher price, either does not exist or is for some reason unavailable. The economic analysis assumes that commercial jet boat operators are unable to adapt to changed management to adjust the promotion of and prices for their services, and thus, the plan must give them flexibility. All other users, including float outfitters, must be flexible and/or make sacrifices because they allegedly cannot be flexible nor make any sacrifices to accommodate other recreationists. (Correspondent 53)

Comment 604-7. The summary of economic effects regarding Alternative C is also inaccurate because again it is based on an assumption that a trip to Kirkwood holds the same value as a trip into the wild river, which is absolutely untrue. (Correspondent 259)

Comment 604-8. The economic evaluation has also assumed a constant quality of product, i.e., of both resource, and service as no evidence to the contrary is offered. It assumes that no improvement in product can or will be forthcoming. There is despairingly little discussion on how all aspects of the plans impact the resource, of one of America's most spectacular river canyons, its air, water quality, noise level, plant and animal life. There is in addition, no discussion, of how changes in the quality of the product affect the economic impact of the commercial outfitter, and affect it, it does. The commercial floatboat outfitters can well attest to this. We have watched in helpless dismay, as the demand for our services on the Scenic section of the Snake has decreased correspondingly with the decrease in the quality of the resource and recreational experience on it, due to the ever escalating increase of the unregulated, unlimited powerboat use. Losing two of every five potential days has had, I can assure you, a very negative economic impact. The same can be said of the loss of demand in the wild section, for the weekand and holiday float use, due to the impact of the "peak" use by the unregulated, unlimited powerboat sector. While it may seem perfectly obvious that total degradation of a resource would have a disastrously negative economic impact on the commercial users, so, though less obviously, do lesser changes in the quality of the resource and the corresponding experience within it, affect the economy of its outfitters. Equally important as just as overlooked in this analysis, is the part that the quality of the outfitting service itself plays in the economy of every outfitter. No accurate economic analysis can be complete without first evaluating the impact of each plan on the resource itself, the resulting change in product quality, demand and ultimately the economy of the outfitters. (Correspondent 245)

Comment 604-9. Moreover, the economic analysis fails to conduct any research, or even to use existing information from two surveys it has sanctioned, to determine whether float outfitters could fill more seats on their allocated launches if they could advertise a guaranteed nonmotorized, or predominantly nonmotorized trip. This option would not only attract new customers, but also could encourage the return of former customers who will not do a return trip because of the profusion of jet boat traffic. Return business is very important to float outfitters who rely on a relatively static client base. (Correspondent 53)

Forest Service Response: ***Information was not available to reliably predict changes in prices for service offered by either the powerboat or float industry due to operational limitations from the alternatives. While many comments relayed how the Salmon River industry had changed due to limiting the number of float permits on the river, no studies could be located that correlated and quantified the changes that could be expected for either the powerboat or float segment.***

An assumption was made, however, about the value of a powerboat trip to Kirkwood. Based on brochure prices, outfitters charge approximately 25 percent more for a trip in the Kirkwood to Wild Sheep section than in the scenic section of the river. We assumed that a trip to Kirkwood would be somewhere within this range, approximately 15 percent less than a trip above Kirkwood. This assumption was used in the calculations of gross revenue for the powerboat outfitters from the Cache Creek and Pittsburg portals. A similar adjustment was made for the Hells Canyon Dam outfitter. Refer to Chapter III-38 to 39 and the analysis file for more information.

For purpose of this analysis, prices were assumed to remain constant recognizing that a variety of factors including business turnover, customer demands, marketing, weather conditions, river conditions, and individual owner's ability and response to change would continue to affect prices and subsequent gross revenues regardless of limitations from the EA. The EA analysis, page III-41 to 43, describes revenue per service day as a proxy to compare outfitters ability to mitigate losses of revenue by increasing prices due to competition.

The ROD (pages 15 and 16) noted that in the past the demand for jetboat trips continued even with price increases and demonstrated that a potential price increase of 10 percent or perhaps higher would not necessarily result in decreased sales. The outfitters least able to adjust presently will remain so in the foreseeable future.

Subject 605
Effects to Local Communities

Comment 605-1. The spin off of this unnecessary Federal intervention resulting in non-motorized windows, will trickle down to those not directly involved meaning less boats, less business, not only on the river, but to those who provide services. (Correspondent 6)

Comment 605-2. I am writing to ask you to drop the non-motorized window. I will be seriously affected by these proposed regulations because I depend on the commercial jetboat outfitters. I really need the recreational tourist season and if people are limited certain days of the week it will make it very difficult to schedule motel reservations and jetboat trips within their vacation limits. (Correspondent 6)

Comment 605-3. Detrimental to the economic well-being of small businesses in the area, Yes! (Correspondent 19)

Comment 605-4. When will the "team" be including the effect of Kirby Creek Lodge in their assessments? Mr. Wiedenmann and members of the planning team did give me an opportunity to speak at the December meeting and again totally ignored the effect of the plan on my established bed and breakfast business at Kirby

Creek Lodge. When is the "team" going to do an economic study on businesses like Kirby Creek Lodge which are directly affected by their proposed severe restrictions of power boating? The Outfitter EA did no such analysis.

Comment 605-5. The economic impact of limiting our outfitters effects all the businesses in this area, not just the outfitters. Each day the visitor spends in the area impacts our local economy. As a Chamber of Commerce, we feel we meet the needs of these visitors very well. The biggest threat to our local business owners is over regulation and too much help. (Correspondent 42)

Comment 605-6. The economy of Riggins, Idaho is based on tourism. Tourism is based on river use. Your recent plan to cut back on outfitter use, both jet boat and rafting, will greatly damage the community economically. I own a real estate office and an RV Park. They are both dependant on tourism. My customers enjoy floating the river and jet boat trips on Snake River. The jet boat outfitters need to be available 7 days every week to accommodate my business. (Correspondent 43)

Comment 605-7. If a "window" for non-motorized use is implemented, I foresee that it would cause interminable problems for visiting tourists, families, fishermen, etc. Our city of Lewiston is largely dependent on that kind of revenue and it would be harmful to those sources. (Correspondent 32)

Comment 605-8. River excursions are a crucial economic factor for this little town of Riggins. For many visitors, time and conditions make hydro-jet boat the only way they will experience the river canyons. (Correspondent 50)

Comment 605-9. We feed three families from our small wholesale business. That's not many people, but they are the families that depend on me. Limiting access to Federal controlled waters limits my ability to make sure my families eat regular. (Correspondent 54)

Comment 605-10. The Wallowa County Chamber stands in opposition to the extension of the time period wherein the use of power boats is excluded. The Chamber feels this expanded exclusion would unnecessarily affect the budding recreational boating industry here in Wallowa County, and therefore urges you to retain the current "sharing" of the canyon that prohibits power boating on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from July 4 and Labor Day. We do not feel the economic impact that will result from this reduction in power boating use has been fully explored in the EA's Alternatives. (Correspondent 57)

Comment 605-11. Power boaters put more dollars back into the community than all other users; fuel for boats, picnic supplies, price of boats, etc. (Correspondent 66)

Comment 605-12. Many boats in this area are specifically designed to run the area rivers. With this in mind, changing the current "shared use" plan could be detrimental to all jet boat builders and their families. (Correspondent 86)

Comment 605-13. This decision if it stands is going to have very bad ramifications for a major industry here in the Lewiston area. The jet boat manufacturing industry is dependent on access to Hells Canyon for their survival. This decision will have far reaching implications for the economy of our valley in Lewiston and Clarkston. The public is demanding the products of this industry and the service that it provides. (Correspondent 103)

Comment 605-14. The effect of restricting the use of powerboats in Hells Canyon would be devastating to the local economy as we have many jet boat manufacturing companies and recreation-based businesses that depend on monies generated from the power boat recreators here in the Lewiston/Clarkston valley. (Correspondent 118)

Comment 605-15. We are very much opposed to the boating restrictions on the Snake River in the Hells Canyon area. We manage a small business, Steelhead Inn, 5 miles north of Lucile, Idaho on the Salmon River. A lot of our business is generated from boaters and fishermen going to and from this area. (Correspondent 123)

Comment 605-16. The current proposal to limit access to the Snake River will greatly affect our motel business. Local outfitters are referring their clients to our motel because of its location. (Correspondent 136)

Comment 605-17. Our community's economy is based now primarily on tourism and recreation. We can no longer rely on timber based business, and must build on the other natural resources in our area. Hells Canyon is nationally recognized and promoted as a major tourist destination. Access by motorized boat is the only way the majority of the population can visit and enjoy the canyon......and the use of power boats in Hells Canyon is an integral part of the area's history.

We feel that limiting power boat access three days a week during the summer season would adversely affect Riggins. We have three power boat outfitters operating out of Riggins, and a restriction or reduction of their operation would have a domino effect on many other businesses - motels, cafes, stores, gas stations, etc., by the decrease in the number of tourists. It would also deny many people the opportunity to experience the Hells Canyon and this part of Idaho. (Correspondent 156)

Comment 605-18. The Forest Service has been trying to help communities affects by the loss of timber related jobs diversify, looking more and more to recreation. Recreation in Hells Canyon offers a chance to do that in several communities, yet here the planners seem to be working at cross purposes to that effort, reducing or destroying recreation businesses in a National Recreation Area and distributing wealth among floaters and power boaters in conflict with public preferences expressed in the market place. Why is the uniqueness of the river with its blend of uses so objectionable to the planners? (Correspondent 184)

Comment 605-19. The community job and income impact estimates do not take into account any potential consolidation or down-sizing of power boat operators that might be caused by new constraints. My guess is that increasing costs and flat revenues will trim a number of operators out of the game. However, absorption of their permits by the remaining operators should maintain the volume of recreationists at permit levels so that total community effects would be only marginally affected. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 605-20. As this EA is an exercise in redistribution from one recreational sector to another, I would have expected float impacts to have been significantly positive, not negative. The fact of the reallocation means that the Forest Service expects float gains to exceed power losses or it would be a pointless managerial change. That means that in community impacts, float job and income induced gains should mitigate against power losses resulting in LESS total community impact from the policy change. We would expect a geographic welfare shift out of power boat oriented Lewiston toward float oriented Riggins and Oxbow in this case. (Correspondent 184)

Comment 605-21. As a business in Riggins that depends on tourism, this ban is completely unacceptable. We that depend on tourism dollars during the summer months, to make it through the winter months, will now also face closure. When we lost our sawmill due to an explosion in 1982, our town clawed our way back on tourism, in fact it is fair to say that all the outfitters may have kept our school open. In 1984 there were only 47 students in the high school, now we are around 100. Should just a few outfitters and service related businesses close their doors, we may close the school and the remaining students being bussed 90 miles a day to Grangeville. (Correspondent 192)

Comment 605-22. As private business owners that will be significantly affected by regulations limiting the utility of jet boats, we feel that the Outfitter EA provides little meaningful analysis of the indirect impacts that the proposed action will have upon businesses associated with use of the NRA. The Snake River provides a unique boating experience within the region, and there has been little effort by the agency to determine how its regulations might impact boat manufacturers (such as ourselves), component part suppliers, and retailers. Given the unique uses found in Hells Canyon, it is conceivable that many individuals considering the possibility of purchasing a new jet boat will forego this decision and partake of other recreational opportunities. The Responsible Officer has been repeatedly informed of these potential adverse affects. (Correspondent 249)

Comment 605-23. There is an economy in that area that has been created by people wanting to visit and to fish the Snake River. It is not right to take that away from those who worked so hard to build it. (Correspondent 256)

Forest Service Response: ***Chapter III of the EA, page III-55 to 56, discloses the economic impacts of the alternatives relative to the areas adjacent to the three major portals: Cache Creek (Lewiston-Clarkston); Pittsburg Landing (Riggins and adjacent communities); and Hells Canyon Creek (communities adjecent to Hells Canyon Dam). Due to excess capacity in float launches as displayed in Table III-10, no additional impacts to communities are portrayed for the float outfitters. The primary effect of the alternatives is a limit to growth in the tourism industries relative to commercial outfitters. Support businesses that are making capital investments to accommodate future growth in the commercial powerboat businesses may be more severely affected.***

However, based on current utilization of seating capacity for powerboat outfitters, Alternative C with modifications allows for a four percent increase in service days over the historically highest 22,957 service days in 1995. Outfitters could mitigate losses by further increasing efficiencies of bookings and seating capacities which would minimize economic effects to communities and associated businesses.

An important objective in recommending a preferred alternative is that economic impacts are minimized within the context that natural resource management objectives (to protect and enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with the river corridor) must be achieved. Commercial outfitter businesses provide substantial income for permittees and for area towns and communities as well. It is the goal of the Forest Service to avoid the unnecessary reduction of this income given that the Snake River outstandingly remarkable values are protected and enhanced.

Comment 605-24. The City of Cambridge, Idaho was not listed as an affected community, but should have been. (Correspondent 116)

Forest Service Response: ***The headquarters of Hughes River Expeditions, Inc. is located in Cambridge, Idaho. Based on historical operations, the Hughes company has excess capacity to add float launches (Table III-12). Therefore, no effects from the alternatives have been estimated for this community as stated on page III-56 in the EA.***

Subject 630
Safety Concerns

Quite a few respondents were concerned about the lack of assistance for people faced with life-threatening situations--snake bites, capsized rafts, illness, etc.--if there are no powerboats present. Many of them referred to a recent rescue at Granite Rapids and sent newspaper clippings. Representative examples have been responded to below:

Comment 630-1. Hells Canyon, by its very remoteness is a very dangerous place. The river itself presents safety problems, along with rattlesnakes and other wildlife. Injured recreationalists are often transported to help by jet boating "neighbors." The suggested expanded exclusion of motorized boats will make rescue of injured parties more difficult and will consume valuable time. (Correspondent 57)

Comment 630-2. I would like to request that you eliminate the non-motorized window because: power boaters have historically helped anyone needing assistance on any of our rivers. I am sure that a recent event has been brought to your attention regarding a guided float trip customer having fallen out of his raft above Granite, and after becoming unconscious, was subsequently recovered and revived on the deck of a jet powered tour boat. Saving a life is a gift made possible by having a jet boat with competent people on board below Granite on that particular day. The guide for the float party is a proponent of power jet boat restrictions on the Hells Canyon: one of his customers should be grateful his efforts have not succeeded. (Correspondent 188)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C provides for shared use, with limited periods of non-motorized use. Floating during the non-motorized periods increases the risks and challenges associated with backcountry, wild rivers settings. Many float groups prefer those risks, as demonstrated by the popularity of non-motorized rivers throughout the Pacific Northwest. Floaters who prefer more security have opportunities to apply for permits during the shared use periods. Reference Appendix K of the Snake River Plan FEIS, pages K-260 through 261.***

Comment 630-3. The proposed non-motorized rule change is coming at a time when the Fish and Wildlife Division is facing budget cuts which could eliminate sixteen enforcement positions statewide. It is likely that two of the sixteen positions would come from the Enterprise, La Grande, and Baker City offices of the Oregon State Police. These are the State Police which provide the personnel to patrol the Snake River.

At a time when I am facing personnel reductions in the Fish and Wildlife Division, to implement a non-motorized rule, coupled with our projected personnel reductions, may reduce the efficient and effective delivery of public safety services in the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area. (Correspondent 190)

Forest Service Response: ***Although the non-motorized window would prohibit motorized access for 21 days in the Wild Sheep Rapids to Kirkwood Historic Ranch section, access could still be obtained through non-motorized watercraft. The Snake River Plan has provisions for administrative and emergency use of motorized watercraft upon the Area Rangers approval. The non-motorized period is designed to occur at the lowest periods of motorized use and in essence during periods of lower law enforcement needs.***

Subject 641
Access to Private Inholdings

Comment 641-1. Norm Riddle, Patricia Riddle, and I own the real property where the Lodge is located. The purpose of being there is to eat and sleep. We are there to eat and sleep because we recreate on the river, in the wild section. When you take away the recreation opportunity, you take away the reason for being there and take away the principal value of the real property. We need historical access to the Lodge property to maintain it. We discussed this at great length in our Notice of Appeal. Also, since Patricia Riddle lives in Walla Walla, Washington, the most reasonable portal for her access to her real property is Hells Canyon Creek. Alternative C unreasonably restricts Patricia's access to her private property in violation of law. (Correspondent 248)

Comment 641-2. The EA does not provide the specifics of how the non-motorized window will operate with regard to private property access, and the EA fails to disclose the specifics on how the limited permits available for private powerboating use during the primary use period will be distributed. Such a lack of specific analysis thwarts informed public review and informed decisionmaking here, violating the agency's NEPA directives and its own appeal decision guidance.

Moreover, because the Ferraro decision acknowledges that the private land access issues are connected to decisions on commercial operations and special use permits, the private land access issues must be addressed at the same time, and in the same environmental analysis document, as are the decisions on commercial outfitter use and establishment of the specifics on any non-motorized period restrictions. Further, a decision of the magnitude proposed in the EA and fully responsive to the Ferraro decision must be addressed by a comprehensive EIS and not a perfunctory EA analysis as the agency is proposing here. (Correspondent 165)

Comment 641-3. One of the Regional Forester's charges in the appeal decision was to conduct further analysis in order to assure reasonable and adequate access to private land. This was not addressed in the EA. While the issue of private land access and river recreation or outfitting and guiding might seem separate issues, they are closely tied together and both should be addressed in this document. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***In July and August of this summer private landowners within the Wild and Scenic Snake River corridor and the Lower Salmon River were notified of the process to consider and grant, if necessary, access to private lands via the Snake River during the primary season. A special use authorization would allow access to private lands within the Snake River corridor or access through the Snake River to private lands within the Lower Salmon River. There are no private lands within the wild section of river that corresponds with the area of the non-motorized window. Requests for access to private lands from the Hells Canyon Creek launch site during any of the 21 non-motorized days will be considered in the application process. Reference analysis file for copies of the private landowners notification.***

Private powerboat access and allocation is addressed in the Snake River Plan and its accompanying FEIS and ROD.

The decision notice to this EA discloses a finding of no significant impact, thus meeting the requirements to not pursue an EIS.

Comment 641-4. There are simply times when we, and other private property owners, need to travel to and from our private property more than once per day, and the proposed action does not provide reasonable access to these private inholdings. Individuals who rely on power boat access to real property holdings within the boundaries of the NRA will be severely affected by the proposed restrictions in their ability to visit and utilize their property. The use of such property is protected by fundamental principles of constitutional law, for the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides that the United States is prohibited from engaging in activity that results in "private property be[ing] taken for public use, without just compensation." U.S. Const., am. 5. Various actions by the government can result in a taking of private property, including, but not necessarily limited to, denying an owner of all economically viable use of his or her property, imposing conditions on the use of real property when those conditions do not substantially advance the asserted government purpose behind the regulations, imposing conditions on the use of land which is not proportional to the actual impacts of the use on public facilities, or interfering with an owner's reasonable, investment-backed expectations regarding the use of real property.

Our ability to access real property along the Lower Salmon River will be affected by the proposed action.

Restriction on our access rights interferes with our reasonable investment-backed expectations. At a minimum, a takings implication assessment should be performed to analyze the potential that the proposed action will effect an uncompensated taking of our real property and the property of other similarly situated owners at various locations within the NRA. The Outfitter EA is not an adequate takings assessment. (Correspondent 249)

Forest Service Response: ***A takings assessment is not required for this environmental assessment. The December 19, 1995 proposed action states that private lands access is a seperate issue independent from the issue of outfitter allocations. Reference the previous Forest Service response.***

Comment 641-5. The Outfitter EA fails to remedy the USFS's apparent refusal to adequately assess real property takings issues. Individuals who rely on power boat access to real property holdings within the boundaries of the NRA will be severely affectad by the proposed restrictions in their ability to visit and utilize their property. Our ability to access real property at Kirby Creek Lodge will be affected by the proposed action. As we have indicated previously, we utilize that property on some of our outfitted trips and for other overnight lodgers, including BLM and Forest Service parties. (Correspondent 250)

Forest Service Response: ***In August of 1996, the correspondent, other owners of the property, and the lodge operator were notified of the process to apply for special use authorization for access to this parcel during the primary season. Through the application process for the reasonable use and enjoyment of the property will be considered, in addition to access to the Kirby Creek Lodge. Reference the analysis file for a copy of the letter sent to the correspondent.***

Comment 641-6. Objectives common to all commercial outfitters, private trips by commercial outfitters, is totally unacceptable to us. We are not only owners we are hands on managers, we have a staff at our Copper Creek facility. It is imperative that we have access to our business facility at all times and without prior notice or consent. You are giving us a special use permit to utilize Copper Creek, and it would be in the best interest of the facility that we be allowed access at all times. We frequent the facility to ensure that it is kept in the utmost state of general good appearance. We spend our time in Hells Canyon working, not recreating, and should not be denied access to our workplace.

Also totally unacceptable to us is the launch allocation to Copper Creek for supply trips. A limited number of boat days (16) to support the lodge operations limited to traveling Monday through Thursday. When supplies are depleted on a Thursday evening, we would not be able to resupply until Monday morning. It's possible we may be to busy to run freight during the week and have to rely on the weekend. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***If access to the river is for management of the Copper Creek Resort, then the trip is commercial, not private, and commercial access guidelines apply, including completion of a manifest at Cache Creek prior to entry. A private trip by a commercial outfitter requires compliance with guidelines for private powerboaters, including a launch reservation and a non-commercial manifest for an outfitter.***

The three powerboat businesses that utilize Copper Creek under the single management of the businesses have 3-4 boats per day total allocated for use throughout the primary season. This should provide enough flexibility to inspect the premises as necessary to operate the site. The 16 boat days allocated as the weekly freight trips for Copper Creek will be allowed to travel on any day of the week and can also be utilized to conduct inspection of the premises and coordinate work activities at the site. All trips, including the weekly freight trips, will continue to be required to drop a manifest at Cache Creek prior to entry, year-round.

In consideration of this change for access to Copper Creek, the four supply trips for Sheep Creek will also be allowed to travel on any day of the week after dropping a manifest at Cache Creek, with the exception that they will not be authorized to travel on non-motorized days.

Subject 651
Law Enforcement

Comment 651-1. If such a rule change came into effect, the Oregon State Police would refrain from using motorized craft during those days the closure would be in effect. We understand there is a provision in the law that allows for enforcement and administrative use of motorized craft during the closure, but the public usually does not agree with such exceptions; our policy is such that we would only use a motorized boat in an emergency, not as a matter of routine as we do now. Consequently, we would utilize our non-motorized craft to a greater degree. The issue I have with using non-motorized craft to provide public safety services in the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area is that a non-motorized craft requires additional personnel to devote time to preparing for a trip and the shuttling of personnel by vehicle and airplane. Also, the scope of the area patrolled is reduced since a floating craft is not as mobile as a motorized craft. (Correspondent 190)

Forest Service Response: ***There are trade-offs involved with implementing the non-motorized period. The same will be true for all federal, state, and county agencies that have enforcement and management responsibilities on the river. The non-motorized period is being implemented in response to a number of publics that want this type of experience, similar to many other rivers in the Northwest. In pursuing this type of experience the recreationist demonstrates their willingness to accept higher personal risk.***

Comment 651-2. Reduction of powerboater presence is likely to increase vandalism (fewer people with vested interests in improved sites), and increased litter (it's much harder to carry out garbage in a non-motorized vessel than in a jet boat). (Correspondent 57)

Forest Service Response: ***The developed sites within the river corridor, both scenic and wild sections, are staffed by Forest Service personnel or volunteers. Potential increases in vandalism due to increases or decreases in use are addressed in the FEIS for the Snake River Plan, pages IV-99 through 103.***

Education programs at the portals and requirements for carryout waste will greatly diminish littering.

Subject 999
Miscellaneous

People commented on various subjects that were not expected and, consequently, not grouped with a previously established subject. Not all miscellaneous subjects have been included in this section; some were outside the scope of the EA (e.g. decisions not considered).

Comment 999-1. This paragraph addressed outfitter/guides "ability to maintain businesses." I object to this entire concept. The people who actually own this property do not owe any concessionaire the right to make a living off public property. If a man builds a business up alongside a highway, then the highway moves, the people do not owe the man anything for loss of business. This has stood up in court many times. The same principle applies here. The people do not owe any operator the right to maintain the status quo. Having said that, I do believe there is a real need for commercials in the canyon, but we do not owe them any rights. Page III-14. A Granger-thye permit for Sheep Creek. Are the unwashed masses invited to bid for the "privilege" or just your outfitters? (Correspondent 82)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service considers special use permits a privilege, not a right. The concern for the ability of outfitters to maintain businesses reflects a recognition of the need to provide a variety of services to that portion of the public which does not have the skill or ability to travel in Hells Canyon without utilizing the services provided by a professional outfitter. As a result, it is in the best***

interest of the public if a variety of businesses are maintained in the canyon, not only to provide these services, but to provide competitive pricing and quality for those services.

The Sheep Creek Granger-Thye Permit is issued under a competitive bid process. One of the requirements is that the bidder be a Snake River float or powerboat outfitter with an outfitter license issued by the State of Idaho in order to be eligible to bid on use of the site. This decision was affirmed in the FEIS/ROD. Reference Appendix G, page G-21 of the FEIS.

Comment 999-2. Where are you going to get the funds to administer your fancy Alternative C? (Correspondent 134)

Forest Service Response: ***Implementation of this decision, in conjunction with the Snake River Plan is a priority for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. The Forest Service is committed to implementing the plans under available funding sources, cooperative partnerships, volunteers, and through the acceptance of the river users.***

Comment 999-3. NORS believes poor management results when important decisions are made by "partnerships" formed between commercial interests and the agencies who are responsible for regulating those interests and for protecting our natural resources. A strong bias toward commercial interests is certainly evident in the Outfitters EA. (Correspondent 135)

Forest Service Response: ***The need for commercial outfitter-guides to serve the public on the Wild and Scenic Snake River was demonstrated in the 1994 FEIS. Upon appeal of that element, the Regional Forester upheld the Forest Supervisor's conclusion that continued outfitter-guide services are needed on the Snake River (page 3, July 1995 appeal decision). The Regional Forester further directed the Forest Supervisor to conduct additional analysis on the effects of allocation and operational limitations on the outfitter-guides. This EA responds to that direction.***

Comment 999-4. Powerboaters have cooperated with other groups and agencies to educate the public on the proper use of the river and respect for other users and the environment. They have faithfully worked in the river corridor removing litter and helping maintain the integrity of the canyon. They should not be rewarded for these efforts by being excluded from the "true" Hells Canyon. I believe this would tend to discourage people from volunteering for Forest projects in the future, which they are now encouraging due to the reduced funding. (Correspondent 143)

Forest Service Response: ***The Forest Service hopes that the protection and enhancement of the river's ORVs (including recreation) can be achieved through implementation of the Snake River Plan in full cooperation with the users of the river.***

Comment 999-5. Float outfitters are feeling very put upon right now. After supporting the agency at every level to come up with meaningful management of the spectacular Hells Canyon resource, we are now confronted with a preferred alternative that caves into the sqeaking powerboat wheel and throws away real and meaningful management. Meaningful management does not exist without launch schedules and a total number of allowable powerboat craft per time period. I feel that all our support of the agency in this process has been discounted by the agency. After 7-8 years of work on the project, I see the current preferred alternative as a sell-out to powerboat interests and their fear of change.

Art Seamans told me for years that the reason that the plan in the late 70's and early 80's was politically stuffed down the agency's throat was that the float outfitters didn't stay in the process until the and. Float outfitters remember Art's admonishment. We intend to stay to the bitter end this time. For the first time in years, I now imagine that float outfitters will have to engage in lawsuits regarding the plan. I strongly suggest that the Forest Service needs to look at GOOD MANAGEMENT rather than at "political expediency." Powerboaters have promised from the first LAC meeting that they would sue regardless of what plan was created if the plan changed their opportunity to come and go as they please. Why worry about a constituency that has such radical and unrealistic goals? Instead, I challenge you to come up with a great plan for a great resource. Otherwise, you will lose your strongest allies (float outfitters and private floaters) in the effort to bring quality management to Hells Canyon and the Wild & Scenic Snake. (Correspondent 158)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comment. Alternative C, as modified in the decision notice responds to your concerns.***

Comment 999-6. What really bothers me is the fact that the float outfitters were the only sector to support you and your team in this whole process and we have been screwed again. Obviously the squeaky wheel gets the grease. I thought we would be able to work with the Forest Service toward a mutual goal of what is best for the resource and the public. I am now convinced that I can no longer trust the Forest Service to do the right thing because you will always buckle under pressure. We should have fought you all the way just as the power boaters did. Maybe if we had circled your office like a bunch of renegade outlaws, we would be in a better position in this plan. (Correspondent 168)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comment.***

Comment 999-7. Use data previously cited by the agency suggest that in some years roughly half of those boating in the NRA are private individuals. See Snake River Visitor Use Report 1990-1993, at 14. The agency should consider whether the proposed action will have significant impacts on these groups prior to making a final decision. (Correspondent 184)

Forest Service Response: ***The decision notice is specific to outfitter-guide operations, with the exception of the timing and duration of the non-motorized period. Chapter III of the EA addresses the effects of those changes on the recreation resources (pages III-1 through III-21).***

Comment 999-8. Hard working Idahoans like myself are sick and tired of federal agencies like the Forest Service and the NMFS dictating our lives. We don't appreciate what you're doing. Our taxpayer dollars go to federal agencies that turn around and put people out of business, just so they (the federal agencies) can go back to D.C. with data that they put "x" number of people out of work, made changes (whether it benefited those affected or not) and receive a bigger budget. If we didn't enjoy recreation and wanted our lives dictated by special interest groups, environmentalists, and oversized government bureaucracies, we would pack up and move to Washington, D.C. But this is Idaho, and we're sick and tired of the East sending their agents to Oregon to come and tell us what to do. Idaho can handle their own problems much better and more efficiently than the federal government can, so please, leave us alone. (Correspondent 196)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comment.***

Comment 999-9. To all the jet boaters that say "we were here first" or "we helped civilize this canyon". Baloney - the Indians brought their culture here first. (Correspondent 205)

Forest Service Response: ***Thank you for your comment.***

Comment 999-10. We hope that your visit in Hells Canyon also showed you that the river is self-limiting. There are only a small number of private boaters that go into the "Wild Section." Even those that do, do so only during ideal water conditions. It is not and never will be a place that just anyone that owns a jet boat can get to or will even attempt. The "Wild Section" of the corridor is not over crowded. (Correspondent 246)

Forest Service Response: ***Improvements in powerboat construction has made, and will continue to make, the wild river more accessible to more powerboat enthusiasts. User surveys indicate that some river users feel there is already too much use in the wild river. Different people have different ideas about what over-crowding means. Alternative C as modified in the decision notice, would protect the ROS settings of the canyon with reasonable allocation of outfitter-guide use and operational limitations, in conjunction with the Snake River Plan.***

Comment 999-11. The primary area of operation for Idaho Rivers Navigation is N. Boundary up river to Rush Creek. Since we report charter use under this permit, how will we accommodate Idaho Power Company should they choose to go farther. Occasionally their trip requires them to go to the dam. (Correspondent 252)

Forest Service Response: ***On any of the 21 non-motorized window days their charter trips with your company would need to end at Kirkwood Historic Ranch. The Snake River Plan has provisions for administrative use by cooperating management agencies (reference page 5 of the Snake River Plan).***

Comment 999-12. I have no desire to put any power boat outfitter out of business. I do not believe that Alternative B would in any way cause this to happen. It would however, create responsible managed use, with sensible limitations for all users. Thus, I continue to support Alternative B, except for the float boat issues as addressed above. I feel the Forest Service has completely betrayed the float boat community with Alternative C. Good management that is fair for all has been traded away to try and satisfy a vocal user group with good political connections which the Forest Service seems to fear. Floaters are not ready to give up Hells Canyon to continued unregulated use. We will continue to seek implementation of sound, responsible management for the National Treasure that Hells Canyon is. (Correspondent 254)

Forest Service Response: ***Alternative C, as modified by the decision notice, responds to your concerns.***