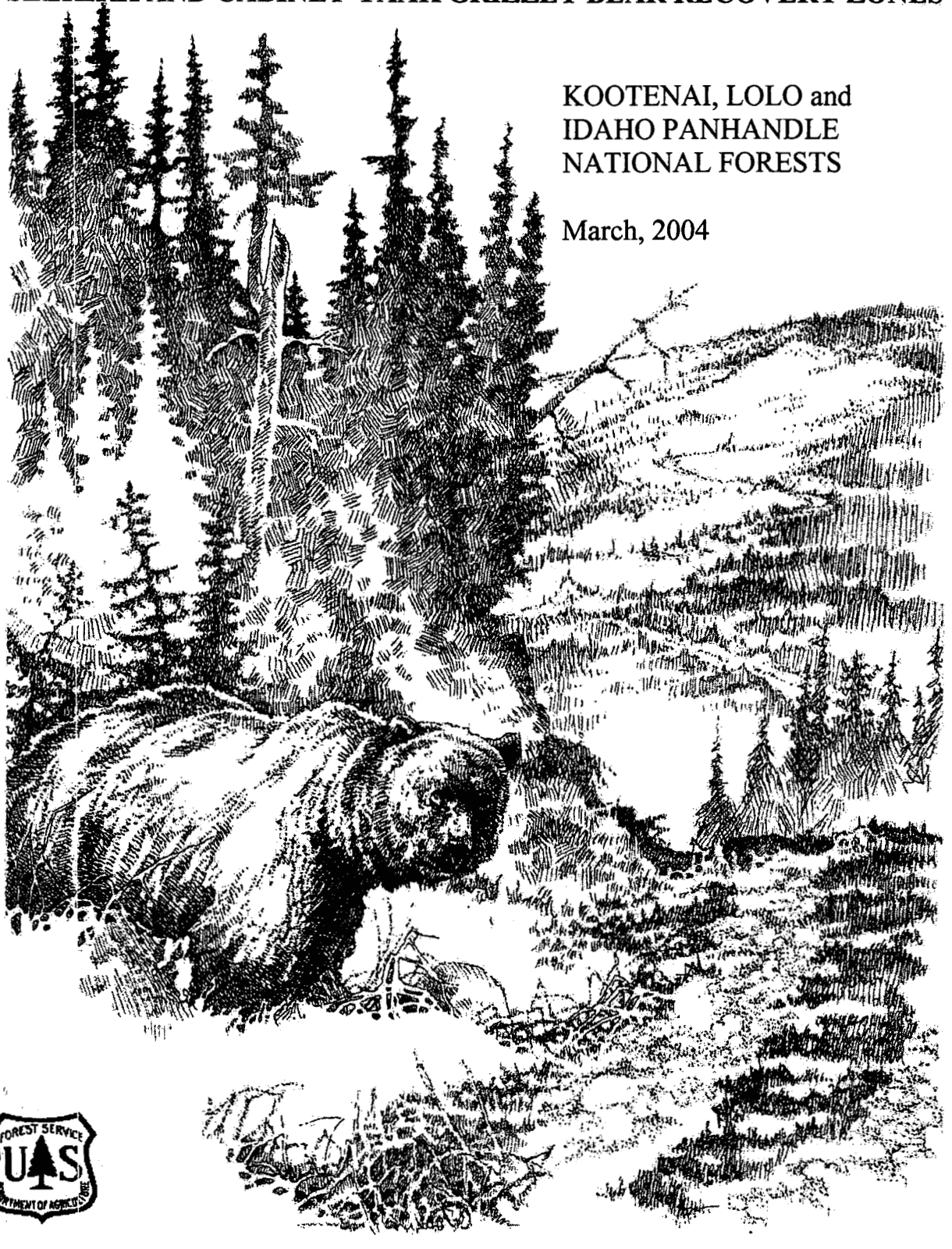
V19D11 P94

RECORD OF DECISION
FOREST PLAN AMENDMENTS
FOR
MOTORIZED ACCESS MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE SELKIRK AND CABINET-YAAK GRIZZLY BEAR RECOVERY ZONES



KOOTENAI, LOLO and
IDAHO PANHANDLE
NATIONAL FORESTS

March, 2004

Artwork created by Frank Kujawa, Fortine Ranger District.

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Idaho Panhandle, Kootenai and Lolo N. F.
Combined Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone
Forest Plan Amendment Team | Forest Supervisor's Office
1101 US Highway 2 West
Libby, MT 59923

File Code: 1950-3
Date: March 24, 2005

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a copy of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Forest Plan Amendments for Motorized Access Management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones on the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle National Forests.

This programmatic Record of Decision (ROD) changes the land and resource management plans (Forest Plans) for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle National Forests by amending the objectives, standards, and guidelines that address grizzly bear management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zones.

This ROD will not prescribe site-specific access management decisions within the two recovery zones. Site-specific decisions on individual roads and trails will be proposed through future project-level planning. These proposals will require public notification and will seek public input for identification of issues and concerns and development of alternative actions.

It is our decision to select Alternative E for implementation, with the incorporation of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) terms and conditions identified in their biological opinion.

We are the Responsible Officials for this process. Thank you for your participation in the amendment process. We appreciate your commitment to this very important task. Specific questions regarding the ROD should be directed to Kirsten Kaiser at (406) 293-6211 or Karl Dekome at (208) 765-7479.

The ROD, Biological Opinion and Final EIS can be accessed on the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee website at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/wildlife/igbc. This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR 217. See the ROD on page 64.

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Northern Region
Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle National Forests
Forest Plan Amendments
For
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Record of Decision

March 2004

I. Introduction

This programmatic record of decision (ROD) changes the land and resource management plans, also known as the forest plans, for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests by amending the objectives, standards, and guidelines that address grizzly bear management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones.

Planning for units of the National Forest System involves two levels of decision-making. The first level, often referred to as programmatic planning, is the development or amendment of forest plans that provide management direction for resource programs, uses, and protection measures. Forest plans and associated amendments are intended to set out management area prescriptions or decisions with goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines for future site-specific decisions. The environmental analysis accomplished at the plan amendment level guides resource management decisions and aids the next level of site-specific planning.

The second level of planning involves the analysis and implementation of projects designed to achieve goals and objectives of the forest plan. This is commonly referred to as site-specific or project-level planning. It requires relatively detailed information on a wide variety of resources including the location, condition, and current uses of individual roads and trails, and the identification of when and where individual roads and trails will be open or closed to various types of use. This step is most often accomplished at the ranger district (local) level.

This ROD does not make site-specific access management decisions within the two recovery zones.

Site-specific decisions on individual roads and trails will be proposed through future project-level planning. These proposals will require public notification and input for identification of issues and concerns and development of alternative actions. This ROD does not directly authorize any specific action; rather, it identifies and selects a programmatic action that sets standards for implementation of site-specific proposals. Site-specific access related decisions made through previous NEPA analyses and with completed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) consultation will not be affected by this decision. The decision on these forest plan amendments will not require re-consultation on previous decisions for access or resource management projects. The standards set in this decision will apply to all future site-specific decisions regarding access management in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak grizzly bear recovery zones (as described in the Analysis Area section of the Final Environmental Impact Statement, p. 3-3).

II. Project Background

In 1998, the Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Subcommittee recommended new access management direction to aid in the recovery of the threatened grizzly bear within the Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones. This direction was entitled the "Interim Access Management Strategy." Additional information was provided in an "Interim Access Management Rule Set." The Interim Access Management Strategy and Interim Access Management Rule Set comprise a set of access related guidelines developed over the past few years by the Selkirk/Cabinet–Yaak Subcommittee of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC). The guidelines address the following access management parameters: 1) habitat security; 2) core area; 3) trial use of access related to habitat quality/season; 4) motorized access route density; 5) monitoring; and 6) coordination with state wildlife agencies. The Rule Set also defined terminology related to each specific parameter (Project Record, Volume 22, Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Areas Interim Access Management Rule Set).

The Idaho Panhandle and Kootenai national forests were sued by the Alliance for the Wild Rockies alleging this direction was adopted without amending their forest plans. The two forests settled the lawsuit and agreed to amend their respective forest plans to address grizzly bear management. The Lolo National Forest was not named in this lawsuit; however, they have determined that it would be appropriate to update their forest plan to provide consistent direction within the Cabinet-Yaak recovery zone.

III. Location

The Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones are two of six grizzly bear recovery zones identified in the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan [USFWS 1993 (Project File, Volume 28)] as areas with adequate space and suitable habitat to support self-sustaining populations of grizzly bears. Located in northwestern Montana, northern Idaho, northeastern Washington, and British Columbia, the two ecosystems encompass 4,560 square miles of habitat. Portions of the Kootenai, Idaho Panhandle, Lolo, and Colville national forests, and Kootenay Lakes Forest District (in British Columbia) are included in the recovery areas (see Figure 1-1).

This ROD addresses the amendment of the forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests. Those portions of the recovery zones located on these forests are displayed in Figure 1-1. The total area within the recovery zones on the three national forests, including state and private inholdings, is as follows: 1,189,000 acres within the Kootenai N.F.; 163,000 acres within the Lolo N.F., and 806,000 acres within the Idaho Panhandle N.F. The Private and State land acreage was quantified, mapped, and analyzed together with national forest lands (including the Colville NF); however this decision only affects lands administered by the three national forests.

IV. Purpose and Need

The purpose and need for action for these forest plan amendments originates from several directives. The overall purpose is as follows:

> ***Amend forest plans to include a set of motorized access and security guidelines to meet our responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act to conserve and contribute to recovery of grizzly bears.***

The need for action includes the following (see final EIS, pp. 1-4 and 1-5):

> ***There is a Need to Comply with the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Task Force Report.***
>
> In July 1994, IGBC issued a Task Force Report, which directed the IGBC subcommittees from each recovery zone to develop recommended parameters for road densities and core habitat using the best biological information and considering the social and economic impacts (final EIS, p. 1-4).

There is a Need to Comply with the Amended Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Statements on the Kootenai and Lolo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans.

In July 1995, the USFWS issued an amended biological opinion (BO) and incidental take statement (ITS) on the Kootenai and Lolo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans. Terms and Conditions included in the ITS stated the Kootenai and Lolo national forests were to adopt the new access management guidelines when developed (final EIS, p. 1-4).

There is a Need to Comply with the Decision by the Chief of the Forest Service on the Appeal of the Kootenai N.F. Forest Plan.

In November 1995, the Chief of the Forest Service issued a decision on a forest plan appeal by the Cabinet Resources Group and Montana Wilderness Association. The decision directed the regional forester to incorporate through forest plan amendment or revision the Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines in their entirety (final EIS, p. 1-4).

The Need to Comply with the Stipulations of a Settlement Agreement in a Lawsuit Challenging Implementation of the Interim Rule Set.

In the spring of 1999, the Alliance For The Wild Rockies filed a lawsuit challenging the Kootenai and Idaho Panhandle national forests implementation of the Interim Rule Set without amending their forest plans. The national forests settled the lawsuit in March 2001 and agreed to amend their respective forest plans to address grizzly bear management (final EIS, p. 1-5). The Lolo N.F. was not included in this lawsuit. However, it requested to be included in the amendment process so as to update its forest plan to provide consistent direction within the Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone.

V. Description of the Decision

It is our decision to select for implementation Alternative E with the incorporation of terms and conditions of the USFWS biological opinion[1] for these amendments (see Appendix B for a full listing of the BO terms and conditions). The terms and conditions involve changes to selected Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD) and Core Area standards (see Table 1 for a description of OMRD and Core Area). Incorporation of these terms and conditions will increase percent Core Area above the amounts proposed in the final EIS for bear management units (BMUs) 3, 5, 10, and 13 (see Table 2). Additionally, the OMRD standard for the Blue-Grass BMU has been adjusted to allow for less open road within the BMU (see Table 2).

The USFWS has also provided a set of terms and conditions for minimizing incidental take to grizzly bear located outside the existing recovery zones. These terms and conditions are non-discretionary in nature. The intent of these terms and conditions is to reduce the potential for mortality and displacement of grizzly bears from occupied habitat in the mapped areas of grizzly bear occupancy outside of but adjacent to the recovery zones (see Figure 1-3).

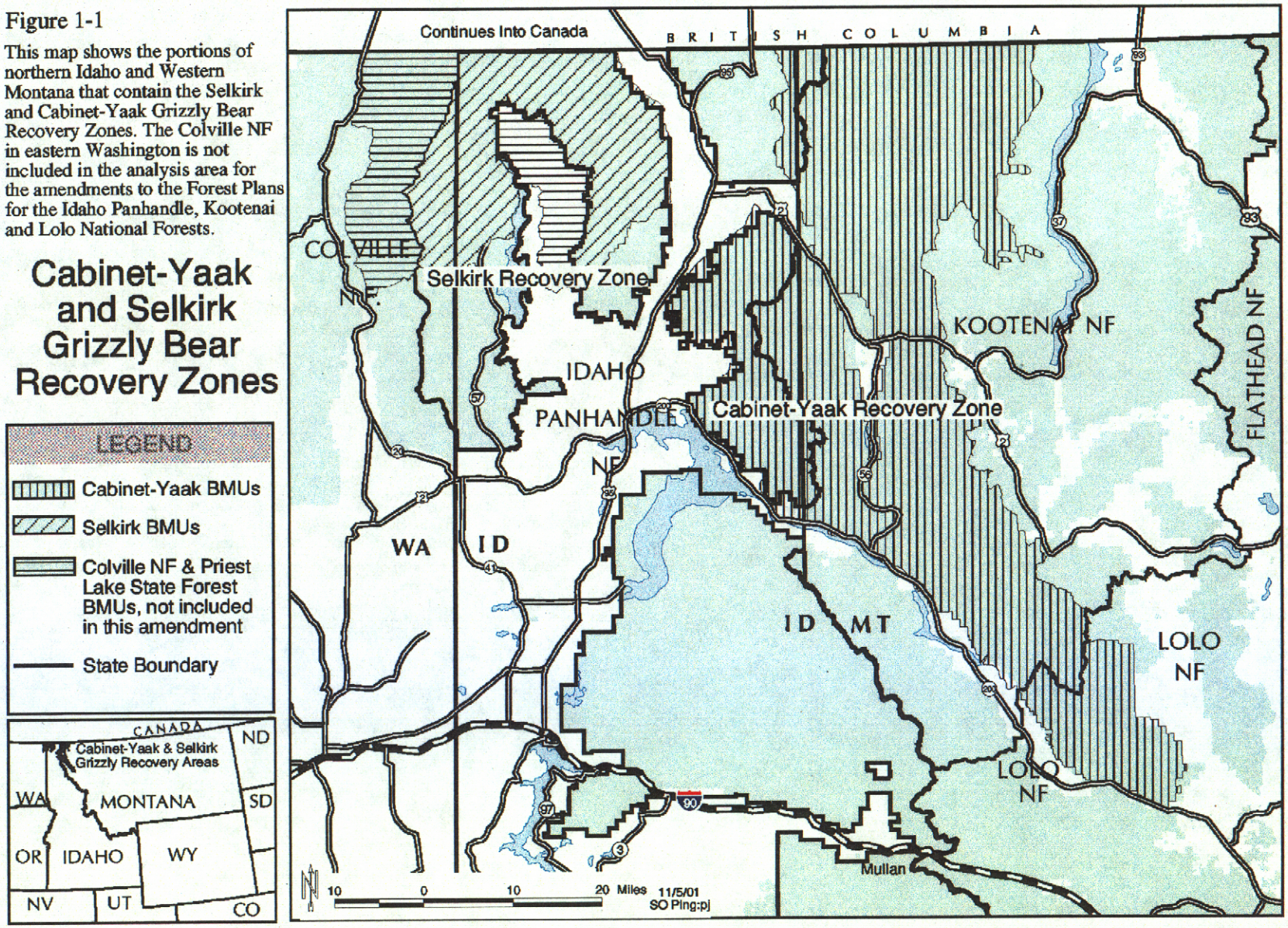
Features of the Selected Alternative

Alternative E was the final EIS preferred alternative and was developed to provide greater management flexibility in response to issues related to public and administrative access, economics, access to private inholdings, and increased grizzly bear habitat security (final EIS p. 2-15). Allowing for increases in route densities and temporary decreases in core habitat within individual bear management units (BMUs) that exceed the standards for these parameters will provide flexibility. This flexibility will be limited though

[1] Biological Opinion for the Kootenai, Idaho Panhandle, and Lolo National Forests Land and Resource Management Plans Amendment for Motorized Access Management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones FWS Ref. 1-9-02-F-148, Project Record, Volume 2.

Figure 1-1

This map shows the portions of northern Idaho and Western Montana that contain the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones. The Colville NF in eastern Washington is not included in the analysis area for the amendments to the Forest Plans for the Idaho Panhandle, Kootenai and Lolo National Forests.



by the requirement that there shall be no permanent net loss of core habitat in any BMU and core area (the amount required by the standard) and any newly created core habitat in these BMUs stay in place for 10 years (except for emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances consulted on with USFWS). The biological opinion's terms and conditions contain additional limitations related to temporary reductions in core area (see Appendix B of this document). We do not expect that the flexibility options will be implemented either at the full extent allowable in each bear management unit or widely applied across all of the units. The selected flexibility measures are designed to be and will be used with discretion. Any site-specific project involving road management occurring within the recovery zones that would propose to increase route densities or decrease core habitat in BMUs that currently exceed standards would be subject to public input, analysis, and consultation with USFWS prior to implementing any such proposal.

Management flexibility will also be provided through administrative use of 57 round trips per restricted road per year, divided by season[2]. Such use will include motorized vehicle use in BMUs on restricted roads outside of core areas by agency employees, contractors, and permittees.

For those BMUs that currently do not meet standards, implementing changes in habitat conditions to achieve the designated standard will be mandatory. Therefore, in BMUs not meeting OMRD, TMRD, or the Core Area standard, proposed actions affecting either of these parameters, must result in a post-project movement (improvement) toward the affected parameter's standard (final EIS, p. 2-15).

With the selected alternative, habitat security standards have been set individually for each BMU. These habitat security standards were determined through consultation with the USFWS and grizzly bear research scientists and reflect the unique biological factors (e.g., highways, high quality habitat, residential developments, etc.) in specific BMUs. Standards have been set depending on the site-specific capability of each BMU (see Table 4). Figure 1-2 displays the BMUs and Tables 1 and 2 display features of the selected alternative.

Research recommended levels for OMRD, TMRD, and Core Area are: 1) OMRD greater than 1 mile/square mile must comprise 33 percent or less of the BMU; 2) TMRD greater than 2 miles /square mile must comprise 26% or less of the BMU and 3) Core Area must be at least 55 percent of the BMU. Standards in some BMUs are set at the minimum level recommended by research as needed to maintain bear populations, while in other BMUs standards are set above or below the minimum recommendations, depending on site-specific capability of the BMU (see Table 2). The recommendations were based on an average of conditions used by grizzly bears in the Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk recovery zones. This implies some bears required less secure habitat and some bears required more security. The BMU-specific standards in the selected alternative apply similar conditions across the landscape as utilized by individual bears within the population. In some BMUs that exceed the minimum recommendations, standards have been set slightly lower than the existing condition (but above the research recommended minimum). This will provide for the needs of grizzly bears while allowing some flexibility for forest management activities and activities on private land that impact federal lands (i.e. access to private inholdings).

[2] The level of allowable administrative use was based on work in the Flathead National Forest, which found no measurable displacement when administrative use was less than one vehicle pass per day (one round trip every other day). This equates to 57 trips per year, distributed throughout the season. In reality, the level of administrative use is far lower than that as evidenced by annual reporting by the National Forests. Further, there are often seasonal restrictions in administrative use, further reducing the allowable use days.

Table 1. Specific Features of the Selected Alternative

Feature	
Linear Open Rd Density (KNF, LNF and IPNF)	**No standard** within BMUs (This means existing standards for grizzly bear will be removed for BMUs from the forest plans for the Kootenai and Lolo N.F. There is no existing standard for within BMUs to be removed from the forest plan for the Idaho Panhandle N.F.)
Habitat Effectiveness (Security)	**No standard** (This means existing standards will be removed for grizzly bear from the forest plans for BMUs on the Kootenai and Idaho Panhandle N.F. There is no existing standard to be removed from the forest plan for the Lolo N.F.)
Point Source Disturbance (a)	The analysis of point source disturbances will be required in site-specific project documents.
Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD) (b) (For all forests, unless specified)	OMRD in BMUs within all three Forests will be set at numeric standards established for each BMU as detailed in **Table 2**. In BMUs not meeting OMRD, actions affecting OMRD must result in a post-project movement toward the standard.
Total Motorized Route Density (TMRD) (c)	TMRD in BMUs within all three Forests will be set at numeric standards established for each BMU as detailed in **Table 2**. In BMUs not meeting TMRD, actions affecting TMRD must result in a post-project movement toward the standard.
Core Area (d)	Core Area in BMUs within all three Forests will be set at numeric standards established for each BMU as detailed in **Table 2**. In BMUs not meeting Core Area standard, actions affecting Core Area must result in increased post-project Core Area. Other Core Area requirements will include consideration for seasonal needs, and Core Area fixed in place for 10 years minimum.
Administrative Use	57 round trips allowed per restricted road per year, divided by season. Per the Biological Opinion's Terms and Conditions the Trips are to be apportioned as follows: 19 round trips in spring (4/1 – 6/15), 23 round trips in summer (6/16 – 9/15), 15 round trips in the fall (9/16 – 11/15).
Public Use Period-30 day	Public Use Periods (30 days) will not be allowed on restricted roads in any of the three national forests.
Mapped areas of grizzly bear occupancy outside of the recovery zones (see Figure 1-3)	No increases in linear open road densities on NFSL above the baseline conditions identified for the Priest, Pack River, Troy, Clark Fork, Cabinet, West Kootenai, Tobacco, Libby, Fisher, and Deer Ridge areas (see Figure 1-3 and Appendix B). No permanent increases in linear total road densities above the baseline conditions identified for the Priest, Pack River, Troy, Clark Fork, Cabinet, West Kootenai, Tobacco, Libby, Fisher, and Deer Ridge areas (see Figure 1-3 and Appendix B).

(a) **Point Source Disturbance** - Pertains to a disturbance originating from a single point rather than a linear feature such as a road. Examples include a drill rig, a campground, a garbage collection site, etc…

(b) **Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD)** - Calculation made with the moving windows technique that includes open roads, other roads not meeting all restricted or obliterated criteria, and open motorized trails. The percent of the analysis area in relevant route density classes is calculated.

Note: Moving windows is a technique for measuring road densities on a landscape using a computerized Geographic Information System (GIS).

(c) **Total Motorized Route Density (TMRD)** - Calculation made with the moving windows technique that includes open roads, restricted roads, roads not meeting all reclaimed criteria, and open motorized trails. The percent of the analysis area in relevant route density classes is calculated.

(d) **Core Area** - An area of secure habitat within a BMU that contains no motorized travel routes or high use non-motorized trails during the non-denning season (non-denning season includes the dates 4/1-11/15, inclusive) and is more than 0.3 miles (500 meters) from a drivable road. Core areas do not include any gated roads but may contain roads that are impassible due to vegetation or constructed barriers. Core areas strive to contain the full range of seasonal habitats that are available in the BMU.

Figure 1-2

This map shows the Bear Management Units (BMUs) within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones.

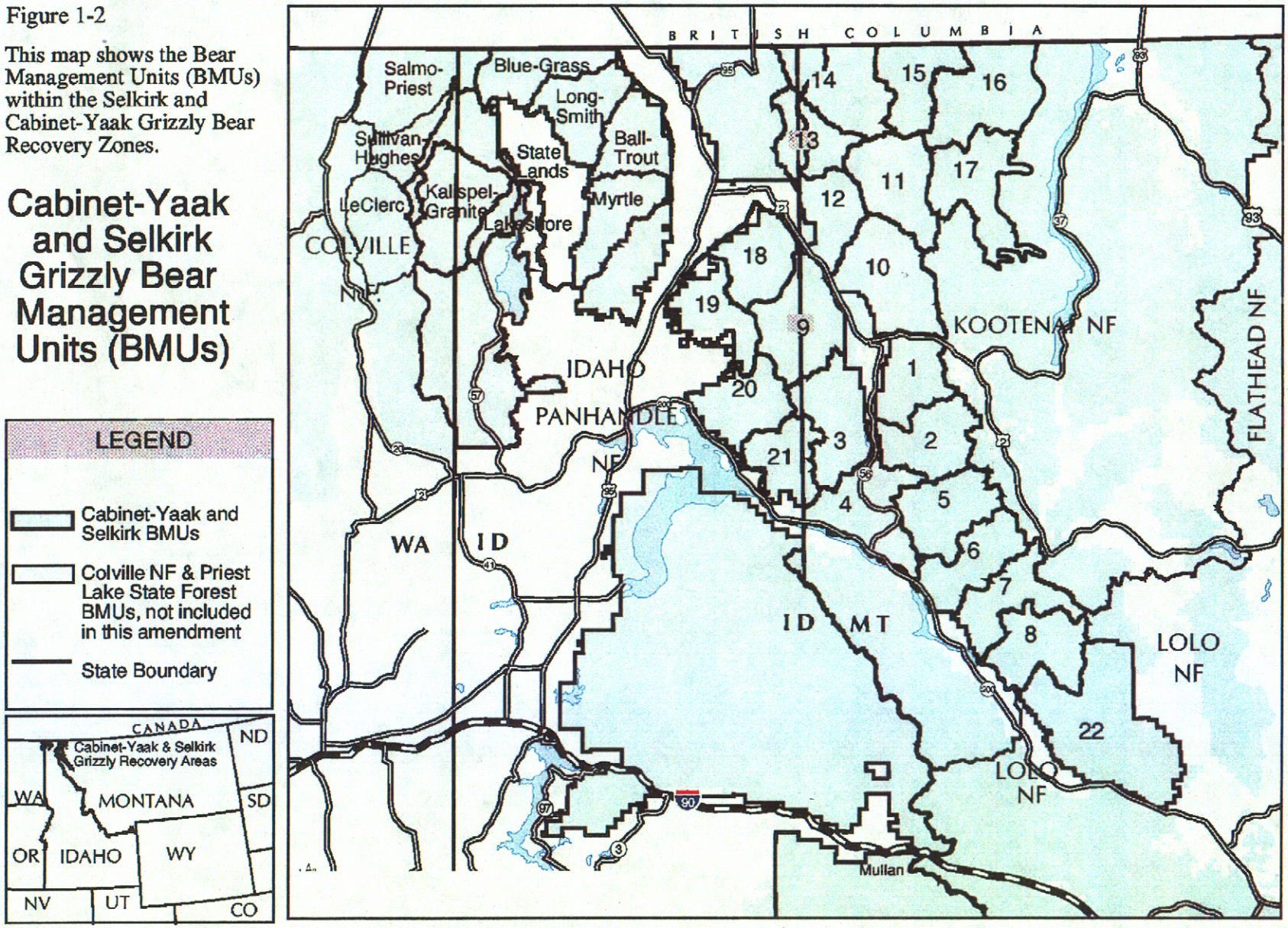


Figure 1-3 – Grizzly Bear Occupancy Outside But Adjacent to the Recovery Zones

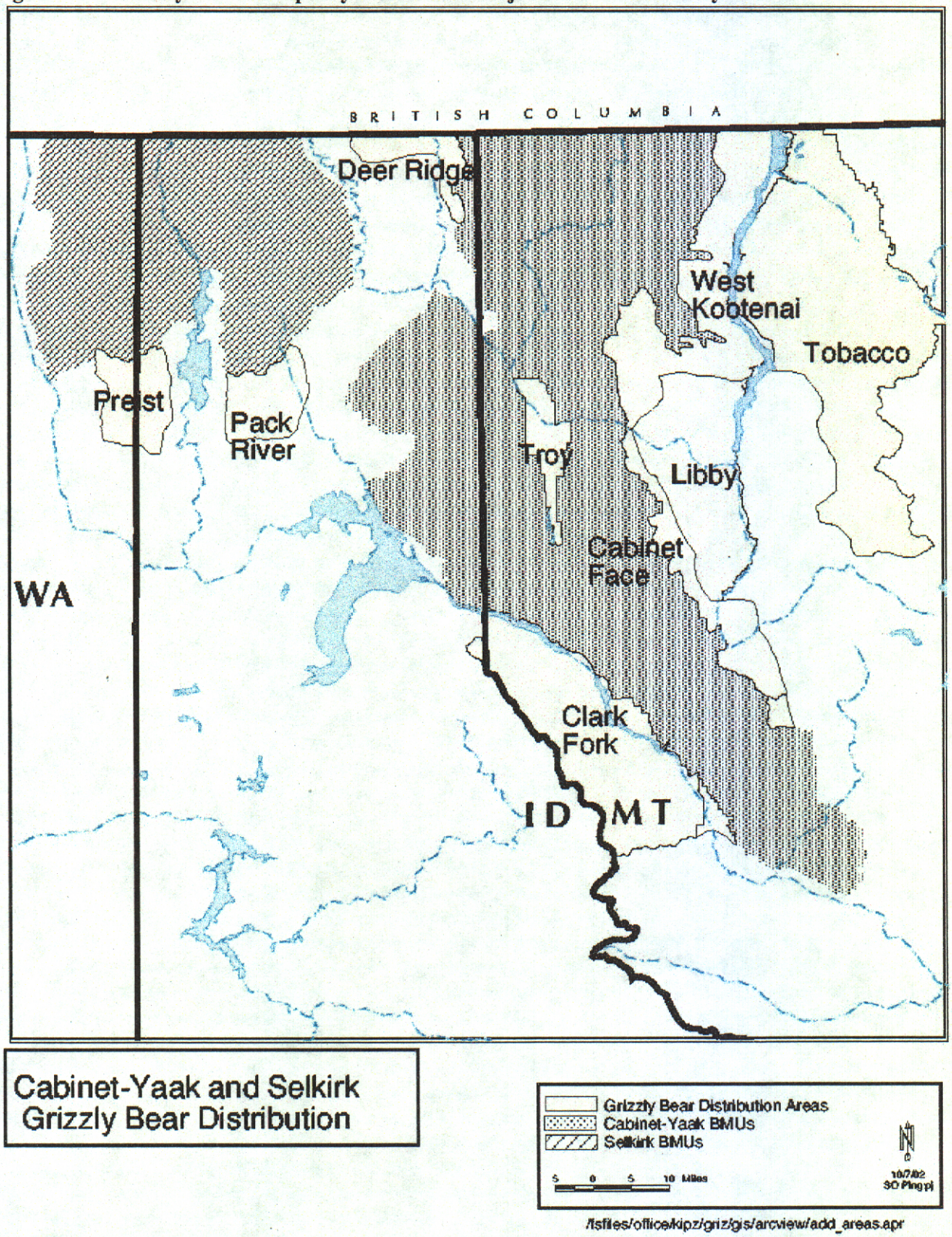


Table 2. Selected Alternative – BMU Status and Selected Standards

BMU and Applicable Forest(s)	BMU Priority [a]	OMRD: >1mi/mi² (%) Research recommended maximum = 33%			TMRD: >2 mi/mi² (%) Research recommended maximum = 26%			Percent Core Area (%) Research recommended minimum = 55%			Percent Federal Land
		2000 Status	2002 Status	Standard (Maximum)	2000 Status	2002 Status	Standard (Maximum)	2000 Status	2002 Status	Standard (Minimum)	
1 - KNF	2	11.5	12.0	15.0	10.8	10.0	15.0	83.0	83.0	80.0	99
2 - KNF	2	16.7	17.0	20.0	14.3	14.0	18.0	78.0	77.0	75.0	94
3 - KNF	3	23.5	27.0	33.0	30.4	26.0	26.0	58.3	62.0	59.0 (f)	95
4 - KNF	2	36.4	36.0	36.0	25.9	26.0	26.0	63.1	62.0	63.0	84
5 - KNF	1	27.0	26.0	30.0	20.9	21.0	23.0	61.5	63.0	60.0 (f)	97
6 - KNF	1	33.2	33.0	34.0	31.3	32.0	32.0	54.8	55.0	55.0	85
7 - KNF	2	23.0	23.0	26.0	20.1	20.0	23.0	66.3	66.0	63.0	92
8 - KNF	3	31.7	32.0	32.0	21.2	23.0	20.0	56.9	56.0	55.0	93
9 - KNF	2	32.2	32.0	33.0	28.1	27.0	26.0	56.3	57.0	55.0	90
10 - KNF	2	44.6	41.0	44.0	33.8	32.0	34.0	47.7	49.0	52.0 (f)	95
11 - KNF	1	28.8	31.0	33.0	26.9	28.0	26.0	54.9	54.0	55.0	96
12 - KNF	1	45.4	43.0	45.0	30.7	30.0	31.0	56.2	57.0	55.0	92
13 – KNF/IPNF	1	34.5	28.0	33.0	24.4	24.0	26.0	59.0	62.0	60.0 (f)	99
14 – KNF/IPNF	1	28.3	28.0	33.0	26.3	26.0	26.0	55.7	56.0	55.0	99
15 - KNF	1	30.7	31.0	33.0	32.2	30.0	26.0	47.8	50.0	55.0 (h)	94
16 - KNF	1	31.2	29.0	33.0	38.4	38.0	26.0	44.7	45.0	55.0	96
17 - KNF	2	32.0	31.0	33.0	27.0	26.0	26.0	49.0	50.0	55.0	99
22- LNF	3	37.0	39.0	33.0	41.0	42.0	35.0	47.2	47.0	55.0	89
Boulder (18) – IPNF	3	37.0	29.0	33.0	35.0	35.0	29.0	48.0	49.0	55.0	92
Grouse (19) – IPNF (b), (c)	3	59.0	59.0	59.0	59.0	59.0	55.0	32.0	32.0	37.0	54
N. Lightning (20) – IPNF	1	38.0	38.0	35.0	20.0	20.0	26.0	61.0	61.0	61.0	94
Scotchman (21) – IPNF	2	35.0	35.0	35.0	27.0	27.0	26.0	63.0	63.0	62.0	81
Blue-Grass - IPNF	1	30.0	27.0	31.0 (g)	29.0	29.0	26.0	49.0	49.0	55.0	96
Long-Smith - IPNF	1	21.0	23.0	25.0	13.0	13.0	15.0	73.0	73.0	67.0	92
Kalispell-Granite - IPNF	1	31.0	31.0	33.0	29.0	29.0	26.0	46.0	48.0	55.0	96
Lakeshore - IPNF	3	82.0	78.0	82.0	56.0	50.0	56.0	16.0	20.0	20.0	86
Salmo-Priest – IPNF (d)	2	30.0	31.0	33.0	24.0	25.0	26.0	64.0	65.0	64.0	99
Sullivan-Hughes – IPNF (d)	1	22.9	23.0	23.0	20.3	21.0	18.0	55.0	59.0	61.0	99
Myrtle - IPNF	2	31.0	30.0	33	19.0	19.0	22.0	60.0	60.0	56.0	85
Ball-Trout - IPNF	2	16.0	18.0	20.0	9.0	9.0	13.0	74.0	72.0	69.0	94
Le Clerc - IPNF (b), (e)	3	39.1	38.0	****	52.7	50.0	****	32	30.0	****	64

(a): BMU Priority - A biological rating for each BMU derived by the Access Task Group of the Selkirk-Cabinent Yaak Management Subcommittee. Each BMU was rated 1-high priority, 2-moderate priority, or 3-low priority based on sightings of family groups, credible grizzly sightings, human caused mortality, adjacency to BMU's having females with young, and within a linkage area or not.
(b): ≤ 75% Federal lands
(c): Due to the high level of non-Federal lands within the Grouse BMU, existing conditions and standards are calculated assuming no contribution of secure habitat from private lands.
(d): Site-specific implementation of standards will be coordinated between the IPNF and Colville NFs at the project level.
(e): LeClerc BMU is not addressed in this project as 90% of the acreage lies within the Colville National Forest.
(f): The final EIS Alternative E proposed Core Area standards were 55% (BMU 3), 58% (BMU 5), 48% (BMU 10), and 55% (BMU 13).
(g): The final EIS Alternative E proposed OMRD standard for Blue-Grass BMU was 33%.
(h): Core area increased to 55% in 2003 as a result of the Garver Timber Sale Record of Decision.

Management direction for the recovery zones prior to this decision (see Alternative B discussion, final EIS, pp. 2-9 to 2-11) provided for 30-day public use periods on one gated road system per year per BMU, if the BMU met prescribed security criteria (final EIS, p. 2-10). With this decision, the ability to provide new public use periods on restricted road systems within the recovery zones will no longer be available on either the Kootenai, Lolo, or Idaho Panhandle national forests. However, as we have previously stated in this decision, site-specific access related decisions made through previous NEPA analyses and with completed USFWS consultation will not be affected by this programmatic decision. For example, public access to roads on the Priest Lake Ranger District that were included in the Kalispell-Granite Bear Unit (KGB) decision of 1996 will not be affected by our decision because they have been previously analyzed and consulted on with the USFWS. Such existing decisions were considered as part of the environmental baseline in this analysis. We expect this decision to provide for a greater level of habitat security and a greater resulting mitigation for mortality risk to grizzly bears.

Point Source Disturbance (PSD) pertains to a disturbance originating from a single point rather than a linear feature such as a road. Examples include a drill rig, a campground, or a garbage collection site. These disturbances have potential effects and must be mitigated or accounted for in accordance with our grizzly bear cumulative effects model. However, we do not believe this programmatic EIS is the place to address the specifics of PSD. There is no established protocol for addressing PSDs programmatically. Therefore, we believe PSDs are better addressed on a project-by-project basis through the use of our grizzly bear cumulative effects model and project level consultation. While they are disturbances to be considered in site-specific project analysis, they are not a road or trail access issue, and thus, not within the scope of our decision.

Because not all habitats are of equal value to grizzly bear, our decision provides for the future development of a habitat-based access management approach. While new techniques currently are becoming available for a habitat-based approach to access management, the techniques are not yet available for the two recovery zones. Our decision has considered recent scientific information and does not preclude the consideration, use and incorporation of new scientific findings/information in future site-specific decisions. Furthermore, if new and applicable scientific findings and/or information is identified our decision encourages its use for project level activities.

As displayed in Table 1, the selected alternative will also remove for each national forest within the recovery zones any existing forest plan standards regarding linear open road density and habitat effectiveness within recovery zones that are currently applicable to grizzly bear (see also final EIS, Table 2-5, p. 2-17).

Implementation

We estimate that full implementation of the actions needed to reach the prescribed standards of the selected alternative will take five to nine years from the date of this decision. Implementation timelines are based upon a three Forest average road decommissioning of 100 miles per year. Per the terms and conditions of the USFWS BO, for those BMUs currently not achieving one or more of the selected standards, all standards will be achieved in 35 percent of the BMUs by December 31, 2009, in 70 percent of the BMUs by December 31, 2011, and by December 31, 2013, all BMUs must equal or exceed the standards. Further, emphasis is to be given to achieving the identified standards by order of BMU priority (see Table 2, Column 2).

While we expect steady progress during this timeframe, actions beyond the control of the Forest Service could delay full implementation. Actions beyond our control include: administrative appeals or litigation of this decision or project-level decisions; budgets to support project-level decisions; or future priorities

affecting the project-level decisions. However, as displayed in Table 2, between 2000 and 2002 (see columns displaying 2000 and 2002 status), we have made progress in reducing the percent OMRD (from 32.7 to 32 percent) and TMRD (from 27.5 to 27 percent) and increasing percent core area (from 56 to 56.7 percent)[3] within the recovery zones. Project level implementation of this decision (based on 2000 status) is expected to eventually provide for an increase in core area of 22,655 acres within the Cabinet/Yaak Recovery Zone and an increase of 9,572 acres in the Selkirk Recovery Zone (final EIS, pg. 3-102).

All three national forests have begun the revision of their respective forest plans. Presently, completion of the revision of the Kootenai and Idaho Panhandle forest plans is expected in 2005, while the Lolo N.F. forest plan revision is expected in 2006. At that time, based on new information assessed during the revision process, the revised forest plans may include or modify the standards adopted in this amendment.

This amendment will result in a new appendix to the forest plans for the Idaho Panhandle and Lolo national forests. This amendment will be an addendum to Appendix 8 of the forest plan for the Kootenai N.F. (see Appendix A of this ROD).

A. Monitoring

In addition to all existing forest plan monitoring requirements, each of the three national forests shall:

1) Meet annually with USFWS to discuss progress made towards achieving established standards for each BMU.
2) Prepare by January 15th of each year, a detailed annual report displaying the accomplishments in implementation of the new habitat security standards. This report will quantify the levels of open motorized route density, total motorized route density, core area, and administrative use for all BMUs at the end of each year and shall also summarize actions taken to comply with the terms and conditions for minimizing incidental take to grizzly bear in areas outside the recovery zones (RPM A.2).

Individual ranger districts will maintain records of administrative use on restricted roads within the recovery area, to insure compliance with existing guidelines. Project-level decisions will consider the need for additional monitoring of site-specific activities within BMUs. Application of additional monitoring will be a future decision at the project-level and is beyond the scope of this amendment.

B. Biological Opinion Terms and Conditions

In addition to the specific features of the selected alternative, this decision complies with the terms and conditions of the USFWS biological opinion for grizzly bear within and outside of the recovery zones. USFWS believes these measures represent all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental harm in the context of taking action to achieve this amendment's purpose and need. A complete description of the terms and conditions are included as Appendix B of this document. The complete USFWS biological opinion is located in the project record (Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion).

As a result of compliance with the terms and conditions of the biological opinion, standards for Core Area or OMRD for BMUs 3, 5, 10, 13, and Blue Grass have been adjusted from the standards reflected in the final EIS for Alternative E. The final EIS Alternative E proposed Core Area standards for BMUs 3, 5, 10, and 13 were 55, 58, 48, and 55 percent, respectively. The standards, per the USFWS BO are 59, 60, 52,

[3] Averages are for the 30 BMUs addressed in this decision – excludes the LeClerc BMU of which 90 percent is located on the Colville National Forest.

and 60 percent, respectively. The OMRD standard for the Blue Grass BMU increased from 33 percent to 31 percent (i.e. there will be a decrease in the amount of open routes allowed to exist in the BMU).

The USFWS also provided a set of terms and conditions for the purpose of minimizing incidental take to grizzly bear in areas outside the recovery zones. The requirements affect approximately 1.1 million acres of National Forest System lands (see Figure 1-3 and the terms and conditions in Appendix B for implementing reasonable and prudent measure A.2).

VI. Rationale for the Decision

Our decision to select Alternative E is based upon the following factors

- Responsiveness to the stated purpose and need.
- Responsiveness to policy direction.
- Responsiveness to public comment and issues - including compatibility with the goals of Tribes and other agencies.

These factors are discussed in the following decision criteria.

A. Achievement of Purpose and Need

This decision affirmatively addresses the purpose and need for action as presented in the final EIS (pp. 1-4 and 1-5).

1) This ROD amends the respective forest plans to include a set of motorized access and security guidelines consistent with our responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to conserve and contribute to recovery of grizzly bears.

ESA requires federal agencies to insure that any agency action does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species [ESA Section 7(a)(2)]. While all the alternatives considered contained elements of programs for managing human access in grizzly bear habitat, in the analysis, alternatives that included conservation measures that are less than the current state of the art (i.e. based on current research) were not found to be as effective, overall at conserving and recovering grizzly bears. Alternatives judged to include higher levels of conservation for bears in a manner consistent with current scientific research were determined to be more effective (see final EIS, pp. 3-18 to 3-22).

Our selected alternative utilizes the best available scientific information regarding access management in grizzly bear habitat [see section *(VI)(C)(1)(a)*] by including use of OMRD, TMRD and Core as management measures for insuring grizzly bear conservation and recovery (final EIS pp. 3-20 and 3-21). While the selected alternative provides flexibility for increases in route densities and temporary decreases in core habitat within individual BMUs that exceed the standards for these parameters, overall across both recovery zones it provides the highest level of security of the alternatives considered in detail (final EIS, pp. 3-19 and 3-20). It is important to note that the management flexibility provided by allowing increases in route density and decreases in core habitat in those BMUs that are currently exceeding standards may be constrained due to other resource management issues. In contrast, in BMUs not meeting OMRD, TMRD, or the Core Area standard, proposed actions affecting either of these parameters, must result in a post-project movement (improvement) toward the affected parameter's standard (final EIS, p. 2-15).

Alternatives A and B do not utilize the most current scientific research. Under both alternatives, human-caused grizzly bear morality has continued to occur. Implementation of Alternative A was found to have a high likelihood of jeopardizing the continued existence of grizzly bears (final EIS, p. 3-20). Alternative

B though was found to be fully consistent with Section 7(a)(2) requirements (final EIS, p. 3-20). Because the numerical levels of Alternative C represent average values across home ranges, it would conserve bears at the lowest level considered to have a reasonable potential for success. Alternative E by contrast was designed to reflect the unique features of biological and social factors found in the specific BMUs, therefore, across both recovery zones, the level of security was found to be higher than that of Alternative C. As a result, Alternative E should be more effective ensuring that the requirements of Section 7(a)(2) are met (final EIS, pp. 3-19 and 2-20).

2) This ROD incorporates amendments to the respective forest plans which will comply with the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Task Force Report and therefore;

3) This ROD complies with the Decision by the Chief of the Forest Service on the Appeal of the Kootenai N.F. Forest Plan.

The Chief's decision on the appeal of the Kootenai NF Forest Plan directed the regional forester to incorporate through forest plan amendment or revision the IGBC guidelines in their entirety. The amendments, which incorporate the IGBC guidelines to the three forest plans, are included in Appendix A of this document. The selected alternative is consistent with administrative direction for recovery of grizzly bears, including the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (USFWS 1993) and IGBC access management direction (IGBC 1998). The Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan identified recovery goals, objectives and tasks necessary for recovery of the species. Many of these items relate to reducing human-caused mortality. Human access by motorized roads and trails is often a contributing factor to human-caused mortality of bears. IGBC provided direction for developing consistent management standards related to management of motorized access within grizzly bear recovery zones.

IGBC adopted minimum levels are:

1) An OMRD of greater than 1 mile per square mile is not to be exceeded in more than 33 percent of the BMU.
2) A TMRD of greater than 2 miles per square mile is not to be exceeded in more than 26 percent of the BMU; and
3) Core area is to be greater than or equal to 55 percent of the BMU.

These measures were developed after the respective forest plans were approved and, therefore, are not incorporated into current forest plans. The selected alternative incorporates these measures and goes beyond the minimum recommended levels in many BMUs (final EIS, p. 2-16). In some BMUs, we will not meet recommended levels of security due to:

1) Lack of legal authority to close highways and county roads
2) A high percentage of non-federal lands

However, when all BMUs are considered, we believe that the selected alternative provides a high level of habitat security for grizzly bear (final EIS, pp. 3-17 to 3-19). By comparison:

- Alternative A is somewhat consistent with Recovery Plan objectives but it is not consistent with IGBC direction because it does not include numerical OMRD, TMRD, or Core requirements within grizzly bear habitat (final EIS, p. 3-18).
- Alternative B establishes goals for core in priority 1 BMUs and allows for no increases in OMRD or TMRD, but no numerical standards are established for these measures, therefore, while this

alternative is an improvement over Alternative A, it is not fully consistent with IGBC and Recovery Plan direction (final EIS, p. 3-18).

- Alternative C is fully consistent with Recovery Plan objectives and IGBC direction (final EIS, p. 3-18). However, OMRD, TMRD, and Core standards are "one size fits all" and are set at the minimum level recommended by researchers, which does not allow for the fact that in some BMUs, we will not be able to achieve recommended minimum levels of security. Therefore, implementation of this alternative would not achieve the objectives of our purpose and need as well as Alternative E, because on-the-ground results will be reduced from those projected in the final EIS by factors such as our lack of jurisdiction or percentage of non-federal lands.

4) This ROD implements amendments to the Kootenai and Lolo N.F. forest plans that comply with the Amended Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Statements for the Forests.

The amendments incorporate standards for OMRD, TMRD and Core, which were developed by Wakkinen and Kasworm (1997). The selected alternative contains one of the best conditions for OMRD, TMRD, and Core, on average, for all BMUs since these standards are set individually by BMU and many are set well above the minimums (see final EIS, p. 2-16, Table 2-4). The USFWS has been consulted throughout development of this action. While the determination of jeopardy or non-jeopardy is made in consultation with USFWS through the ESA Section 7 consultation process, we believe that the selected alternative best meets Recovery Plan and IGBC direction and ESA Section 7(a)(2) requirement to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of grizzly bear (final EIS, pp. 3-18 to 3-22). Subject to the terms and conditions of their biological opinion, the USFWS has concluded that this amendment will not jeopardize the continued existence of the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak grizzly bear population (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 125).

5) This ROD complies with the conditions of a settlement agreement reached with the Alliance for the Wild Rockies.

Our decision satisfies the terms of this settlement agreement by complying with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Forest Management Act (NFMA) procedures to amend the respective forest plans to address grizzly bear management. The forest plan amendments to be implemented incorporate IGBC guidelines into the forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests (see Appendix A).

In summary, we find that the selected alternative best achieves the stated purpose and need for action by utilizing best science as contained in the IGBC guidelines so as to provide for an overall higher level of habitat security within the recovery zones (see final EIS, Tables 3-7 to 3-9, pp. 3-22 to 3-24).

B. Responsiveness to Policy Direction

1. National Fire Plan

The National Fire Plan (NFP) is designed to help protect communities and natural resources, and most importantly the lives of firefighters and the public. In response to the NFP, we expect that where appropriate, site-specific proposals designed to implement this decision shall evaluate the use of prescribed fire to reduce fuel loadings for protection of private property and develop measures that address fuel reduction, access and suppression capabilities.

2. Interior Columbia Basin Strategy

The Interior Columbia Basin Strategy (Project Record, Volume 30) provides guidance for incorporating the science data and resource information developed by the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project into land and resource management plans (amendment and revision) and project implementation. The Strategy envisions that the management of Forest Service and BLM administered lands throughout the Columbia Basin will contribute to, among other things, the recovery and de-listing of threatened and endangered species. Our decision responds to this goal by using best available science to develop habitat security standards for the purpose of conserving and contributing to the recovery of grizzly bears [see section *(VI)(C)(1)(a)*]. The new standards are also expected to provide improved conditions for other wildlife species (see the *Responsiveness to the Issues* section of this ROD).

C. Responsiveness to Public Comment and Issues

1. Public Involvement

Planning team members involved interested groups, individuals, tribal entities, and agencies in this project. There have been many opportunities to comment and provide input during the many public meetings that have been conducted for this project. The following is a summary of the primary communication, collaboration and public involvement efforts that have been conducted (for more detail see Chapter 4 of the final EIS and Volumes three through fourteen of the Project Record).

- May 10, 2001 - Project information and request for public comments distributed to about 1,300 individuals, agencies, organizations, and tribal entities.
- May 11, 2001 - Notice of intent (formal project initiation) published in the *Federal Register.*
- May 24, 2001 to June 5, 2001 – A series of public meetings were held in the communities of Libby, Eureka, and Thompson Falls, Montana as well as Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry, Idaho.
- June 2001 to August 2001 - Information was presented at public forums and/or organizational meetings in the communities of Bonners Ferry and Post Falls, Idaho and Spokane, Washington.
- July 31, 2001 – A project update newsletter was distributed to about 550 Individuals, agencies, organizations, and tribal entities.
- November 15, 2001 – The draft EIS notice of availability was published in the *Federal Register*, corresponding with the associated mailing and/or availability of the draft EIS and/or draft EIS summary to about 500 individuals, agencies, organizations, and tribal entities.
- November 26, 2001 to December 19, 2001 - Open houses associated with the release of the draft EIS were held in the communities of Libby, Thompson Falls, and Eureka, Montana as well as Sandpoint, Bonners Ferry, Coolin, and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.
- December 6, 2001 - Information was presented at a locally sponsored public forum in Coolin, Idaho.
- December 31, 2001 – The end of the 45-day comment period on the draft EIS.
- March 15, 2002 – The final EIS notice of availability was published in the *Federal Register*, corresponding with the associated mailing and/or availability of the final EIS and/or final EIS summary to about 500 individuals, agencies, organizations, and tribal entities.
- A biological opinion on the preferred alternative was obtained from USFWS in February of 2004.

We reviewed all public comments received during the public scoping phase of the project and identified a series of significant issues to lead the development of alternative actions. The following significant issues were identified prior to release of the draft EIS.

- Public access for recreation and social uses;
- Administrative access;
- Local economic conditions;
- Increased secure habitat for grizzly bears; and
- Access to private inholdings

Responsiveness of the selected alternative to these and other issues is discussed in a following section titled *Responsiveness to the Issues*.

We received over 330 letters, containing a total of 531 substantive comments, during the draft EIS comment period. Categories receiving the largest number of comments included grizzly bear and use of best available science (170), public access (79), and employment (36) (for further information see final EIS pp. 4-3 and 4-4).

a) Grizzly Bear and Best Available Science

Some of the comments questioned the science that was used in the document and by the IGBC. Specifically, comments were received concerning the 55 percent Core, 33 percent OMRD and 26 percent TMRD standards as not being biologically defensible. Some commenters believed the proposed standards were insufficient and had no scientific validity in terms of bear habitat requirements (final EIS, pp. 4-27 to 4-30). It was stated that more stringent standards should be utilized (i.e. 19 percent OMRD, 19 percent TMRD, and 68 percent core area) to conserve grizzly bear, based on the Flathead National Forest's Forest Plan Amendment 19 and the research of Mace and Manley (1993).

ESA requires the USFWS and Forest Service, respectively, to base the biological opinion and subsequent agency action on the use of best scientific and commercially available data [16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)]. The best available scientific information regarding access management in grizzly bear habitat is considered to include two sources. One of these is the research from the South Fork of the Flathead River regarding how road access affects grizzly bears (Mace and Manley 1993, Mace and Waller 1997). This research resulted in development of OMRD, TMRD and Core as management measures for insuring grizzly bear habitat security. The second source is research from local bear populations that applies the South Fork technology to the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones (Wakkinen and Kasworm 1997). The Wakkinen and Kasworm report was peer reviewed by nine biologists, whose comments were incorporated in the final report. Wayne Kasworm, grizzly bear researcher with the USFWS and Wayne Wakkinen, grizzly bear researcher with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game have over thirty years of experience monitoring grizzly bear populations in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak ecosystems.

The IGBC has directed that information on open road density (OMRD), total road density (TMRD) and core be incorporated into the management of grizzly bears and that each grizzly bear ecosystem develop ecosystem-specific guidelines using local data where possible [Project Record, Volume 22, Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Taskforce Report on Grizzly Bear/Motorized Access Management (Revised), p. 5]. Based on the IGBC's direction, research data from radio-collared grizzly bears in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystems were used to determine the appropriate levels of these three parameters (Wakkinen and Kasworm, 1997). These numbers were generated with such local data, which we consider to be the best available local information (see final EIS, p. 4-30).

Six radio collared female grizzly bears monitored during 1989 to 1994 were used by Wakkinen and Kasworm (1997) to represent the basis for the open road, total road and core standards. These animals were radio collared within the Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk recovery zones. All animals produced young either during or prior to this monitoring period. Individual home ranges for these animals were evaluated for percent of area over one mile per square mile of open road density, percent of area over two miles per square mile of total road density, and percent of area in core. Previous analyses showed less than expected use when these road densities were exceeded. The methods used by Wakkinen and Kasworm followed those described by previous research (Mace and Manley 1993) and by guidelines from the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC 1994). These six bears were chosen because they were females that had survived long enough to provide sufficient data for analysis and had reproduced within the study area. Values for these six radio collared bears were averaged to produce the resulting 33 percent of the home range had an open road density of 1 mile per square mile or greater, 26 percent of the home range had a total road density of 2 miles per square mile or greater, and 55 percent of the home range was core.

While the sample sizes obtained by Wakkinen and Kasworm (1997) were small, the results were consistent with those found in similar studies conducted in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE), although road density numbers in that Ecosystem were lower (open and total road densities equal 19 percent, each) and core habitat was higher (68 percent). The NCDE parameters were developed using composite home range information, rather than average multi-years home range information as used for the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystems. These values provide the best available indication of the habitat conditions used by grizzly bears in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystems (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 40).

While allowable road density percentages for the NCDE are lower and core habitat percentages higher than those based on the research of Wakkinen and Kasworm (19-19-68 vs. 33-26-55), the values are applied differently. The motorized road density analysis process (OMRD and TMRD) for the NCDE and Flathead NF includes all federal (except for MS-3[4] lands), state, and Plum Creek Timber Company lands. Small private ownerships (all private ownerships other than Plum Creek) are not included in the analysis. All open and restricted roads and motorized trails are included in the analysis, except for federal and state highways (primary and secondary highways only), county roads, small private roads (Plum Creek and Montana Department of State Lands roads are not considered small private), and revegetated or reclaimed roads (Project Record, Volume 30, NCDE Protocol Paper). The Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak road density analysis process includes all ownerships (including federal MS-3 lands) as well as federal and state highways, county roads, and small private roads in the analysis, regardless of jurisdiction. Because it includes all ownerships and more types of motorized routes, one would expect higher values of road density to be the result of applying the Selkirk and Cabinet Yaak analysis process, other things being equal.

Similarly, the core area analysis process utilizing the NCDE and Flathead NF protocols does not include small private lands (all private ownerships other than Plum Creek). The Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak core analysis process includes all ownerships. Therefore, in areas of mixed ownership, lower core area values would be expected from utilization of the Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak process, other things being equal. While we would expect effects from applying the two protocols to differ between BMUs depending on the proportion of private lands, highways, and county roads present, overall calculations for the

[4] The MS-3 lands are where grizzly bears may occur infrequently, and human developments such as campgrounds or resorts may result in conditions that make grizzly bear presence untenable for humans and/or grizzly bears. Management focus is on human-bear conflict minimization rather than habitat maintenance and protection, and grizzly bear presence is actively discouraged.

Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak should result in somewhat more protection for grizzly bears because we are applying the protocols in a more restrictive manner.

Another factor related to the apparent differences between the two sets of standards pertains to grizzly bears in the South Fork of the Flathead River study having greater amounts of roadless and unroaded areas available for their use than in the Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak study. This may have contributed to the differences between the results of the research studies.

The project record also includes letters received from the public that included attachments of references to literature or simply a reference to literature (see Project Record, Volumes 8 through 12). Scientists involved in this project from the USFWS, Forest Service and Idaho Fish and Game reviewed all submitted references. In their review of references, scientists determined if the reference was applicable to the Selkirk or Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones. Additionally, the Forest Service conducted an exhaustive search for references identified in public letters, which were not submitted/attached with the comment letter. The project record documents the review process conducted by the scientists [Volume 14, Public Comment (Scoping & DEIS) Literature References Relevancy]. References pertaining to expansion of the recovery zones or landscape linkages were determined to be beyond the scope of our decision. Other references pertained to the effectiveness of road closures, grizzly bear population trends, grizzly bear habitat availability, development of access management guidelines, and impacts of snowmobiles on wildlife. While these references were considered relevant, the information they provided did not result in a need to revise the analysis (Project Record, Volume 14, Public Comment (Scoping & DEIS) Literature References Relevancy).

b) Public Access

Comments we received concerning public access reflected the sentiment of the respondents on access management, with about 20 percent supporting more road closures and 80 percent opposed to more road closures. We acknowledge that continuation of motorized use of existing roads in the recovery zones is a very important social concern. Implementation of the selected alternative is expected to continue providing for this important national forest use by maintaining over 3,000 miles of road open year-round to motorized users (final EIS, p. 3-72, Table 3-31).

c) Employment

The third largest number of comments was related to the topic of employment and income. Specifically, the respondents expressed sentiments that further analysis concerning economic impacts was needed. In response, the interdisciplinary team revised and updated the effects analysis of the alternatives (see final EIS, pp. 3-126 to 3-148).

2. Compatibility with the Goals of Tribes and Other Agencies

a) Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Kalispel Tribe, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

There were no heritage or wildlife issues associated with this programmatic amendment identified by the Tribes (Project Record, Volume 14, Tribal Consultation). Further consultation will precede the implementation of any site-specific access changes or road closures when they are proposed.

b) Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribe

Specific issues discussed during consultation included decommissioning or closure of roads and how these activities would affect access by tribal members to traditional resources. Access is particularly an issue with tribal elders (Project Record, Volume 14, Tribal Consultation). The tribe indicated to us that they would not have any overriding concerns about road closure or decommissioning, when weighed

against the benefits of enhancement of grizzly bear habitat because grizzly bear holds important traditional cultural significance to them. Further consultation will take place prior to implementation of any site-specific access changes or road closures.

c) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

EPA has responsibilities to review and comment on environmental impacts under section 309 of the Clean Air Act. In comments provided on the draft EIS (final EIS, p. 4-163), the EPA indicated that it would be important for any alternative we select for implementation to be consistent with IGBC recommendations as well as to address the needs identified in USFWS biological opinions and incidental take statements. As documented in the final EIS (pp. 3-6 to 3-25), the biological assessment (pp. 1 to 19) and this ROD, the selected alternative is fully consistent with IGBC recommendations. Additionally, this decision incorporates the terms and conditions of the USFWS grizzly bear biological opinion (see Appendix B). Therefore, our decision is compatible with the goals of the Environmental Protection Agency.

d) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The USFWS (along with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—Fisheries) is charged with the administration and implementation of the Endangered Species Act (1973). The goal of the Endangered Species Act is the recovery of listed species to levels where protection under the Act is no longer necessary.

USFWS consultation and grizzly bear research biologists were involved throughout the entire analysis process including attendance of interdisciplinary meetings and conference calls as well as active involvement during public meetings and forums (Project Record, Volumes 1 and 2).

To comply with Endangered Species Act, we prepared a biological assessment that evaluated the potential effects of our decision on threatened and endangered species that may be present in the project area. The biological assessment prepared concluded that the selected alternative "**may affect, and is likely to adversely affect**" the grizzly bear and bull trout, or their habitat. As a result, we initiated formal consultation with USFWS in May of 2002. The USFWS issued a biological opinion on, February 9, 2004 (Project Record, Volume 2). The biological opinion concluded that implementation of the proposed amendments is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the grizzly bear, Canada lynx, and bull trout as long as the terms and conditions of the biological opinion are met (see Appendix B for a list of the BO terms and conditions). The terms and conditions of the BO are non-discretionary.

e) Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the Idaho Office of Species Conservation

The mission of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) wildlife program is to preserve, protect, perpetuate and manage the wildlife resources of the state to provide continued supplies of wildlife for hunting, trapping and wildlife viewing and to ensure the persistence of native wildlife species. The mission of the Office of Species Conservation is to build agreements among Idahoans and State and Federal agencies that advance both the interests of people and the future of listed species.

In 2001, the Office of Species Conservation and the Forest Service entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) whereby an IDFG grizzly bear researcher would participate in our grizzly bear Forest Plan amendment planning process by providing grizzly bear population and habitat data, and assisting in the development of access management goals, objectives and standards (Project Record, Volume 2, MOU between KNF, LNF, IPF and OSC). Per the agreement, we utilized the data and assessments provided by IDFG in the amendment planning process. The IDFG grizzly bear research

biologist remained involved throughout the entire analysis process through attendance of interdisciplinary meetings, conference call, and public meetings.

Our selected alternative is consistent with the goals of both the IDFG and Office of Species Conservation. Of the alternatives considered, the selected alternative most effectively contributes to the recovery of the grizzly bear [see section *VI (a)*] while addressing the interests of people (i.e. issues related to public access, economics, access to private inholdings) [see section *VI (C) (3)*].

3. Responsiveness to the Issues

a) Threatened and Endangered Wildlife and Fish Species

(1) Grizzly Bear

The need for this analysis is to amend our respective forest plans to provide for motorized access and security guidelines for the purposes of conserving and contributing to the recovery of the grizzly bear. The grizzly bear population in the Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone was estimated at 30 to 40 bears (Kasworm, et. al, 2002). The grizzly bear population in the Selkirk Recovery Zone was estimated at 45 to 50 bears (64 FR 26725-26733). Several estimates of the finite rate of increase (lambda) for both populations have produced point estimates above and below 1.0 (stable population), but confidence intervals on these estimates do not allow us to statistically conclude that the population is increasing or decreasing in either recovery zone (64 FR 26725-26733, Kasworm, et. al, 2000; Kasworm 2001; and Wakkinen and Johnson, 2000).

Security is an important element of grizzly bear habitat, helping to minimize human-caused bear mortalities. Grizzly bear mortalities, both natural and human-caused, are important factors limiting the growth of bear populations in both recovery areas (USFWS 1993). Historically (in the past 20 years), more than two-thirds of the grizzly bear mortalities in the recovery areas have been human-caused, with the preponderance of these mortalities occurring near open roads (final EIS, pp. 3-6 to 3-8). Since most grizzly bear mortalities are human-caused, and most human-caused mortalities are within 500 meters of open roads, the management of roads is one of the most powerful tools available to balance the security needs of grizzly bears with the activities of humans (USFWS 1993).

Because most grizzly bear mortalities are human-caused (69 percent), we considered the level of mitigation for grizzly bear mortality risk to be an important factor. The greater level of security provided by an alternative, the greater the resulting mitigation for mortality risk. The selected alternative was found to provide one of the best levels of mitigation for grizzly bear mortality risk. Because the selected alternative sets standards for OMRD, TMRD, and Core Area individually by BMU, the analysis ranked this alternative higher than alternatives A and C and as high as Alternative B for this important measure (final EIS, p. 3-21).

Mitigation for grizzly bear displacement potential was also an important consideration in our decision. The greater the level of security provided by an alternative, the greater the mitigation for potential displacement of grizzly bears from preferred habitat. Again, the selected alternative provided one of the best levels of mitigation for displacement when compared to the other alternatives. The analysis ranked the selected alternative higher than alternatives A and C and as high as Alternative B for this measure (final EIS, p. 3-21).

Having management direction in place does not in itself ensure that the direction is effectively implemented. For example, claims have been made that road closure devices (e.g. gates, berms) on the

national forests are poorly managed and maintained, and thus ineffective. In the past, this may have been true to an extent on some units of the National Forest system. Presently, each national forest in the Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk recovery zones actively maintains and enforces road closures. Administrative use of gated roads is tightly controlled, and accurate documentation is kept of allowed use. Some road closure violations continue to occur, as enforcement records show. However, in our experience the overall effectiveness of National Forest road closures is high.

We recognize that other steps can be taken to help reduce grizzly bear mortalities. These include hunter certification programs, sanitation, law enforcement, and education. Although the Forest Service and other agencies currently are pursuing these elements (final EIS, pp. 3-9 and 3-10), they are beyond the scope of this decision, which pertains to the access management element.

The selected alternative will amend the respective forest plans by incorporating the grizzly bear habitat security standards displayed in tables 1 and 2 of this document. These standards provide for increased grizzly bear habitat security while providing management flexibility to address issues related to administrative access, economics, and access to private inholdings. While flexibility is provided, the selected alternative also provides for the greatest increase of core habitat for the recovery zones (an increase of 32,227 acres vs. 31,888 acres for Alternative B and a decrease of 29,056 for Alternative C) of the alternatives considered (see Table 3). The terms and conditions of the USFWS biological opinion will further increase the standards for core area habitat in BMUs 3, 5, 10, and 13. While BMUs 3, 5, and 13 currently meet their selected standard for core, achieving the core standard in BMU 10 will require additional amounts of road reclamation than displayed for Alternative E in the final EIS. As a result, the selected alternative would eventually provide for a three percent increase in core area over the year 2002 existing condition and reduce somewhat the flexibility of BMUs 3, 5, and 10 to accommodate decreases in core area (see Table 2). The overall effect of these changes is to provide additional amounts of secure habitat for grizzly bears and other wildlife species.

Both the selected alternative and Alternative C include standards for OMRD, TMRD, and Core Area. Our rationale for selecting appropriate standards for individual BMUs is summarized in Table 4 (for more detailed discussion see the Project Record, Volume 1, *Alternative E Development of Standards* and *Alternative E BMU Specific Information for all BMU's*). While Alternative C includes these standards, they are one size fits all and are set at the minimum level recommended by bear researchers. The selected alternative in contrast includes OMRD, TMRD, and Core standards set individually for each BMU based on site-specific capability. The core areas will meet researchers' minimum recommended level of 55 percent in 15 BMUs and exceed it in 12 BMUs (see Table 3). TMRD would meet the minimum recommendation of 26 percent in 14 BMUs and be better than the minimum in 9 BMUs. OMRD would meet the minimum recommendation of 33 percent in 14 BMUs and be better than the minimum in 9 BMUs. The final EIS proposed standard for OMRD in the Blue Grass BMU was 33 percent. The existing OMRD is 27 percent and the selected standard, per the terms and conditions of the biological opinion is 31 percent. Therefore, the flexibility to increase OMRD in this BMU will be reduced, which should result in a lower amount of open routes, and therefore, higher levels of security for grizzly bear and other wildlife species.

Table 3. Comparison of Numerical Effects Indicators Between the Alternatives Considered (based upon 2000 status)

Effects Indicator	Alternatives			
	A	B	C	E
Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone (22 BMUs)				
# BMUs meeting ≤33% OMRD	NA	13	**21**	15
# BMUs meeting ≤26% TMRD	8	9	**21**	16
# BMUs meeting ≥55% Core	13	17	**21**	20
# BMUs meeting 33%-26%-55% (all three)	0	6	**21**	14
Average OMRD (all BMUs) (%)	NA	**33**	34	34
Average OMRD change per BMU** (%)	NA	**0**	+1	<+1
Average TMRD (all BMUs) (%)	27*	28	**27**	**27**
Average TMRD change per BMU** (%)	0*	0	**<-1**	**<-1**
Average Core (all BMUs) (%)	58*	**58**	54	57
Net Core change for Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone** (acres)	0*	+13,877	-20,037	**+22,655**
Allowable administrative use per road	121 trips KNF 15 days IPNF 14 days LNF	115 trips	**57 trips**	**57 trips**
Selkirk Recovery Zone (7 BMUs in Alts A, B, C; 8 BMUs in Selected Alternative)				
# BMUs meeting ≤33% OMRD	NA	6	**7**	**7**
# BMUs meeting ≤26% TMRD	NA	5	**7**	**7**
# BMUs meeting ≥55% Core	NA	**7**	**7**	**7**
# BMUs meeting 33%-26%-55% (all three)	NA	5	**7**	**7**
Average OMRD (all BMUs) (%)	NA	**27**	33	35
Average OMRD change per BMU** (%)	NA	**0**	+6	+2
Average TMRD (all BMUs) (%)	NA	**21**	26	25
Average TMRD change per BMU**(%)	NA	**0**	+5	<+1
Average Core (all BMUs) (%)	NA	**62**	55	56
Net Core change for Selkirk Recovery Zone** (acres)	NA	**+18,011**	-9,019	+9,572
Allowable administrative use per road	**15 days IPNF**	115 trips	57 trips	57 trips

*KNF and LNF only (NA on IPNF). LeClerc BMU not included (<75% federal and mostly on Colville NF).

**Change proposed or allowed from 2000 status.

Bold underlined = best for bears

Bold = second best. Where there is a tie for best, no second best is identified.

Table 4. Selected Alternative Determination for BMU Specific Standards

BMU	Selected OMRD Standard	Selected TMRD Standard	Core Area Standard	Rationale for Selection of Standard(s)
1	15	15	80	Standards are better than recommended levels because the BMU is 99% federal ownership with a fairly high percentage of designated wilderness and designated roadless habitat.
2	20	18	75	Standards are better than recommended levels because the BMU is 94% federal ownership with a fairly high percentage of designated wilderness and designated roadless habitat.
3	33	26	59	Levels of core habitat increased from final EIS as a result of consultation with USFWS. Proposed core standards were best estimates at the time. Since then actual on ground conditions, through site specific analysis show that core can be maintained at a higher level.
4	36	26	63	State highways on two sides of the BMU make it impossible to achieve the 33% OMRD. Core is better than the recommended level because much of the BMU is currently proposed wilderness, inventoried roadless, or wilderness.
5	30	23	60	High percentage of designated wilderness and designated roadless habitat. This BMU was thought to be reasonably capable of achieving levels above and beyond the recommended minimum core level, and below the maximum allowable OMRD and TMRD levels. This strategy provides management flexibility while still providing a high level of habitat security.
6	34	32	55	The ownership pattern and county roads greatly reduce the potential for achieving the recommended levels.
7	26	23	63	Standards are better than recommended levels because BMU is 92% federal ownership and currently has a large designated roadless area adjacent to the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness.
8	32	20	55	The existing condition is better than the OMRD and TMRD recommendation- these levels provide flexibility.
9	33	26	55	Selected security levels do not deviate from the 33-26-55 parameters.
10	44	34	52	OMRD & TMRD are at the levels that can be maintained without closing county roads, access to private land and recreational facitities.
11	33	26	55	Selected security levels do not deviate from the 33-26-55 parameters.
12	45	31	55	Achieving recommended OMRD & TMRD levels would require closing county roads and access to private land.
13	33	26	60	Levels of core habitat increased from final EIS as a result of consultation with USFWS. Proposed core standards were best estimates at the time. Since then actual on ground conditions, through site specific analysis show that core can be maintained at a higher level.
14, 15, 16, & 17	33	26	55	Selected security levels do not deviate from the 33-26-55 parameters.
22	33	35	55	A higher TMRD is required because the amount and pattern of private ownership make permanent barriers on many roads are not possible.
Boulder	33	29	55	TMRD unachievable due to numerous roads accessing private lands in NW corner of this BMU.
Grouse	59	55	37	Because of numerous private inholdings the 33-36-55 standard is unattainable.
N. Lightning	35	26	61	OMRD exceeds recommended level due to configuration of arterial roads. Higher core value results from roadless area.
Scotchman	35	26	62	OMRD exceeds recommended level due to high densities on pvt. ownership. Higher core value results from roadless area.
Blue-Grass	31	26	55	OMRD standard was made more restrictive because this is a high priority BMU.
Long-Smith	25	15	67	This BMU appreciably exceeds recommended standards for core and road densities due to high quality habitat, low road densities, and an elevated level of habitat effectiveness.
Kalispel-Granite	33	26	55	Selected security levels do not deviate from the 33-26-55 parameters.
Lakeshore	82	56	20	Achieving the recommended standards was not considered feasible due to the small size of the BMU and its close proximity to developed residential areas.
Salmo-Priest	33	26	64	Levels of core habitat exceed the recommended level because of the proportion of designated wilderness w/in the BMU.
Sullivan-Hughes	23	18	61	The levels of core habitat would exceed the 55 percent standard based on the proportion of designated wilderness which is located within the BMU and also because of the low percentage of core habitat which would be managed for within the Lakeshore BMU.
Myrtle	33	22	56	Selected stds. reflect ownership patterns and lower total motorized road densities.
Ball-Trout	20	13	69	This BMU appreciably exceeds recommended standards for core and road densities due to high quality habitat, low road densities, and an elevated level of habitat effectiveness.

Denotes a deviation from the recommended standard(s) of less than or equal to 33% OMRD, less than or equal to 26% TMRD, or greater than or equal to 55% Core Area.

Table 5. Rating of Alternatives by Non-Numerical Effects Indicators

Effects Indicator	Alternative			
	A	B	C	Selected Alternative
Contributes to achieving Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan objectives and consistent with IGBC Access Direction	Partial	Partial	**Yes**	**Yes**
Consistent with ESA Section 7(a)(1) requirement to conserve listed species	Partial	Partial	**Yes**	**Yes**
Consistent with ESA Section 7(a)(2) requirement to avoid jeopardizing continued existence of listed species	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Utilizes best available scientific information	Partial	Partial	**Yes**	**Yes**
Level of mitigation for grizzly bear mortality risk	Medium	**High**	Medium	**High**
Level of mitigation for grizzly bear displacement potential	Medium	**High**	Medium	**High**
Provides for future development of habitat-based access management approach	No	Partial	**Yes**	**Yes**
Alternatives that are **best** for grizzly bears under each criterion are identified with bold underlined letters. **Second best** alternatives are identified with bold letters. Where there is a tie for best, no second best is identified.				

We recognize that the selected alternative provides habitat security at levels that do not meet the minimum recommendation in 8, 7 and 3 BMUs, respectively, for OMRD, TMRD, and Core (see Table 4). However, when considered across both recovery zones, the level of security provided is higher than in either existing forest plan direction or current practices (see Table 2). Furthermore, some allowed changes (i.e. increases in road densities or temporary decreases in core in BMUs that are currently better than standards), though allowed to occur by the standards, might not occur due to other resource concerns. In contrast, proposed changes needed to bring deficient BMUs up to standard will be mandatory (final EIS, p. 3-16). These standards were not found by the USFWS to result in jeopardy determination for the grizzly bear.

Based on the numerical indicators displayed in Table 3, and the discussion of the non-numerical indicators utilized in the analysis (see final EIS, pp. 3-18 to 3-23), which are summarized in the Table 5, we have concluded that, of the alternatives considered, the selected alternative best provides for an overall improvement in the habitat security needs of the grizzly bear. Of the alternatives considered:

- **Alternative A** only partially contributes to Recovery Plan objectives, is not consistent with Section 7(a)(2) of ESA, does not utilize best available scientific information, and is only moderately effective in mitigating grizzly bear mortality and displacement risk.
- **Alternative B** partially contributes to Recovery Plan objectives, is partially to fully consistent with ESA, does not utilize best available scientific information, and provides a high level of mitigation for grizzly bear mortality risk and displacement risk.
- **Alternative C** fully contributes to Recovery Plan objectives, is fully consistent with ESA, utilizes best available scientific information, but only provides moderate levels of mitigation for grizzly bear mortality and displacement risk.

- **Alternative E** fully contributes to Recovery Plan objectives, is fully consistent with ESA, utilizes best available scientific information, and provides high levels of mitigation for grizzly bear mortality and displacement risk.

Therefore, we are confident that implementation of the selected alternative will contribute to the conservation and recovery of grizzly bears within the recovery zones (Project Record, Volume 15, Document 1, p. 14).

Other aspects that we have considered in our decision involve both the biological and social aspects of grizzly bear recovery. We understand some people are opposed to grizzly bear recovery because of perceived adverse effects on lifestyles and the economy. Arguments have been made that restricting the public's use of the national forests can have a backlash effect, resulting in people intentionally killing bears. As public lands managers, we face a difficult decision in trying to balance the need for scientifically based resource management standards against potential consequences of illegal activities. In considering whether or not to set higher standards for total or open road densities and percent core habitat, we were concerned with the increased risk of the malicious killing of grizzly bears (known as social jeopardy). Social jeopardy has not been scientifically studied to quantify a cause and effect risk but we believe a true risk exists. In the ten to fifteen years the forests have been implementing their respective forest plan direction for road closures, human caused bear mortality has occurred in both the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zones (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, pp. 51 and 52). At least ten bear deaths are listed as malicious or are under investigation. Deaths as recent as 2002 occurred in Idaho and Montana. Recent bear mortalities in British Columbia are also under investigation. We know a segment of our local communities are frustrated and angry with road closures. A small number of people vent their displeasure by shooting signs and taking out gates. As evidenced by the human caused bear mortalities, some will shoot bears. We believe the loss of even one bear by malicious intent is a high probability if higher road standards were to be implemented.

Grizzly bear recovery zones also include state and private lands. Decisions made by these landowners regarding management of motorized roads and trails on their lands could potentially result in cumulative effects to grizzly bear. Forest Service projects in BMUs containing state or private lands will consider activities on these lands as part of the existing condition or as cumulative effects during project specific analysis. Cumulative actions potentially include:

1) Plum Creek Timber Company, a major private landowner, is currently working with USFWS on a grizzly bear amendment to their Native Fish Habitat Conservation Plan (C. Jorgensen, USFWS, pers. comm. 2002). When completed, this Native Fish Habitat Conservation Plan should provide additional protection for grizzly bears and their habitat that would reduce cumulative effects within the recovery zones.

2) Stimson Lumber Company has recently purchased 28,000 acres of land in the vicinity of Troy, Montana from the Plum Creek Timber Company. While the existing habitat conservation plan for fish will be maintained, there is currently no habitat conservation plan for grizzly bear.

3) Other decisions implemented by the Forest Service may contribute to cumulative effects to grizzly bears. For example, the OHV decision (USDA, January 2001) in Montana limits off-road motorized vehicle use on the Kootenai N.F. While the potential for such use is limited in the recovery zones, any limitations could potentially result in positive cumulative effects to bears (final EIS, p. 3-25). The Roads Management Policy (USFS 2001) requires the Forest Service to examine the road network and give priority to reconstructing and maintaining needed roads and decommissioning unneeded

roads. This policy is complimentary to road management objectives in grizzly bear habitat, and could be a tool for implementing road management decisions in grizzly bear habitat.

4) In 2001, the Kootenai N.F. implemented food storage guidelines throughout the national forest, including the Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone, providing additional protection for bears through reduction in mortality risk.

Our biological assessment (BA) concluded that during the time period of five to nine years from the decision, the existing environmental baseline condition ***may affect, and is likely to adversely affect*** the grizzly bear or its habitat. However, implementation of the selected alternative, in combination with anticipated cumulative effects, ***may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect*** the grizzly bear or its habitat. The adverse effects to grizzly bears or their habitat are expected to result from the existing environmental baseline in the five years from the decision until nine years from the decision. The adverse effects are not due to the implementation of the new grizzly bear standards themselves. The measures identified in this ROD would remove, avoid, or compensate for these adverse effects. The measures will be implemented according to the timeframes in the Motorized Access Amendment BA (p. 19) (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment).

Because of the potential effects to grizzly bear resulting from the environmental baseline condition during the five to nine years from this decision, we requested formal consultation with USFWS. The action that was consulted on with the USFWS was the continued implementation of each forest plan as modified by this amendment. For grizzly bear, the USFWS considered the action area to be the area comprised of the administrative boundaries of each national forest, which includes those portions of the Kootenai and Lolo that are situated within the Northern Continental Divide Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone. The USFWS concluded that this amendment would not jeopardize the continued existence of the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak grizzly bear population as long as the terms and conditions of the biological opinion are met (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion; and ROD, Appendix B).

As part of its biological opinion, the USFWS also provided a set of terms and conditions for minimizing incidental take to grizzly bear located outside the existing recovery zones (see Figure I-3; Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion and ROD, Appendix B). Due to the success of recovery plan implementation, expansion of grizzly bear populations beyond the boundaries of the existing recovery zones is occurring (Project Record, Volume 16, *Incidental Take Analysis for Grizzly Bears That Occur Outside Recovery Zones on the KNF, IPNF and Portions of the LNF* and *Grizzly Bear Distribution Outside of Recovery Zones*). These terms and conditions are non-discretionary in nature and their implementation is mandatory. The intent of these terms and conditions is to reduce levels of incidental take to grizzly bear in these areas by ensuring there are no further increases in open and total road densities above the baseline levels identified in the biological opinion (see Appendix B, Table 2). The USFWS believes that due to the higher total and open road densities that will be allowed, these areas outside the recovery zones will not support the number or densities of grizzly bear that it is possible to achieve within the recovery zones. However, mortality risk to grizzly bears residing within these areas is not expected to increase as a result of these terms and conditions (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 126). These requirements will combine cumulatively with the access management standards for the recovery zones to prevent increases in motorized route densities within occupied grizzly bear habitat.

Forest Plan Consistency: This ROD will amend the respective forest plans to incorporate new security standards for grizzly bear. Depending upon budget allowances, implementation of project specific actions designed to bring the national forests into compliance with these standards is expected to take five

to nine years. The new security standards provide an overall higher level of habitat security than current forest plan direction; therefore, they exceed current standards. Based upon the monitoring and habitat security components to be implemented with this amendment as well as the results of formal consultation with the USFWS, we find that the selected alternative complies with National Forest Management Act (NFMA) direction and the implementing regulations that grizzly bear habitat be managed to maintain viable populations well distributed across the planning area (36 CFR 219.19).

(2) Bald Eagle

All of the area covered by this analysis is included in Zone 7 as designated in the Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan (USFWS 1986). At the time of federal listing in 1967, bald eagles were uncommon in this zone. Today, they are common and expanding along shorelines of the area's larger bodies of water (e.g., Lake Pend Oreille and the Kootenai and Clark Fork rivers) in Idaho. In Montana, bald eagles have increased since federal listing and are considered stable along the major rivers and largest lakes (e.g., Koocanusa, Cabinet Gorge and Noxon reservoirs and the Kootenai and Clark Fork rivers) (final EIS, p. 3-26).

Most bald eagle nesting, feeding and roosting occurs at elevations below grizzly bear habitat, an exception being those areas where grizzly bear recovery zones lie adjacent to major river valleys. Access restrictions on forest roads are expected to have little to no effect on bald eagles because eagles do not extensively use the forested environments where most of these roads occur (final EIS, p. 3-26). Effective protection measures are in place to support the conservation and recovery of the bald eagle (e.g., Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan, the Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan, and the forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests). None of the alternatives are expected to have measurable indirect effects on bald eagles or their nesting, feeding or roosting habitats. Consequently, the selected alternative ***may effect – not likely to adversely effect*** bald eagle (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, pg. 25). The USFWS has concurred with this determination (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 1).

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change and is consistent with our respective forest plans to manage habitat for the recovery of threatened and endangered species. Across the national forests, this decision is not expected to affect viability of existing eagle populations because the access restrictions are expected to have little to no effect on bald eagles. Site-specific proposals resulting from this programmatic decision will be required to adhere to existing recovery plan measures that will protect the integrity of nesting, feeding, and roosting habitat (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, pp. 21 and 25).

(3) Canada Lynx

In accordance with the Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy (LCAS) (Ruediger, et. al. 2000), our biologists have mapped lynx habitat and have identified Lynx Analysis Units (LAUs) where lynx habitat is monitored. Within the analysis area (Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones on the Lolo, Kootenai and Idaho Panhandle national forests), LAUs constitute 68 percent of the Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone and 95 percent of the Selkirk Recovery Zone. Lynx have been documented in previous years through much of this area (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 22).

According to the Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy, there is no compelling evidence that lynx avoid roads, at least lower traffic-volume forest and backcountry roads. Though uncommon, lynx have been trapped or shot (legally, illegally and incidentally) in the Northern Rocky Mountains geographic area (Ruediger, et al. 2000). Road access could potentially contribute to any mortality that does occur. Therefore, those alternatives that reduce motorized access in lynx habitat are expected to provide a higher

degree of habitat security and lower mortality risk to Canada lynx in proportion to their limitations on access.

Canada lynx will profit most from open roads that shift to a more restrictive status. However, the change in road miles implemented with the selected alternative will be small when compared to the total miles of road within the recovery zones. Consequently, we expect the increased security for lynx resulting from a shift in open road status to be minimal (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 22).

Compacted winter travel routes created by snowmobiles; cross-country skiing, etc., may serve as transport routes for potential predators and competitors of lynx (Ruediger, et al. 2000). While our selected alternative does not directly impose restrictions on winter recreation, roads that result in a reclaimed or obliterated classification may indirectly reduce winter access by making roads impassable to snowmobiles, either through natural (encroaching vegetation) or human-caused means (final EIS, p. 3-31).

To provide habitat security for grizzly bear, the selected alternative will shift approximately 18 to 26 miles of open road to a "restricted" classification (generally roads with gates that can accommodate periodic motorized use) and convert approximately 34 to 46 miles of open road to a "reclaimed" or "obliterated" classification (roads physically blocked with the long-term intent for no motorized use). Also, about 353 to 498 miles of restricted or gated road will shift into a reclaimed/obliteration status. Therefore, a total of about 387 to 544 miles of road would move into a reclaimed status. Depending upon site-specific road locations in relation to lynx habitat, the selected alternative will probably lead to a higher degree of habitat security and a lower mortality risk to the Canada lynx (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 22).

The biological opinion's terms and conditions provide for adjustments in core area standards, OMRD standards, and include standards for grizzly bear occupied areas adjacent to the recovery zones (NFSL). Incorporation of these terms and conditions into our decision will provide for an increase in the amount of habitat and security for grizzly bear. The increases in core area and OMRD standards will potentially provide for increased security for lynx as well when compared to the level of effects disclosed in the final EIS for Alternative E. The standards required for areas of grizzly bear occupancy outside the recovery zones will only maintain existing levels of security from motorized access for the Canada lynx. Consequently, the selected action ***may effect – not likely to adversely effect*** Canada lynx (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 25).

The USFWS has provided a biological opinion regarding the effects of the selected alternative on Canada lynx. Because no incidental take is anticipated, no reasonable and prudent measures or terms and conditions are required to minimize take. It is the Fish and Wildlife Service's opinion that the amendments are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Canada Lynx (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 127). While the Fish and Wildlife Service has not yet designated critical habitat for lynx, the selected alternative maintains all options for the Fish and Wildlife Service to designate critical habitat.

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change and is consistent with our respective forest plans to manage habitat for the recovery of threatened and endangered species. Depending upon site-specific road locations in relation to lynx habitat, we expect the selected alternative to provide for a slight increase in habitat security for the Canada lynx (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 22). Therefore, our decision is not expected to negatively affect viability of existing lynx populations across the three national forests.

(4) Woodland Caribou

The woodland caribou population is generally found above 4,500 feet elevation in the Selkirk Mountains. Woodland caribou historically occurred on the Kootenai N.F., but no sightings have been reported there in the last ten years. Caribou are administratively designated as a sensitive species on the Kootenai N.F. The recovery area for woodland caribou in the Selkirk Mountains is comprised of approximately 2,200 square miles in southern British Columbia, northeastern Washington and northern Idaho. Forty-seven percent of the recovery area is found in British Columbia, the remaining 53 percent falls in the U.S. [USFWS 1994 (Project Record, Volume 30, Selkirk Mountain Woodland Caribou Recovery Plan)]. Almost the entire caribou recovery zone on the Idaho Panhandle N.F. falls within the grizzly bear recovery zone for the Selkirks. This population is threatened by habitat fragmentation and loss, and excessive mortality from predators and illegal human take (USFWS 1994). Areas of high road densities increase the chances of human/caribou interactions that can lead to poaching or loss due to mistaken identity.

Controlling or managing access helps address the risk associated with illegal human take. While all the alternatives considered in the analysis offer a relatively secure environment for woodland caribou due to existing access management strategies for grizzly bear, we found that Alternative A provided the least protection and the selected alternative (as well as Alternative C) provided the most protection (final EIS, p.3-33). Actions that promote lower levels of motorized access and increase core for grizzly bear (e.g., the selected alternative) will provide a more secure environment for caribou. Our selected access management strategies for grizzly bear provide for a slightly higher level of security than existing forest plan direction or current practices. Caribou will primarily benefit from improved conditions in the Kalispell-Granite and Sullivan-Hughs BMUs, which are part of the Selkirk Recovery Zone for caribou. Consequently, our selected action represents an improvement in habitat security (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 23). The selected alternative ***may effect – not likely to adversely effect*** woodland caribou (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 25). The USFWS has concurred with this determination (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 1).

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic direction to manage for viable populations of this species. A higher level of security will be provided than existing forest plan direction or current practices, and is therefore consistent with the respective forest plans and the Selkirk Mountain Caribou Management Plan/Recovery Plan.

(5) Gray Wolf

The gray wolf is a year-round resident of the Kootenai and Lolo N.F. and is transient on the Idaho Panhandle N.F. portions of the analysis area. Wolves within this area are within the Northwest Recovery Zone (50 CFR 60252-60281) and are fully protected endangered species.

The analysis area presently offers a high degree of security for wolves due to the existing access management strategies for grizzly bear, thereby, providing a favorable environment for wolves and their prey (final EIS, p. 3-34). Protection measures are already in place to support the conservation and recovery of the gray wolf [e.g., Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Plan (Project Record, Volume 30), and the forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests].

Those alternatives that reduce open road densities across the grizzly bear recovery zones are expected to provide a higher degree of habitat security and lower mortality risk to gray wolves. Our analysis determined that alternatives A and B would provide the least amount of security of the alternatives considered. Alternative C and the selected alternative were determined to provide the greatest amount of security for wolves and their prey because they convert more roads to more restrictive conditions (final

EIS, p. 3-34). Therefore, the selected alternative is expected to augment a relatively favorable environment for gray wolves. Overall, the selected alternative will reduce open road densities across the grizzly bear recovery zones and provide a higher degree of habitat security and lower mortality risk to gray wolves. Likewise, the selected action will promote an ungulate population that is sufficient in providing prey for wolves (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 24). The selected alternative includes the biological opinion's terms and conditions, which provides for adjustments in core area and OMRD standards and includes a set of standards for grizzly bear occupied areas (on NFSL) outside of the recovery zones. The changes in core area and OMRD standards will potentially provide for a small increase in the level of security for gray wolf when compared to the level of effects disclosed in the final EIS for Alternative E. The required standards for grizzly bear occupied areas outside of the recovery zones will only maintain existing levels of security for the gray wolf in relation to motorized access. The selected alternative ***may effect – not likely to adversely effect*** gray wolf (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 25). The USFWS has concurred with this determination (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 1).

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic direction in the respective forest plans for the management of this species and by providing a higher degree of habitat security and lower mortality risk is in conformance with existing recovery plans.

(6) Bull Trout

Bull trout populations within the Cabinet Yaak and Selkirk recovery zones are some of the strongest in Idaho and Montana. The Pend Oreille Lake and Kootenai subbasins support bull trout populations comprised of large migratory fish numbering in the thousands spread out over several drainages. The lower Clark Fork and Priest River subbasins also support populations of bull trout in the Thompson River and upper Priest River, respectively. Additionally, there are smaller populations distributed across the subbasins to maintain the sustainability of bull trout (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 45). Within the analysis area, 25 Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk Recovery Area BMUs either overlap known bull trout habitat or tributaries that flow into bull trout habitat.

Our selected action will change motorized access management within BMUs in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones. For BMUs that presently do not meet the selected standards displayed in Table 2 of this ROD, access on some roads will change from an open[5] to a restricted road[6], open to a reclaimed/obliterated/barriered road[7], or from a restricted to a reclaimed/obliterated/barriered road.

The greatest long-term risk to bull trout from implementation of the selected alternative is expected to result from barriered roads that are not hydrologically neutral[8] prior to closure. Once a road is classified as closed, for Core or to reduce TMRD, motorized access for maintenance will be discontinued thus

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[5] Open Road – a road without restriction on motorized use.

[6] Restricted Road – a road on which motorized vehicle use is restricted seasonally or yearlong. The road requires effective physical obstruction (generally gated). Motorized administrative use by personnel of resource management agencies is acceptable at low intensity levels as defined in existing cumulative effects analysis models. This includes contractors and permittees in addition to agency employees.

[7] Reclaimed/Obliterated/Barriered Road - a route which is managed with the long term intent for no motorized use, and has been treated in such a manner so as to no longer function as a road. An effective means to accomplish this is through one or a combination of several means including: recontouring to original slope, placement of logging or forest debris, planting of shrubs or trees, obliterating/barriering the entrance, etc.

[8] Hydrologically neutral is a condition where the potential for road failure and or sedimentation is expected to be eliminated or greatly reduced.

potentially increasing the risk to bull trout by way of road failures. In contrast, roads identified for decommissioning pose only a short-term negative impact but are expected to provide a long-term beneficial effect to the watershed and associated fisheries habitat (final EIS, p. 3-88).

The selected alternative incorporates the terms and conditions of the biological opinion, which require that additional amounts of core area be provided in BMUs 3, 5, 10,and 13. While BMUs 3, 5, and 13 currently meet their selected core area standard, BMU 10 will require additional core habitat be created (see Table 2 - the proposed standard was 48 percent, the selected standard is 52 percent). Achieving this standard will require additional amounts of road, above that disclosed in final EIS Alternative E, be converted from either open or restricted to a reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition in BMU 10.

Overall, final EIS Alternative E required the second largest change in access management and would provide the second greatest decrease in net associated risk of sediment delivery and road densities (final EIS, p. 3-91). The estimated changes were from 33 to 44 miles of open road to reclaimed/obliterated/barriered; 18 to 26 miles of open road to restricted; and 334 to 470 miles of restricted road to reclaimed/obliterated/barriered. Out of the total 385 to 540 miles of road needing treatment, 95 percent would be reclaimed/obliterated/barriered. We estimate that an additional 20 to 30 miles of road will need to be reclaimed in BMU 10 in order to meet the higher core habitat standard contained in the selected alternative.

Of the alternatives considered, the selected alternative will require the second greatest change in motorized access management within the recovery areas, while Alternative B would require the least amount and Alternative C the greatest amount of change in motorized access (final EIS, pp. 3-90 and 3-91). The reduction in the net associated risk of sediment delivery would be greatest with Alternative C, followed by the selected alternative, then Alternative B. Even though the selected alternative will treat fewer total roads than Alternative C, reclaiming/obliterating/barriering 95 percent of potential roads is the best out of the three action alternatives considered (final EIS, p. 3-91). It is important to note though that net associated risk will only be reduced when roads are reclaimed/obliterated, since it is these roads that will be permanently removed from the transportation system (see final EIS, pp. 3-90 to 3-92).

Current forest plan direction as embodied in the Inland Native Fish Strategy (INFISH) Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (1995) requires that projects and activities not retard the attainment of riparian management objectives (RMOs). Consistency with INFISH standards and guidelines for road management include providing for:

1) Pre-, during-, and post-storm inspections and road maintenance (RF-2) and
2) Closing and stabilizing roads not needed for future management activities (RF-3).

In addition to INFISH standards and guidelines, the Idaho Forest Practices Act and State of Montana Best Management Practices provide for regular preventive maintenance operations to minimize disturbance and damage to water quality and fish habitat. On barriered roads, achieving consistency with these requirements could include maintaining culverts left in place or removing the drainage structures. Per the terms and conditions of the biological opinion, roads closed to create core habitat will be put in a condition such that a need for motorized access for maintenance is not anticipated for at least 10 years (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 138). Furthermore, during project level consultation, as part of any incidental take statement; USFWS may require that stream crossings in newly created grizzly bear habitat be hydrologically neutral and capable of passing 100 – year flood events with minimal erosion (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 133).

As a result of these requirements, we expect implementation of the selected alternative to provide additional opportunities to address watershed concerns through site-specific projects developed to meet the selected TMRD and Core objectives. Where site-specific projects propose to barricade roads, the analyses will consider the risks of not removing culverts and will demonstrate consistency with forest plan standards, the Idaho Forest Practices Act, and Montana Best Management Practices as applicable. Therefore, we expect aquatic systems to benefit as needs are site-specifically identified through additional analyses (final EIS, p. 3-92).

The BA determined that given the level of effects to bull trout habitat associated with the selected alternative and the generally wide distribution of bull trout across the recovery zones the selected alternative ***may affect*** bull trout and is ***likely to adversely affect*** the species (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 45). The adverse effect to bull trout is based on the superimposition of affected BMUs on occupied bull trout habitat, where 12 of the BMUs currently not meeting their selected standard have a high density of roads lower in the watershed in or close to occupied bull trout habitat (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 42). The potential for take is further increased given the timeframe for implementing the action. Impacts associated with implementing the selected alternative will result in the potential for short and long-term negative impacts to habitat and the possible harm or harassment to individuals (final EIS, p. 3-92).

Because of the potential effects to bull trout from implementing this amendment, we requested formal consultation with USFWS. The action that was consulted on with the USFWS was the continued implementation of each forest plan as modified by this amendment. For bull trout, the USFWS considered the action area to be the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones. The USFWS concluded that this amendment **would not jeopardize the continued existence of bull trout** in the Columbia River Distinct Population Segment (DPS). This determination is based on our current forest plan direction to implement best management practices to reduce the potential for both short- and long-term adverse effects to occur to bull trout as a result of conducting road related actions. Further, we are required to consult with USFWS on any project-level proposals that have the potential to affect bull trout. During such consultations, additional measures can be incorporated into our proposed action to provide for added protection from adverse effects to bull trout. Overall, the USFWS expects these amendments to result in long-term beneficial effects to the species through a reduction in road densities, removing and reducing the risk of road prism failures, and restoring the natural hydrology patterns to road crossings (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, pp. 127 and 128). Incidental take, if any would be authorized at the site-specific action level (Project Record, Volume 2, Biological Opinion, p. 132).

The USFWS has also provided terms and conditions for those areas of the three national forests occupied by grizzly bear but outside of the established recovery zones (see Figure 1-3). These terms and conditions are applicable to an additional 1.1 million acres of National Forest System land. The requirements are that there be no increases in linear open road densities above baselines conditions and no permanent increases in linear total road densities above baseline conditions (see Table 2, Appendix B). Meeting a no permanent increase in total road density standard will require that newly constructed or existing roads be reclaimed or made hydrologically neutral in sufficient amounts, where needed, to meet baseline conditions (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 138). We expect implementation of these requirements to be neutral with respect to their impact on bull trout. While road construction and its attendant short-term effects will still occur within these areas, we expect that the longer term, ongoing effects that also result from a newly constructed road's long-term presence on the landscape (i.e. continued sediment production potential) will be greatly reduced as a result of the no net increase in linear road density standard.

Forest Plan Consistency: The forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests were amended by INFISH (USDA 1995) and subsequently consulted on for effects to bull trout in 1998. The USFWS provided a biological opinion in August 1998 that determined the implementation of the amended forest plans was likely to adversely affect bull trout. There were mandatory terms and conditions developed by the USFWS to help the Forest Service track its implementation of respective forest plans and provide for recovery of the bull trout as a species across the Columbia River Basin. The selected alternative is consistent with the respective forest plans as they were amended by INFISH (USDA 1995) to protect riparian values and aquatic resources. The selected alternative will not affect the current direction for protecting aquatic resources as provided in the respective forest plans (final EIS, p. 3-92).

The selected alternative does not change the aquatic conservation strategy provided by the existing forest plans as amended by INFISH. In addition, the terms and conditions of the BO, specifically Term and Conditions, 1(B) ii, 1(D), and 2(B) ii (pp. 136 to 138, USFWS BO), provide for the long-term protection of aquatic habitat within Core established by implementation of the selected alternative. The continued implementation of the existing forest plans as amended by the selected alternative would provide for viable bull trout populations given the wide distribution and abundance of bull trout across the planning areas, including areas outside the two affected recovery zones.

(7) White Sturgeon

White sturgeon is restricted to 168 miles of the Kootenai River from Cora Linn Dam, Canada, upstream to Kootenai Falls, Montana. The majority of occupied sturgeon habitat occurs outside both the Cabinet Yaak and Selkirk recovery zones. All habitat identified as critical habitat lies outside the grizzly bear recovery zones. Effects associated with barrierring/obliterating/decommissioning roads in tributaries to the Kootenai River have not been shown to significantly affect sturgeon or their habitat. The larger volume of the Kootenai River would dilute effects within the smaller watersheds. As a result, there are no direct or indirect effects nor would there be any cumulative effects as a result of implementing the selected alternative. The BA determined that the selected alternative would have ***no effect*** on white sturgeon (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, pp. 50 and 51).

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative is consistent with the forest plans of the Kootenai and Idaho Panhandle national forests as they were amended by INFISH (USDA 1995) to protect riparian values and aquatic resources. The selected alternative will not affect the current direction for protecting aquatic resources, including white sturgeon, as provided in the respective forest plans (final EIS, p. 3-92).

b) Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plant Species

Three threatened plant species are suspected or have potential to occur on the Kootenai, Lolo and Idaho Panhandle national forests: the water howellia, Spalding's catchfly and Ute ladies'-tresses. These species have not been found on the national forests. The closest known populations of water howellia occurs in the Swan Valley on lands managed by the Flathead N.F., land owned by private timber companies, and other private individuals property. Spalding's catchfly has been found within the boundaries of the Kootenai N.F. on privately owned lands and may occur nearby on national forest lands. Ute ladies' tresses is a species of the Great Basin, creeping into southern Montana, but is not known to occur within or nearby to any of the three national forests. There are no endangered plant species suspected to occur on any of the three national forests. Sensitive plants however, occur throughout the analysis area and habitats are identified and avoided on a site-by-site basis.

The selected alternative will not alter current forest plan direction for threatened, endangered or sensitive (TES) plant species. Because TES plant species habitats and populations are consistently identified

through site-specific surveys and protected through avoidance and/or site-specific design criteria and/mitigation from impact by ground-disturbing activities, the selected alternative will not contribute to any direct, indirect, or cumulative negative effects on TES plant species or their habitats. However, along with other restrictive measures such as existing closures and management area direction, we expect a positive cumulative effect resulting from limiting development and disturbance in close proximity to TES plant populations and habitats. Therefore, the selected alternative will have ***no effect*** on the viability of threatened or endangered plant species (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p. 26) and no impact on sensitive plant species (final EIS, p. 3-123).

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic direction to manage for viable populations of TES plants, and is therefore consistent with the respective forest plans (final EIS, p. 3-123).

c) Sensitive Wildlife and Fish Species

Table 6 displays sensitive wildlife and fish species that are known or suspected to occur within the analysis area and the potential effect to them of implementing the selected alternative.

We expect that, overall, the terms and conditions of the biological opinion will provide for a small increase in levels of habitat security for sensitive wildlife species, when compared to the effects of final EIS Alternative E. The adjustments to core area and OMRD standards are expected to provide for a small increase in habitat security or suitable habitat for sensitive wildlife species. The new access standards for areas outside the recovery zones occupied by grizzly bear will potentially maintain existing levels of security, in relation to motorized access, for these species on an additional 1.1 million acres of National Forest System land.

As discussed for bull trout, the greatest long-term risk to sensitive fish species from implementation of the selected alternative is expected to result from gated/barriered roads that are not hydrologically neutral prior to closure. State BMPs and current forest plan direction provide for regular preventive maintenance operations in order to minimize disturbance and damage to water quality and fish habitat. Per the terms and conditions of the biological opinion, roads closed to create core habitat (or to meet road density standards in areas adjacent to but outside of the recovery zones) will be put in a condition such that a need for motorized access for maintenance is not anticipated for at least 10 years (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 138). Furthermore, during project level consultation, as part of any incidental take statement for bull trout; USFWS may require that stream crossings in newly created grizzly bear habitat be hydrologically neutral and capable of passing 100 – year flood events with minimal erosion. Should we desire to leave a culvert in on a road in newly created core habitat, then that crossing should potentially be capable of passing a 100 – year event (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 133). Therefore, we expect access management activities occurring within the recovery zones to benefit aquatic systems as needs are site-specifically identified through additional analyses (final EIS, p. 3-92).

Table 6. Effect to Sensitive Species Potentially Occurring in the Recovery Zones

Wildlife Species	Effects
Common Loon	**No impact** to a beneficial impact depending on roads selected for restricting motorized use (final EIS, p. 38).
Harlequin Duck	May have a **beneficial impact** on security depending upon the amount and location that motorized access is reduced (final EIS, p. 3-39)
Black-backed Woodpecker, White-headed Woodpecker, Townsend's Big-eared Bat	The selected alternative may have a **beneficial impact** on these species because of increases in habitat security resulting from reduced motorized access (final EIS, p. 3-40).
Northern Goshawk	Implementation of the selected alternative will provide for a **beneficial impact** on goshawk security habitat because of reductions in motorized access (final EIS, p. 3-43).
Peregrine Falcon	The selected alternative may have a **beneficial impact** on peregrine falcon habitat security since motorized access will be reduced (final EIS, p. 3-43).
Flammulated Owl	**Beneficial impact** on habitat will result where roads are closed; however, some birds may be disturbed by roadwork (e.g. reclamation, etc...) for short periods of time. Non-restricted areas may see a loss of suitable nesting habitat. Therefore, the selected alternative may impact individuals but will not contribute to a trend toward federal listing or a loss of population viability (final EIS, p. 3-41).
Northern Bog Lemming	No direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on this species (final EIS, p. 3-44).
Northern Leopard Frog	On the Kootenai there are 10 historic sites (includes one on private land) with only 4 of those with current active breeding. All sites are found on the Fortine Ranger District, which is outside the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones. There are no known leopard frog locations in the Cabinet-Yaak portion of the Idaho Panhandle or Lolo National Forests. Since the northern leopard frog does not occur in either the Selkirk or Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones, the proposed project will have **no impact** on this species (Project Record, Volume 15).
Boreal Toad	The proposed action may reduce mortality risks to the boreal toad by reducing the miles of road open to vehicle traffic. When roads are decommissioned, with culverts removed and stream channels restored, boreal toad habitat may be impacted due to short term (generally 1 year or less) increases in sediment down stream. The proposed action **may impact individuals, but not contribute to a trend toward federal listing or loss of population viability** (Project Record, Volume 15).
Fisher	May have a **beneficial impact** on fisher habitat security, since motorized access will be reduced (final EIS, p. 3-45).
Wolverine	May have a **beneficial impact** on fisher habitat security, since motorized access will be reduced (final EIS, p. 3-46).
Woodland Caribou	See Threatened and Endangered Species discussion.
Fish Species	
Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Interior Redband Trout	Actions **may impact individuals but are not likely to cause a trend to federal listing or loss of viability.** This determination is based on the superimposition of BMUs affected by the alternatives on known occupied redband and westslope cutthroat trout habitat and the potential that individuals may be affected by short and long term negative impacts to habitat and individuals (final EIS, p. 3-92).
Burbot and Torrent Sculpin	There will be **no impact** on torrent sculpin and burbot. This determination is based on their distribution and their habitat preferences (final EIS, p. 3-92).

Standards for areas of grizzly bear occupancy outside of but adjacent to the recovery zones will require that there be no increases in open road density and no permanent increases in total road density. While temporary increases in total road density are allowed under certain circumstances, at the completion of a project, linear total road density will return to the baseline level (Table 2, Appendix B). The effect to sensitive fish species resulting from these terms and conditions is expected to be similar to those of bull trout. While the potential for short-term effects to aquatic species from additional road construction will still exist in these areas, we expect the that ongoing effects that also result from a newly constructed road's long-term presence on the landscape will be reduced as a result of the no net increase in linear road density standard.

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic direction to manage for viable populations of sensitive wildlife and fish species, and is therefore consistent with the respective Forest Plans.

1) *Flammulated owl* – The flammulated owl is considered an associate of mature and old forest structure. There are approximately 237,000 acres of suitable flammulated owl habitat on the Kootenai NF. The Idaho Panhandle NF estimates 30,890 acres of suitable habitat across the forest. The portion of the Lolo NF covered by the Access Amendment has about 14,860 acres of habitat.

Viability of flammulated owl populations depends on providing the appropriate amounts and pattern of suitable habitat. Proposed access management activities (basically road closures, changes in closure devices, or road decommissioning) would not result in any loss of suitable habitats for the flammulated owl. A few owls could be disturbed by road decommissioning or changing closure devices. Most of this work would have no effect on current or long-term viability on the three national forests. Therefore, the selected action does not contribute toward a loss of population viability for this species (Project Record, Volume 15).

2) *Boreal Toad* – The Boreal toad has been found at sixty-nine sites on national forest lands on the Kootenai NF and nineteen sites on the Idaho Panhandle NF. Active breeding has been confirmed at thirty-five of the Kootenai NF sites and six of the Idaho Panhandle NF sites. In addition there are twenty sites (nine with active breeding) on private lands within the Kootenai NF. The Lolo NF portion of the Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone contains four known boreal toad sites, with one showing active breeding.

Since boreal toad are only aquatic during egg laying and larval stages (April to early June), conducting decommissioning work outside this period is expected to minimize impacts from sediment. With road decommissioning completed, boreal toad habitat may improve in the long term due to reduced sediment levels down stream. All three forests have riparian area standards that maintain boreal toad breeding habitat and thus do not contribute to a loss of population viability from the selected action.

3) *Westslope Cutthroat Trout* – Westslope cutthroat trout are widely distributed across the action area and currently occupy significant portions of, and are well distributed across their historical range (Shepard *et al.* 2003, p. ii). The primary risks to westslope cutthroat trout include isolation, genetic introgression and disease as identified in Shepard *et al.* (2003). Currently in many instances pure strain westlsope populations remain upstream of roads with impassable stream crossings. These barriers can only be considered temporary at best and therefore provide no long term security from genetic introgression by hybridized fish. Implementation of the selected alternative would not increase the likelihood of these identified risks occurring. As such, the continued implementation of

forest plans, as amended by INFISH and the selected action, would not increase these risks and as such, would continue to provide for the viability of westslope cutthroat trout across the planning area.

4) *Interior Redband Trout* – Interior redband trout are distributed in small isolated populations within the planning area (final EIS, p. 3-84); however, the known distribution of redbands within the planning area is expanding as genetic research continues. The primary risks to redband trout include isolation and genetic introgression. Implementation of the selected alternative would not increase the likelihood of these risks occurring where redbands are known to occur. As such, the continued implementation of the forest plans, as amended by INFISH and the selected action, would continue to provide for viability of redband trout across the planning area.

d) Management Indicator Species

Table 7 displays management indicator species that are known or suspected to occur within the analysis area and the effects to them from implementing the selected alternative. In general, we expect that incorporation of the biological opinion's terms and conditions standards for core area and OMRD will provide for a small increase in levels of habitat security or suitable habitat for management indicator wildlife species, when compared to the effects disclosed in the final EIS for Alternative E. For management indicator species, the effect of the new open and total road density standards, for those areas outside the recovery zones but occupied by the grizzly bear, will be to maintain existing security levels in relation to motorized access.

Table 7. Effect to Management Indicator Species Potentially Occurring in the Recovery Zones

Species	Effects
Bald Eagle, Grizzly Bear, Woodland Caribou, Gray Wolf	See Threatened and Endangered Species discussion.
Northern Goshawk	See sensitive species discussion.
Elk	There will be a slight improvement in habitat security for elk. About 60 miles of open road will be converted to a more restrictive status (final EIS, p. 3-47).
White-tailed Deer	A beneficial result from road closures to habitat security is expected proportional to the amount of closures in deer habitat (final EIS, p. 3-48).
Moose	The selected alternative will provide the highest level of security and reduced vulnerability to illegal shooting or hunting loss of the alternatives considered (final EIS, p. 3-49).
Mountain Goat	The selected alternative will provide for a slight increase in habitat security (final EIS, p. 3-49).
Marten	There may be a beneficial impact on habitat security (final EIS, p. 3-50).
Pileated Woodpecker	Increases in suitable habitat will result in more acres of forest where trees die and remain as habitat for pileated and other snag-dependent wildlife species. Due to increased demand for firewood from the national forests, a loss of suitable nesting habitat may occur in areas where roads are still open to motorized use. Therefore, until specific road closures are determined, it is not possible to assess whether there would be a net gain or net loss in pileated woodpecker habitat from changes in motorized access (final EIS, p. 3-51).

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic direction to manage for viable populations of management indicator species, and is therefore consistent with the respective forest plans. Depending on the species, the access restrictions are expected to have either no effect on viability or provide for an improvement through increased habitat security.

e) Transportation

Final EIS Alternative E proposed changing about 51 to 70 miles of road open year round to either reclaimed/obliterated/barriered or restricted status during the active bear season and converting about 334

to 470 miles of existing road with seasonal restrictions to reclaimed/obliterated/barriered in order to achieve the proposed standards (final EIS, p. 3-67). Tables 3-29 and 3-30 of the final EIS (pp. 3-68 and 3-69) and the errata to the final EIS display these proposed changes in road status by BMU.

Core area standards for BMUs 3, 5, 10, and 13 and the OMRD standard for the Blue Grass BMU have been adjusted from the standards proposed in the final EIS as a result of the USFWS biological opinion (see section *V* and Table 2). The effect of these adjustments is to increase the amount of core in each of the BMUs affected and decrease the allowable open motorized route density in the Blue Grass BMU. BMUs 3, 5, and 13 currently exceed their selected core area standards; therefore, additional road restrictions or reclamations will not be needed in these BMUs to achieve the selected core area standard.

In BMU 10, the selected core area standard is 52 percent, the final EIS proposed standard was 48%, and the existing core area (as of 2002) is 49 percent. As a result, an additional amount of currently open or restricted road will need to be reclaimed/barriered/obliterated to provide for the necessary increase in core area of three percent. Final EIS Alternative E would have converted between two to six miles of road in this BMU to reclaimed/barriered/obliterated (a 1 to 3 percent change from the existing condition) (final EIS, p. 3-69). We estimate the increase in the amount of road reclamation necessary to provide for the selected core area standard to be an additional 20 to 30 miles of road within this BMU. The result will be about a one percent increase (from 16 percent to 17 percent) in the amount of reclaimed/barriered/obliterated road within the recovery zones, when compared to final EIS Alternative E[9]. Based on the design of Alternative E, we expect that about 95 percent of the additional reclamation needs to come from the conversion of restricted roads to reclaimed/barriered/obliterated (i.e. only about one to two miles of currently open road would be affected).

The OMRD standard for the Blue Grass BMU is 31 percent. The existing OMRD in the Blue Grass BMU is 27 percent; therefore, no additional restriction or reclamation of road is needed in this BMU to achieve the selected OMRD standard.

Implementation of the selected alternative is expected to result in the smallest reduction in the amount of existing open roads within the recovery zones (see Table 8). We estimate that implementation of these standards will result in changing about 52 to 72 miles of road open year round to either reclaimed/obliterated/barriered or restricted status during the active bear season, or as a minimum between April 15th and November 15th annually (see Table 9). The majority of changes in road status necessary to meet the standards will come from conversion of restricted roads to impassable/barriered roads. Approximately 353 to 498 miles of roads with existing seasonal restrictions will need to be reclaimed/obliterated/barriered to achieve the standard.

[9] See Table 3-31 final EIS. There are 3,227 miles of reclaimed/barriered/obliterated road currently existing in the recovery zones, 3,755 miles resulting from final EIS Alternative E, and about 3,785 miles from the selected alternative.

Table 8. Projected Road Mileage by Alternative for All Forests*

Road Status	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	FEIS Alternative E	Selected Alternative E
Open Roads (miles)	3,082	2,921	2,905	2,851	3,012	**3,010**
Restricted Roads (miles)	1,897	2,058	1,877	1,436	1,453	**1,425**
Impassable & Barriered Roads (miles)	3,133	3,133	3,330	3,825	3,647	**3,677**
Total Miles	8,112	8,112	8,112	8,112	8,112	**8,112**

*The estimated "maximum change" was used where a range in miles was shown. Mileages shown are from the final EIS errata.

Table 9. Estimated Miles of Road Status Change by Alternative for All Forests

Road Status	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	FEIS Alternative E	Selected Alternative E
From Open to Restricted (miles)	160 - 161	166 - 170	59 - 86	18 - 26	**18 - 26**
From Open to reclaimed/obliterated/barriered (miles)	0	1 - 7	105 - 145	33 - 44	**34 - 46**
From Restricted to Reclaimed/Obliterated (miles)	0	138 - 190	384 - 547	334 - 470	**353 - 498**
Total Miles	160-161	305 - 367	548 - 778	385 - 540	**405 - 570**[10]

Once each BMU reaches its designated standards, our decision allows for those BMUs with existing levels of habitat exceeding the BMU specific standard(s) to potentially accommodate some reductions in habitat security (newly created core habitat, however, shall not be entered for at least 10 years after creation)[11]. Unlike Alternative C (see final EIS, p. 3-64), the selected alternative allows each BMU to be independent of others in the recovery zone and can be adjusted once all standards within the BMU are met. This feature was developed in response to comment on the draft EIS. We reviewed each BMU and quantified the approximate extent of these options for each recovery zone (final EIS, p. 3-67).

Table 10 displays the approximate range of flexibility disclosed in the final EIS for Alternative E. Other resource management issues may limit or eliminate this flexibility. Per the terms and conditions of the USFWS biological opinion, core area standards for BMUs 3, 5, 10, and 13 and the OMRD standard for the Blue Grass BMU have been adjusted in order to provide for increased amounts of security within these BMUs (see section *V* and Table 2). As a result (based upon 2002 status):

- BMU 3 could potentially accommodate a three percent temporary reduction in core area, rather than a seven percent reduction based on the final EIS proposed standard.
- BMU 5 could potentially accommodate a three percent temporary reduction in core area, rather than the five percent reduction based on the final EIS proposed standard.

[10] Due to the terms and conditions of the biological opinion, the estimated total amount of road status changes would increase by about 20 to 30 miles (to between 405 and 570 miles). A concomitant increase of 20 to 30 miles of open (estimated amount is about 1 to 2 miles) or restricted road (estimated amount is about 19 to 28 miles) being converted to reclaimed/barriered/obliterated status will result from this change.

[11] While temporary reductions of core area would be permitted, in those BMUs exceeding their selected standard, any proposed temporary reduction of core area will need to be compressed so the impacts to the core area occur in no more than three consecutive years of the 10 year time span that core must remain in place to be functionally effective. Also temporary reductions in core are allowed only once per ten year timeframe per individual BMU, unless it is to decommission/stabilize an existing road (see Appendix B).

- BMU 10 will require a three percent increase in core area just to achieve the selected standard, so no reduction in core area is currently possible.
- BMU 13 could potentially accommodate a two percent temporary reduction in core area, rather than the seven percent reduction based on the final EIS proposed standard.
- The Blue Grass BMU could potentially accommodate a four percent increase in OMRD, rather than the six percent increase based on the final EIS proposed standard.

As a result, in BMUs 3, 5, 10, and 13, the future options for opening roads to motorized access will be reduced somewhat from the amounts displayed in Table 10. The amount of the reduction is not expected to be significant as BMUs 3, 5, and 13 currently exceed the selected core area standards and could still accommodate some temporary reduction in core area. Of the four BMUs, only BMU 10 will not be able to accommodate some temporary level of core area reduction. As we have previously stated, project-level analysis and decisions will be required prior to implementation of these options.

Table 10. Future Options for Adjustments to Motorized Access – Alternative E

Possible Road Access Options	Miles by Recovery Zone	
	Cabinet–Yaak	Selkirk
Restricted to Open Road	45-142	24-72
Reclaimed to Open Road	22-66	12-36
Reclaimed to Restricted Road	3-12	6-18

By law (Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act), the Forest Service must provide for adequate access to private land inholdings within the national forests. We acknowledged early in this project that the Forest Service has a legal obligation to provide access to private inholdings. In determining the effects of the habitat security standards, we modeled scenarios that did not change existing access to private lands. If future needs for access on private inholdings require motorized access, the area surrounding the access route would no longer qualify as security habitat. If this causes the affected BMU to not meet security standards, core habitat designation and route density adjustments will be necessary elsewhere on Federal lands within the BMU (final EIS p. 4-127).

Cumulatively, within the analysis area, the Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Forest Plan Amendment applicable to some forest plans in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota only affects lands managed by the Kootenai N.F. The OHV decision amended the Kootenai Forest Plan and established a new standard that restricts yearlong, wheeled motorized cross-country travel, where it is not already restricted. This action combines cumulatively with our selected access management standards in that it further reduces opportunities for motorized recreation on the Kootenai N.F. However, we expect that implementation of the OHV decision will have only minimal influence on increased security due to the affected area's terrain and vegetation (final EIS p. 3-76).

The Roadless Area Conservation Rule has proposed to eliminate use of existing roads as well as road construction and reconstruction in inventoried roadless areas. Though the Forest Service has been enjoined from further implementation of this rule, if and when litigation with regard to this rule is resolved, such programmatic actions can combine cumulatively with the effects of managing motorized access in grizzly bear recovery zones. Although we cannot quantify the effects of this effort at the programmatic level, both of these actions will further decrease the availability of developed and road dependent recreation uses (final EIS, p. 3-76).

Implementation of the biological opinion's terms and conditions will also limit total and open linear road densities on an additional 1.1 million acres of National Forest System lands outside of but adjacent to the

recovery zones (see Figure 1-3). Linear open road densities in a given area will not be able to go above the defined baseline conditions displayed in Table 2 of Appendix B (p. 139 of the Biological Opinion). Therefore, any additional roads that are opened, constructed, or reconstructed in these areas will need to be effectively closed to public motorized access.

We also are required to ensure that there be no permanent increase in total road density. Per the terms and conditions, temporary increases in linear total road densities may be allowed if: 1) Newly constructed roads are effectively closed to motorized public use and 2) upon completion of use they are effectively closed to motorized use and put in such a condition that a need for motorized access for maintenance is not anticipated for at least 10 years. However, upon completion of each project, linear total road density must return to baseline levels (see Table 2, Appendix B). This standard will require that any newly constructed or sufficient miles of existing road be reclaimed or made hydrologicially neutral after project completion, to prevent exceeding the baseline condition.

In summary, implementation of the selected alternative is expected to result in the second largest increase in the amount of road converted to an impassable or barriered status of the alternatives considered. While flexibility is provided, the selected alternative also provides for the greatest increase of core habitat for the recovery zones (see Table 3). Therefore, we believe that the selected alternative will continue to provide for a level of public motorized use within the recovery areas, while meeting our responsibilities to the grizzly bear under the Endangered Species Act.

Consistency With Regulatory Framework: The selected alternative is consistent with the existing authorities for local line officers to manage motorized and non-motorized access that has the potential to cause considerable adverse effects (36 CFR 295). The selected actions are also consistent with the recently approved roads rule (36 CFR 212) that provides a process for resolving access management issues through interdisciplinary analysis and review.

f) Vegetation and Timber

During the analysis process, the public expressed concerns about reductions in access affecting management of vegetation (timber) on National Forest System lands (see final EIS, p. 4-134). Restrictions on motorized access can limit administrative access and can change the ways in which we respond to fire, windthrow, and insect and disease outbreaks and infestation.

In each respective forest plan, timber management goals, objectives, and standards were identified along with an upper limit for timber harvest, or *allowable sale quantity* (ASQ). On each national forest, since the forest plans were initially approved, the ASQ has never been reached. The number of acres annually treated with timber harvest has shown much variability in recent years, but the trend has been slightly downward. The volume harvested has declined more rapidly over the same period, because of changes in management direction and silvicultural regimes, from primarily regeneration harvest early in the period to primarily intermediate and salvage harvest in more recent years (final EIS, pp. 3-96 and 3-97).

The following table displays the amount of land considered suitable for timber production within the recovery zones on each national forest.

Table 11. Amount of Suitable Timber Land in the Analysis Area

National Forest	Suitable lands in Grizzly Recovery Zones	Suitable lands in Recovery Zones that are also in Roadless Areas	Net area potentially affected by the Selected Alternative *
Idaho Panhandle	385,447 acres	59,459 acres	325,988 acres
Kootenai	515,960 acres	91,200 acres	424,760 acres
Lolo	89,038 acres	66,366 acres	22,672 acres

*In the FEIS, the analysis for effects to vegetation and timber management looked at effects to lands suitable for timber production that is outside roadless areas. Changes in access management within roadless areas would have little to no effect on vegetation management activities in these areas

The selected alternative will limit our ability as resource managers to respond to fire, windthrow, insects and disease, and to provide timber or other commodities. Approximately 990,500 acres of suitable timberland is located within the recovery zones (see Table 11). The final EIS disclosed that Alternative E would potentially reduce access to about 113,000 acres[12] of these lands, when compared to the existing condition (final EIS, Table 3-41, p. 3-103[13]). This amounted to about 3 percent of the total suitable timber base on the three national forests (final EIS, p. 3-96[14]).

The selected alternative will have higher core area standards than originally proposed in the final EIS for four BMUs :(3, 5, 10, and 13). We expect these higher core area standards to further reduce access to suitable timberlands in BMU 10 only. BMUs 3, 5, and 13 currently meet or exceed their selected core area standards. The core area standard for BMU 10 has increased from 48 to 52 percent. As of 2002, the core area in this BMU amounted 49 percent. For BMU 10, final EIS Alternative E was expected to maintain access to about 53,000 acres of suitable timberland with a core area standard of 48 percent (final EIS, Table 3-41, p. 3-103). Therefore, we would expect the selected alternative; with a 52 percent core area standard to maintain access to about 48,000 acres of suitable timberland within BMU 10 (a 5,000 acre reduction). This small change will not significantly affect our ability to access suitable timberland as it amounts to only a one-tenth of one percent reduction in access to the suitable timber base. Access will still be maintained to about 97 percent of the total suitable timber base on the three national forests.

We expect the change in the OMRD standard for the Blue Grass BMU (from 33 to 31 percent OMRD) to have no effect on our ability to access suitable timberlands within this BMU. Currently the OMRD (27 percent) in this BMU is better than the selected standard. Therefore, some flexibility currently exists within this BMU to increase OMRD if needed to accommodate vegetation treatments.

Of the alternatives considered in detail, only Alternative C exceeds the selected alternative in the amount of reduction in access to suitable timberlands (138,000 acres) (final EIS, p. 3-145). In contrast, alternatives A (no change) and B (50,000 acres) provided the least amount of change in access to suitable timber acres (final EIS, p. 3-104, Table 3-12) and therefore, would be more favorable from a timber management perspective. However, these alternatives were found to be only partially consistent or not consistent with the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan and IGBC direction for access management (final EIS, p. 3-159).

[12] Actual access will be affected by site-specific decisions made through project level analysis and decision-making.

[13] From Table 3-41: 1,032,000 acres (existing condition) – 919,000 (Alternative E) = 113,000 acres.

[14] 113,000 acres/3,850,900 suitable acres = 2.9%.

As a result of past harvest activities within the analysis area, there are many areas of young even-aged stands that require stand tending in the form of thinning or stocking control to maintain desired growth or species composition. Across the three national forests there are approximately 222,000 acres of potential stand tending needs located within the recovery zones (final EIS, p. 3-99, Table 3-39).

Our decision will limit access to some of these timber stands with stand tending needs. While there are about 222,000 acres with potential stand-tending needs, the selected alternative will retain access to approximately 190,000 of these acres (final EIS, p. 3-104, Figure 3-13). The effects of limiting access to an estimated 32,000 acres of timber stands potentially in need of tending sometime in the future are expected to result in growth and yield reductions, a potential loss of investment, and higher fuel loadings on the affected acres. Although core habitat requirements of the selected alternative provide some management flexibility, in the short term, newly created core must stay in place for 10 years. This requirement will restrict management activities in some BMUs. BMUs requiring substantial increases in core area are 15, 16, 17, 18 (Boulder), 19 (Grouse), 22 (Lolo), Blue Grass, Kalispell-Granite, and Lakeshore. The overall net change in acres of core area will be an increase of 22,655 acres within the Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone and an increase of 9,572 acres in the Selkirk Recovery Zone (final EIS, p. 3-102).

Effects to old growth will in general be beneficial as the focus of this decision is on access control, which will potentially reduce the loss of old growth structure components (snags, down trees). Furthermore, site-specific project proposals potentially affecting old growth will go through a separate environmental analysis where site-specific effects to old growth and other affected resources will be disclosed.

Cumulatively, we expect the Lynx Forest Plan Amendment process, which would amend the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forest plans to combine with the reduced access for stand tending. The proposed action in the lynx amendment would limit precommercial thinning activities in lynx habitat, except when necessary for safety and protecting property. The effects from reduced access under the grizzly bear amendment likely include many of the same areas affected by lynx limitations, so the extent of cumulative effects may be similar between this amendment for grizzly bear and the proposed amendments for lynx.

The biological opinion also sets standards for total and open linear road density on areas adjacent to but outside of the recovery zones. These standards will apply to an additional 1.1 million acres of National Forest System lands (see Figure 1-3). We do not expect implementation of these standards to limit our ability to conduct vegetation management activities within these grizzly bear occupied areas; therefore, they do not combine cumulatively with the access management standards for the recovery zones in limiting our ability to access the suitable timber base. While no increase in open linear road density will be permitted this requirement can be addressed by effectively closing any newly created, opened or reconstructed road to motorized public use. Similarly, permanent increases in total road density will not be permitted. Addressing this standard will require reclaiming or making hyrdologically neutral any new construction upon completion of project activities or reclaiming or making hydrologically neutral an equal amount of existing road (see Table 2, Appendix B).

While our decision is expected to reduce needed access for timber management purposes, we determined that these changes and restrictions to access are necessary for meeting our responsibilities for protecting the grizzly bear under the ESA. The selected alternative has been determined to be consistent with the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan and IGBC direction for access management (final EIS, p. 3-159: Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, pp. 125 to 127). While access for needed timber

management will be constrained, these changes are not expected to result in irreversible or irretrievable commitments of this resource (final EIS, p. 3-160).

Consistency With Regulatory Framework: The selected alternative is consistent with the existing authorities for local line officers to manage motorized and non-motorized access for vegetation management and timber harvest.

g) Recreation

Recreational use within all BMUs of the recovery zones has been well established and is an integral part of the management and use of the land. Opportunities provided range from semi-primitive non-motorized to motorized summer and winter travel on a well developed transportation system; from remote backpack and horse camping to developed campgrounds with tables, toilets, and other amenities; from a feeling of remoteness and solitude to one associated with the presence of other users.

Within the analysis area, an estimated 836,000 recreational visitor days[15] (RVDs) were utilized in 2000. This is a 25 percent increase from the recreational use estimated in 1990. Driving and sightseeing form the largest single activity that recreationists participate in each year within the analysis area. An estimated 257,000 RVDs are spent in driving for pleasure and sightseeing (final EIS, p. 3-113).

Our decision is not expected to affect use of developed sites within the analysis area. These sites are located along major travel routes, most which are paved, and access to and use of these developed sites will be maintained (final EIS, p. 3-117). Similarly, access to non-motorized recreational opportunities within the analysis area should also be unaffected as the scope of our decision only addresses motorized access within the recovery zones (final EIS, p. 3-118).

Table 12 provides a summary of the effects to motorized recreation by alternative. Overall, of the alternatives considered, our decision will have the least impact on motorized recreation because fewer miles of currently open road will be converted to either restricted or reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition. While Alternative A would convert an estimated 160 miles of road to a restricted condition, all of these road miles would come from currently open drivable roads (final EIS, p. 3-59). Alternative B would convert from 306 to 369 miles of existing road to either a restricted or reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition, with 168 to 179 miles of the access conversions coming from currently open road (final EIS, p. 3-62). Alternative C would convert approximately 563 to 795 miles of road to a restricted or reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition. About 164 to 231 miles of the access conversions for Alternative C would come from currently open road (final EIS, p. 3-65). The selected alternative would convert from 405 to 570 miles of road to a restricted or reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition. However, only 52 to 72 miles of these access conversions are expected to come from currently open roads (final EIS, p. 3-68 and Table 9). Therefore, of the alternatives considered, our selected alternative is best able to provide for existing motorized recreational uses.

[15] A RVD is the equivalent to one person recreating for 12 hours.

Table 12. Effect of the Alternatives Considered on Motorized Recreation

Effect to:	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Selected Alternative
Motorized, Developed	No / little effect. Access to and use of developed sites would be maintained.	No / little effect. Access to and use of developed sites would be maintained.	No / little effect. Access to and use of developed sites would be maintained.	**No / little effect. Access to and use of developed sites would be maintained.**
Motorized, Dispersed, Summer	Greater effects. Major impacts in 3 BMUs on the Kootenai NF. For BMUs 9, 10, and 12, all or most open Forest Service Roads would be restricted. 160 miles of open road would receive some form of yearly restriction. No indirect effect on the IPNF or LNF with this alternative	Greater effects. Major impacts in 3 BMUs. 139 to 197 miles of road would be reclaimed and 167 to 172 miles of open road would be restricted, with over 160 of these miles located on the Kootenai NF.	Greatest effects. Most roads closed but spread over larger area. 504 to 709 miles of road would be reclaimed, obliterated, or barriered, which amounts to 10 to 14 percent of the total miles of motorized routes in the analysis area. 105 to 145 miles of this road mileage consists of currently open road. Likelihood is low that any reclaimed roads would be reopened in the next 5 to 10 years because all BMUs within each recovery zone must meet standards before roads can be considered for reopening in project level analysis.	**Slight effects. Least number of roads closed.** **387 to 544 miles of road will be reclaimed, obliterated, or barriered, which amounts to about 7 to 10 percent of the mileage of total motorized routes in the analysis area. Only 34 to 46 miles of this road mileage consists of currently open routes (the majority of these are in BMU 22 on the Lolo NF).** **Fewer miles of reclaimed road can potentially be reopened compared to Alternative C. With the selected alternative reclaimed road in an individual BMU can be considered for reopening after habitat security standards have been met in that BMU. Because some BMUs will meet their selected standards immediately, consideration of these options in project level analyses is more likely to occur than with Alternative C.**
Motorized, Dispersed, Winter	No / little effect.	Same effect as summer except there are often less restrictions for winter activities because potential impacts to bears are less when they are denned.	This alternative would result in the most impact to the available mileage and would likely reduce current snowmobile use in some BMUs.	**Same effect as summer except there are often less restrictions for winter activities because potential impacts to bears are less when they are denned.**

Of the types of recreation opportunities considered in our analysis, motorized, dispersed recreational activities (both summer and winter) will be most affected by our decision. However, for winter recreation there are often fewer restrictions because the potential impacts to grizzly bear are less when they are in their dens. The following changes in access would take place with the selected alternative (final EIS, p. 3-117):

1) Restricted Roads to Reclaimed/Obliterated/Barriered would occur on between 353 and 498 miles[16]. The majority of these roads are currently not available for motorized travel due to brush, down trees, and other obstacles. Therefore, we do not expect this change in access to affect motorized dispersed summer activities.

2) Open Routes to Reclaimed – between 34 and 46 miles[17]. The majority of these miles are in BMU 22 (located on the Lolo N.F.). While reclaimed roads would no longer be available, due to the amount of roads remaining open (about 519 to 526 miles: final EIS, Table 3-30, p. 3-69), we do not expect recreation use in the analysis area to be reduced significantly.

3) Open Roads to Restricted – between 18 and 26 miles likely will have seasonal restrictions reducing some opportunities in BMUs 4, 12, 13, 17, and 20.

Management direction for the recovery zones prior to this decision (see Alternative B discussion, final EIS, pp. 2-9 to 2-11) potentially provided for 30-day public use periods on one gated road system per year per BMU, if the BMU met prescribed security criteria (final EIS, p. 2-10). While our decision will no longer allow for new public use periods on restricted road systems within the recovery zones, the effect of this on the recreation resource is expected to be minimal. On the three national forests, since the interim access rule set became effective in 1998, only the Boulder, Ball-Trout, Blue-Grass, and Myrtle BMUs on the Idaho Panhandle N.F. have met the necessary conditions to allow for the 30-day public use period. Public use periods were provided only in 1999 and 2000 on a total of 9.7 and 15.7 miles, respectively, of gated road systems within these BMUs.

In total, between 387 and 544 miles of road will be reclaimed, obliterated or barriered with our decision (see Table 9). This amounts to between seven and ten percent of the mileage of total motorized routes in the analysis area. We expect that restricting/placing barriers/obliterating/reclaiming roads will limit the mileage available for motorized dispersed summer and winter recreation use; however, these existing recreational uses will still be provided for within the recovery zones. The actual impact will depend on the miles of road still available and the amount they are currently used. Roads only used lightly at the present can receive some increased use; roads already under heavy use will generally only receive minor increases (final EIS, p. 3-117).

On the Kootenai N.F., cumulative effects from our decision could involve the recent Off-Highway Vehicle Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (ROD) and Plan Amendment (USDA, January 2001). This forest plan amendment for the Kootenai N.F. eliminates wheeled motorized cross-

[16] The final EIS range of miles for conversion of restricted road to reclaimed road was 334 to 470. Per the conditions of the biological opinion, the core area standard in BMU 10 has increased from the 48 percent proposed in final EIS Alternative E to 52 percent. We have estimated that this change will result in an additional 20 to 30 miles of road within this BMU being converted to a reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition. About 19 to 28 miles of currently restricted road are expected to be converted to a reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition.

[17] About 1 to 2 miles of currently open road is expectd to be converted to reclaimed/barriered/obliterated as a result of the change in core area standard for BMU 10.

country travel on forestlands in Montana. Neither the Lolo nor the Idaho Panhandle national forests are affected by the OHV decision (final EIS, p. 3-114).

The biological opinion also sets standards for total and open linear road densities on areas adjacent to but outside of the recovery zones. These standards will apply to an additional 1.1 million acres of National Forest System lands (see Figure 1-3) and will combine cumulatively with the motorized access management standards for the recovery zones to limit the mileage available for motorized dispersed summer and winter recreation use. However, we expect the cumulative effect of these standards on motorized dispersed recreational opportunities, both within and adjacent to the recovery zones to be only minor and not significant.

The standards for areas outside the recovery zones require that open and total linear road density not increase above existing baseline conditions and any newly opened, constructed or reconstructed road be effectively restricted with respect to motorized public access. Therefore, the existing level of motorized dispersed recreational opportunities will be maintained in these areas. However, further increases in open or total road mileage made available for motorized dispersed recreation use will not be permitted by the standards. While future opportunities for motorized access will be limited, the effects on existing motorized recreational use, in regards to the creation and use of new roads, is expected to be minimal. Motorized use by the public on a road newly opened, created, or reconstructed will only be permitted during a brief 30-day period for the purpose of personal use firewood gathering. Because motorized use by the public will not have become established for any significant length of time on these roads, we do not expect any lost motorized recreational opportunities to result. Therefore, the cumulative effect of the access management standards in areas both inside and adjacent to the recovery zones will be only a seven to ten percent reduction in existing motorized routes, many of which are not are currently not available for motorized travel due to brush, down trees, and other obstacles.

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative is consistent with and will not change current programmatic forest plan direction to manage the recreation resource to reduce conflicts between grizzly bears and humans.

h) Heritage Resources

Natural weathering, management practices, looting, and vandalism can impact heritage sites. Access plays a major role in the looting and vandalism of sites. Limited access provides a measure of site protection and unlimited access can exacerbate problems if they exist (final EIS, p. 3-120).

Within the analysis area, our decision to further restrict road access for grizzly bear security will provide an additional measure of protection for heritage sites. However, restricted road access may complicate administrative access to sites for the purpose of site management. Additionally, the road access restrictions potentially will impact tribal members who use roads for gathering, hunting and for visiting traditional sites (final EIS, p. 3-120).

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic direction for the management of heritage resources within the respective forest plans and is therefore consistent with the respective forest plans (final EIS, p.3-121).

i) Invasive Plant Species

Policy for management of noxious weeds is provided in the Forest Service Manual (FSM 2080). For the Kootenai N.F. lands within the analysis area, direction is provided in the Kootenai N.F. Environmental Assessment for Herbicide Weed Control (USDA, 1997b) and as design features in project-level

environmental assessments and impact statements. On the Idaho Panhandle N.F. portion of the analysis area, three EISs have been prepared to address invasive plants (final EIS, p. 3-124). Project-level environmental analyses include design features tiered to these EISs.

Implementation of the selected alternative could result in changes in noxious weed management approaches on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the site, effects could be:

- Positive (closing areas without noxious weeds would slow the advance of vehicle-spread seed),
- Negative (areas presently infested could become more difficult to access and treat),

A qualitative assessment of each alternative is provided in the following table (final EIS, p. 3-125).

Table 13. Potential Effect on Weed Spread and Treatment Access by Alternative

	Effects on Weed Spread and Treatment
Alternative A	Negligible change in potential for chance of weed spread, maintains existing access for treatment of weed infestations
Alternative B	Access management would change on 139 to 197 miles of roads with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.
Alternative C	Access management would change on 504 to 709 miles of roads with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.
Selected Alternative	Access management would change on 387 to 544 miles of roads with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.

Our decision with respect to motorized access management, both within and in areas adjacent to the recovery zones, will not alter current programmatic direction for noxious weeds. It will, however, reduce traffic on travel routes and unless an area already has weed infestations, could work cumulatively with recent access restrictions for OHVs (Off-Highway Vehicle decision, USDA January 2001), towards an improvement in the noxious weed situation within the analysis area by reducing spread of weeds in the Montana portion of the analysis area (OHV decision is only applicable in the Montana portion of the Kootenai N.F.).

Our decision will result in an increase in barriered/impassable road, within the recovery zones, second only in amount to Alternative C (see tables 8 and 9). As a result, costs of monitoring and treating existing weed infestations along these roads or trails are expected to increase in those areas needing treatment but no longer accessible by motorized vehicle. Conversely, restricting motorized access, both within and adjacent to the recovery zones, will reduce the potential for spreading weed seeds and expanding existing infestations or for bringing seeds into areas that have been relatively weed free (final EIS, p. 3-125). Measures to mitigate weed spread and minimize weed treatment costs will be made through project level analysis and decision-making.

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic direction to identify, treat and monitor noxious weed populations and is therefore consistent with existing forest plan direction for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests.

j) Social and Economic Environment

Rural areas surrounding national forests often depend on forest resources for much of their social and economic well-being. The majority of the analysis area encompasses parts of four counties in two states

and on two national forests: Boundary and Bonner counties in Idaho, and Lincoln and Sanders counties in Montana (final EIS, p. 3-127, Figure 3-14). These counties make up the zone of influence for our decision.

The analysis area's economy is heavily dependent upon natural resources of the national forests. The counties are heavily forested, ranging from 80 percent (Bonner County) to 95 percent (Lincoln County) as forestland. Timber harvest has been an important land use for all four counties (final EIS, p. 3-131).

Additionally, outdoor social activities within the analysis area contribute to defining the culture and quality of life for many local residents and include hunting, fishing, huckleberry picking, and firewood cutting. The area has a wide array of wildlife and fish species. Hunting has had a large influence on settlement of the area and remains a major activity for local residents and visitors to the area (final EIS, p. 3-131).

Of the action alternatives, the selected alternative is expected to have a larger negative impact on the social environment than Alternative B, but a lower negative impact than Alternative C (see Table 14). The selected alternative will result in 34 and 46 miles of currently open roads being reclaimed/obliterated or barriered and an additional 18 to 26 miles of open roads being restricted. Overall, this alternative will leave more road open than any other alternative, including Alternative A (see Table 8).

Table 14. Qualitative Assessment of Effect on the Social and Economic Environment by Alternative

Level of Effect on	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Selected Alternative
Social Environment	Very Low	Low	High	**Moderate**
Area Economy – Recreation Jobs and Income	No Change	No Change	No Change	**No Change**
Area Economy – Timber Jobs and Income	No Change	Lowest Decrease	Highest Decrease	**Decrease**
Area Economy – Road Reclamation Jobs and Income	No Change	Lowest Temporary Increase	Highest Temporary Increase	**Temporary Increase**
Area Economy – Payments to Counties	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	**No Effect**

The selected alternative will require more currently restricted roads to be reclaimed/obliterated than with Alternatives A or B, but less than Alternative C. A large portion of the currently restricted roads to be reclaimed (353 to 498 miles) are currently non-drivable due to brush, down trees, or other obstacles. Therefore, we expect only minor motorized access related social effects resulting from reclaiming these non-drivable roads (final EIS, p. 3-146).

Reclaiming or obliterating currently restricted roads that are open and drivable during a portion of the year will displace some individuals to other areas of the national forests for hunting, fishing, huckleberry picking, or firewood gathering. As a result, these users could be displaced into a smaller area, increasing competition for the uses mentioned above. This may make it more difficult for some people to obtain their firewood or huckleberries or have a high quality, successful hunting experience. Either they will not be able to obtain the quantity or quality of products they have in the past or they may have to walk further from an open road to obtain these products. We recognize that this is likely to generate a feeling that an aspect of their quality of life has been diminished. We expect this effect to be similar in nature to the effects of a slowly increasing population where new inhabitants would also participate in these outdoor

activities. While existing uses could be affected, the amount of open road within the analysis area will decline by only about two percent, with implementation of the selected alternative (see Table 8). Overall, only about 11 percent of the existing amount of open and restricted road within the analysis area will be converted to impassable and barriered roads (see Table 8). Therefore, the level of potential effect is not expected to be significant (final EIS, p. 3-143).

With respect to the area economy, existing access to the suitable timberland base will potentially be reduced on approximately 118,000 acres[18] (final EIS, p. 3-146). The largest reductions occur in BMUs 15 through 17 on the Kootenai N.F.; 22 on the Lolo N.F.; and 18, 19, and Kalispell-Granite on the Idaho Panhandle N.F. The selected alternative will set road densities and core areas individually for each BMU within the analysis area. The selected alternative provides for a larger reduction in TMRD than either alternatives A and B, but a lower reduction than Alternative C. Our decision also sets administrative use at 57 round trips per year on each restricted road system. Therefore, because of the reduced allowance and the decrease in TMRD, our decision has a higher potential for reducing future timber harvest than either alternatives A and B, but a lower potential than Alternative C (final EIS, p. 3-146).

While our decision provides for flexibility by allowing BMUs with standards exceeding the new levels to accommodate some reductions in habitat security, as previously noted, other resource management issues may limit this flexibility[19]. Therefore, implementation of these options is uncertain and project-level analysis will be required prior to any decision affecting habitat security.

The biological opinion also sets standards for total and open linear road densities on areas adjacent to but outside of the recovery zones. The socio-economic effect of implementing these standards in combination with the access management standards for the recovery zones will not be significant. As we have previously stated, existing levels and opportunities for motorized access and use will be maintained and implementation of these standards is not expected to limit our ability to conduct vegetation management activities within the grizzly bear occupied areas outside of the recovery zones. While opportunities for a permanent increase in motorized route density will not be possible, there are opportunities for brief, temporary increases, specifically to accommodate public needs. On roads created, opened, or reconstructed to facilitate management activities, it will be permissible after management activities have been completed for such roads to be opened to the public for a period of 30 consecutive days, during either the months of July or August. This will allow for such activities as personal use firewood gathering. There will be no restrictions on non-motorized uses occurring within these areas.

Because of the availability of alternative areas on and near the national forests, we expect recreation levels to remain at current levels. The reduction in access to the suitable timberland base will potentially result in reduced timber harvest levels. While we do expect a temporary increase in jobs and income associated with the increase in road reclamation work over the next five to nine years, this work is not expected to offset the decline in timber related employment and income (final EIS, p. 3-146). Therefore, of the action alternatives, our decision will have a larger negative impact on the area economy than Alternative B but a smaller negative impact than Alternative C (see Table 12).

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[18] Final EIS Alternative E potentially reduced access to suitable timberland on 113,000 acres. To achieve the higher core area standard contained in the BO for BMU 10, we expect access to an additional 5,000 acres of suitable timberland in BMU 10 to be affected.

[19] The BO has increased core area standards in BMUs 3, 5, 10, and 13, and the OMRD standard for the Blue Grass BMU. As a result the ability of each of these BMUs to potentially accommodate some reductions in habitat security or increases in OMRD will be reduced [see Section VI(C)(3)(e)].

k) Fire and Fuels

Management action that changes roaded access, may affect human-caused fire ignitions, initial attack fire suppression success and have effects on large-fire suppression capability. Delayed response time for initial attack and reinforcements for emerging fires is the critical limiting factor for most fire starts. Extended response times due to reduced surface access increases the possibility of an escaped fire. The cost of suppression increases due to needs for aviation support and firefighter support in remote areas. Conversely, reduced access may decrease the number of human-caused fires.

Management ignited prescribed fires can be an effective tool to reduce fuel accumulations and thus reduce the severity of wildfires. However, reduced road access will limit the opportunities for such prescribed fires, thereby lessening fuel management capabilities. Because there is the potential for fewer acres of vegetation to be treated with the lesser amount of road access, we will need to place greater reliance on air supported fire suppression to compensate for reduced ground-based response time. Therefore, we expect the cost of fire suppression to increase (final EIS, p. 3-152).

Fire risk is expected to be the lowest with the implementation of either alternative A or B because these alternatives would convert the least amount of either open or restricted road to reclaimed/barriered/obliterated (0 and 197 miles, respectively) (see Table 9). Alternatives C and E would convert the most miles of currently open or restricted road to a reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition (709 and 544 miles, respectively). As a result, Alternative C is expected to have the highest overall fire risk of the alternatives considered. Alternative E, our selected alternative, will have the second highest overall fire risk of the alternatives considered. While alternatives A and B better address fire, fuels, and associated air quality concerns, these alternatives were determined to not be consistent with or only partially consistent with our purpose and need for action [see section *IV(A)*]. Alternative E best addressed the purpose and need for action, yet will convert only about 70 percent the amount of road to a reclaimed/barriered/obliterated condition as Alternative C. As a result, Alternative E will provide for better access than Alternative C with regard to fire suppression/prescribed burning activities.

We realize there are concerns about the increased fire risk to downwind resources potentially resulting from implementation of the selected alternative. The biological opinion's terms and conditions recognize that emergency situations will periodically occur. In the event of a wildfire, temporarily reopening restricted or barriered/reclaimed roads within a BMU may be necessary for effective fire suppression. Emergency situations such as this will be consulted on with the USFWS. However, within the recovery zones, we expect very few miles of road affecting private land to be proposed for obliteration as the selected alternative is implemented (final EIS, p. 4-158). With the availability and use of aerial firefighting techniques and increased fire fighting personnel due to the NFP requirements, we expect there should be very little if any change in the protection of private property. Protection of private property will remain as one of our top priorities, right behind fire fighter and public safety. At the time NEPA analyses are conducted on each BMU for the purpose of site-specifically identifying the roads that will be proposed for closure, restriction or decommissioning, the issue of forest fuel loadings will be addressed and mitigation measures in the form of using prescribed fire for fuel reduction, access and suppression capabilities will be considered. Therefore, we believe that any potential increases in fire fighting costs will be minimal and can be mitigated by the specific decisions of which roads to restrict and which roads to decommission with the specific project analyses.

Our ability to conduct prescribed burning operations and fire suppression activities as needed, in those areas of grizzly bear occupancy outside of the recovery zones, is not expected to be compromised by the incorporation of open and total linear road density standards. While further increases in open and permanent total road density will be precluded, there is no requirement to reduce existing road densities in

these areas below the existing baseline conditions (see the terms and conditions for reasonable and prudent measure 2 in Appendix B). Therefore, we expect that existing amounts of access will continue to be provided for in these areas.

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative will not change any of the current programmatic fire management direction within the forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, or Idaho Panhandle national forests.

l) Soils

Roads can extend the stream network and the speed and efficiency of water delivery to stream channels. Road systems, also, increase the potential for mass failures and cutslope slumps, particularly in steep, dissected landtypes where the road prism exposes dense, compacted till layers or other restrictive layers, which perch surface ground water.

Implementation of the selected alternative is expected to result in soil disturbance associated with roadwork such as obliterating or installing barriers. Various forms of roadwork are expected to produce some short-term sediment but are expected to result in positive long-term effects as a result of the restoration of hydrological function along roads and reducing the potential for road-related mass failures.

Forest Plan Consistency: The selected alternative would meet respective forest plan standards for soil and water quality. The overall effect of the selected alternative is expected to be beneficial, in the long term, because restoration of the hydrological function along roads would be improved or restored and the potential for road-related mass failures would be reduced (final EIS, p. 3-158).

D. Summary of Our Rationale for the Decision

In summary, we have chosen Alternative E, with incorporation of the Biological Opinion terms and conditions, for implementation because it:

1) Fully addresses the purpose and need for action as described in the final EIS and this ROD (see pp.12 to 14). The selected alternative:
   - ➢ Amends our respective forest plans to include a set of motorized access and security guidelines that best address ESA requirements to conserve and recover grizzly bear.
   - ➢ Incorporates amendments that fully comply with the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (USFWS 1993) and IGBC access management direction (IGBC 1998), thereby complying with the Chief's decision on the appeal of the Kootenai NF Forest Plan.
   - ➢ Amends the Kootenai and Lolo NF forest plans to include the new access management guidelines, as required by terms and conditions included in their respective Incidental Take Statements for the forest plans.
   - ➢ Satisfies the terms of the settlement agreement between the Forest Service and Alliance for the Wild Rockies.
2) Responds to and is consistent with existing policy direction, including the National Fire Plan, and the Interior Columbia Basin Strategy (see pp. 14 and 15);
3) Responds to the goals of local Tribes by providing for the conservation and recovery of an important tribal cultural resource (pp. 18 and 19);
4) Addresses the goals of other agencies by contributing to the conservation and recovery of grizzly bear within the recovery zones (pp. 19 and 20); and
5) Best responds to comments and issues while achieving the project's purpose and need for action:
   - ➢ Overall across both recovery zones it provides the highest level of grizzly bear security of the alternatives considered in detail (p. 20).

- Complies with NFMA direction that grizzly bear habitat be managed to maintain viable populations well distributed across the planning area (pp.26 and 27).
- Improves habitat security for lynx, woodland caribou, and gray wolf (pp. 27 to 30).
- Maintains or provides an improvement in habitat security for sensitive and MIS species (pp. 34 to 37).
- Provides opportunities to address existing watershed concerns through site-specific projects developed to meet the selected TMRD and Core objectives, thereby potentially benefiting aquatic ecosystems and species (p. 32).
- Access to provide reasonable use and enjoyment will continue to be provided to private land inholdings (p.40).
- Minimizes to the extent feasible the reduction in access to the suitable timber base within the recovery zones (pp. 42 and 43).
- Provides management flexibility by potentially allowing for increases in route densities and decreases in core habitat within individual BMUs that exceed the standards for these parameters (p. 40).
- Will have the least effect, overall, on motorized dispersed summer and winter recreation of the alternatives considered (p. 44).
- In the event of wildfire, little if any change in our ability to protect private property is expected (p. 51).
- While the various forms of roadwork are expected to produce some short-term sediment, overall we expect long-term benefits as a result of the restoration of hydrological function along roads and reducing the potential for road-related mass failures (p.52).

VII. Other Alternatives Considered

A. Alternatives Not Given Detailed Study

1. Alternative D – Increased Security Habitat

We developed this alternative in response to public comment calling on the Forest Service to go beyond the guidelines provided in the Interim Access Rule Set to provide additional habitat security for grizzly bears. In this alternative, standards for route densities and core area were established based on the highest security requirements of bears documented in the Grizzly Bear and Road Density Relationships in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones (Wakkinen and Kasworm 1997). The values used in this alternative would be OMRD less than or equal to 17 percent, TMRD less than or equal to 14 percent, and Core Area greater than or equal to 72 percent rather than the average values (33-26-55) identified in the research report and used in Alternative C.

The Interdisciplinary Team commenced detailed study of this alternative until it discovered that meeting these standards was infeasible within several BMUs (4, 6, 10, 12, 20, 21, 22, and Lakeshore). These BMUs did not have sufficient amounts of road under Forest Service jurisdiction to adequately reduce access to meet these standards. To test the feasibility of this alternative, the moving windows model was run under a scenario with all roads under Forest Service jurisdiction closed to motorized access. The model results indicated that several of the BMUs could not reach the standards proposed in Alternative D. As this alternative was intended to set one level of standards across all BMUs with greater than 75 percent Federal lands, it was determined to not be feasible to implement and dropped from more detailed study (final EIS, pp. 2-18, 4-178, and 4-180).

2. Alternative F – Maintain Current Levels of Access

This alternative was designed to respond to comment requesting the Forest Service maintain the existing levels of closed and open roads on the landscape, as well as responding to public comment asking for no additional road closures. The design of this alternative would be to "freeze" the current status as reported at the end of Bear Year 2000. Upon examination of the existing status of security parameters in the Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak BMUs, we determined that the present status did not fully meet any particular desired biological or social condition. The "freezing" of the present status would not provide an option that more fully resolved any of the biological or social concerns identified as significant issues. The Interdisciplinary Team fully considered this alternative but found it did not warrant detailed study because it would not meet the purpose and need for action (final EIS, pp. 2-18 and 4-186).

3. Alternative G – Maximum Access

We developed this alternative in response to public comment requesting as much access as possible for recreation and economic activities in the three national forests. The design of this alternative would require all currently gated roads to be opened.

This alternative did not meet important elements of the purpose and need for action and was not given detailed study. The overall purpose as previously stated in this ROD is to "amend forest plans to include a set of motorized access and security guidelines to meet our responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act to conserve and contribute to recovery of grizzly bears". Eliminating the existing gates on all restricted roads would not likely conserve and contribute to the recovery of grizzly bears within the recovery zones.

Other than access management and habitat improvement, the Forest Service has limited capabilities to affect changes that contribute to grizzly bear recovery. Without the ability to manage road access, other mitigation for grizzly bear security would need to be implemented, such as firearms restrictions or changes to hunting seasons. However, these options are outside the jurisdiction of the Forest Service and beyond the scope of this analysis.

This alternative was not given further detailed study in this analysis, as it did not meet the purpose and need for action and would require actions beyond the jurisdiction of the Forest Service to conserve and contribute to the recovery of grizzly bears in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery zones.

B. Alternatives Considered in Detailed Study

1. Alternative A – No Action

The No Action alternative is defined as the direction and implementation of the forest plans, as amended and under the terms and conditions of their respective biological opinions, prior to December 1, 1998, the date the Interim Access Rule went into effect. The goals and objectives of the forest plans and other directives that were in place at that time would remain unchanged under this alternative.

Page 2-6 and Table 2-1 of the final EIS (p. 2-8) display the features of this alternative by BMU with respect to the major habitat security components for grizzly bear.

The No Action Alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and provides a baseline against which to compare the amount and rate of change of all other alternatives. At the same time, it does provide a certain level of responsiveness to some of the unresolved issues identified by the proposed action. This alternative displays the effects of a more conservative approach to access management than our Proposed Action (Alternative B). In doing so, it provides a different course of

action that is responsive to the issues of public access, administrative access, economics, and access to private inholdings.

We did not select this alternative for implementation because it did not address the purpose and need for action as well as the selected alternative. This alternative would not implement standards for OMRD, TMRD, or core habitat within the BMUs; therefore, it was not consistent with IGBC direction (final EIS, p. 3-18). We considered the likelihood to be high that the USFWS would find this alternative to jeopardize the continued existence of grizzly bears under ESA (final EIS, p. 3-20).

2. Alternative B

Alternative B was presented as the proposed action and incorporates all the protective measures of Alternative A plus it would implement the Interim Access Rule Set issued by the Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak Subcommittee of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) on December 1, 1998. The Interim Access Rule Set provides a goal of achieving core habitat on a minimum of 55 percent of the area within each Priority 1 BMU (see Table 2 for a listing of BMU priority). This alternative stopped short of setting standards but did provide specific direction for several habitat security parameters. The levels of linear open road density and habitat effectiveness prescribed in the forest plans and biological opinions are to be met. Existing levels of OMRD and TMRD would not be increased. Other parameters such as levels of administrative use and public use are included to provide management flexibility in meeting local social and economic needs. Table 2-2 of the final EIS (p. 2-11) displays the features of this alternative by BMU with respect to the major habitat security components for grizzly bears.

While this alternative establishes goals for core in Priority 1 BMUs and allows no increases in OMRD or TMRD, no numerical standards are established for these measures. Additionally, no standard for core is established in priority 2 and 3 ranked BMUs. Therefore, while this alternative meets the purpose and need for action better than Alternative A, we did not select it for implementation because, unlike the selected alternative, it is not fully consistent with IGBC and Recovery Plan direction for grizzly bear because no numerical standards would be established for these measures (final EIS, p. 3-18).

3. Alternative C

In this alternative, numeric standards for OMRD (less than or equal to 33%), TMRD (less than or equal to 26%), and Core Habitat (greater than or equal to 55%) would be established for all BMUs with greater than 75 percent federal lands. This alternative was developed in response to concerns that the Proposed Action lacked sufficient habitat security for grizzly bears. It was designed to incorporate the OMRD, TMRD, and Core Habitat levels recommended in 1997 by the Selkirk/Cabinet–Yaak Access Task Group, as well as in a recent USFWS biological opinion on the forest plan for the Idaho Panhandle N.F. These recommendations represent average security values documented through the latest available science and results of grizzly bear research and monitoring within the recovery zone.

Alternative C would not allow for an increase in route densities or decrease in core habitat until all BMUs in the recovery zone meet the standard for these parameters. This alternative would also remove the existing forest plan standards regarding linear open road density and habitat effectiveness. Table 2-3 of the final EIS displays the Year 2000 status as well as the maintained levels of these parameters in Alternative C.

We did not select this alternative because it did not address the purpose and need for this project or some of the key issues as well as the selected alternative. While Alternative C is fully consistent with IGBC and Recovery Plan direction, the standards for OMRD, TMRD, and core are a one size fits all and set at minimum recommended levels. As a result, security levels represent average values within the home

range of local bears, thereby conserving bears at the lowest level considered to have a reasonable potential for success. While the selected alternative will set security standards individually for each BMU, across both recovery zones we believe that the selected standards will provide for a level of security that is higher than Alternative C (final EIS, p. 3-19). Therefore, we expect that the selected alternative will go farther towards insuring the continued existence of the grizzly bear in the recovery areas than would Alternative C (final EIS, p. 3-20).

Alternative C also did not respond to the key issues of public access and economic conditions as well as the selected alternative. To meet prescribed security standards, Alternative C would convert the greatest amount of open road to either the reclaimed/obliterated/barriered or restricted status and the greatest amount of restricted road to reclaimed/obliterated/barriered status (final EIS, Table 3-31, p. 3-72). As a result, there would be a greater effect from this alternative to motorized recreation opportunities and the area economy (final EIS, pp. 3-101 to 3-102; 3-116 to 3-118; and 3-144 to 3-146) without providing for an accompanying enhancement in the achievement of the project's purpose and need.

4. Alternative E

Alternative E is the preferred alternative and the alternative that we have selected for implementation. The rationale for its selection has been disclosed in this ROD.

C. Environmentally Preferred Alternative

Previously in this ROD, we have described the Selected Alternative and given our rationale for choosing Alternative E to implement. Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA also specifies that the alternative or alternatives that are considered to be environmentally preferable be identified (40 CFR Part 1505.2b). The environmentally preferable alternative is not necessarily the alternative that will be implemented, but is ordinarily the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological, physical and cultural environment. The alternative that best meets this definition is the selected alternative (Alternative E). As previously discussed in this ROD, we have selected Alternative E to implement because it best responds to the project's biological emphasis of conserving and contributing to the recovery of grizzly bears while at the same time minimizing adverse effects to the social and economic environment concomitant with restricting motorized access within the recovery zones.

VIII. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

Forest Service activities and decisions must comply with many laws. In this section we consider each of the major laws involved in this programmatic level decision.

A. National Forest Management Act

We have reviewed National Forest Management Act (NFMA) direction for management requirements (36 CFR 219.27(a) through (g). We find that this amendment is in compliance with NFMA (see following section). Specifically, we find that this amendment is not significant, as it does not meet the requirement for a significant amendment as defined in Forest Service Manual (FSM) 1922.5. The standards found in the selected alternative do not propose any timber management activity that is not in compliance with NFMA nor do they provide management direction that would cause future site-specific projects to conflict with the 36 CFR 219 resource integration and management requirements. The standards are expected to contribute to the conservation and recovery of grizzly bear on the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests.

1. NFMA Significance of the Amendment

Our decision amends the forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo and Idaho Panhandle national forests to include a set of motorized access and security guidelines for grizzly bear conservation. Forest Service

policy permits forest plan amendments resulting from analysis conducted during implementation [36 CFR 219.10(f) and FSM 1922.5]. We have determined these changes are not significant; they are minor adjustments that will not significantly alter the forest-wide environmental impacts disclosed in the forest plan EISs for the Kootenai, Lolo and Idaho Panhandle national forests. This determination of non-significance is based on consideration of four factors (as per FSH 1909.12,5):

1) *Timing* - The timing factor examines at what point over the course of the forest plan period the Plan is amended. Both the age of the underlying documents and the duration of the amendment are relevant considerations. The Forest Service handbook indicates that the later in the time period, the less significant the change is likely to be. This management direction will be in place until efforts to revise forest plans are complete. All of the forest plans affected are nearing the end of the first planning period. As noted in the this ROD, completion of the revision of the forest plan for the Kootenai and Idaho Panhandle national forests is expected in 2005, with the Lolo's Forest Plan revision expected in 2006. Therefore, under our current forest plans, these amendments are expected to be in effect for two to three years. This supports our determination that the proposed changes do not constitute a significant amendment of the forest plans.

   The revised forest plans would need to include standards to protect grizzly bear. Whether the specific provisions of this amendment will be carried forward into the revised forest plans will be addressed during the forest plan revision process.

2) *Size and Location* – The key to location and size is context, or "the relationship of the affected area to the overall planning area", the smaller the area affected, the less likely the change is to be a significant change in the forest plan." The planning area is about 6.8 million acres across the three national forests. The amendment is applicable to the 1,189,000 acres within the Kootenai, 163,000 acres within the Lolo, and 806,000 acres within the Idaho Panhandle national forests that comprise the Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk recovery zones (final EIS, p. 1-2). Terms and conditions of the biological opinion also provide standards for approximately an additional 1,114,240 acres of NFSL, adjacent to but outside of the designated recovery zones. Therefore, the area addressed by this amendment on the three Forests is about 48 percent of their combined land base. Thus, the size of the area projected to be affected during this time period (three years or less) is <u>not</u> small when compared to the total in the planning area. While this factor alone <u>does not</u> support our determination that the proposed changes do not constitute a significant amendment of the forest plans, it is mitigated to a considerable degree by the timing factor and the effect of the amendment on goals, objectives, and associated outputs.

3) *Goals, Objectives, and Associated Outputs* – The goals, objectives, and outputs factor involves the determination of "whether the change alters the long-term relationship between the level of goods and services in the overall planning area" [Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, section 5.32(c)]. This criterion concerns analysis of the overall forest plan and the various multiple-use resources that may be affected.

   The respective forest plans display the outputs and services that were projected during their planning horizon. Of the categories of outputs listed, the greatest concern relates to timber production. Implementation of the selected alternative could preclude roaded access on up to 118,000 acres of suitable timberland across the national forests. This amounts to about 3 percent of the respective national forest's total suitable timber base (final EIS, p. 3-96). Considering the small area involved, relative to the three forests' total planning area (6.8 million acres) and total

suitable timber base, and the fact that some level of commercial timber production will still occur from the recovery zones, no precise change in timber-related outputs can be projected.

Potential impacts to recreational outputs/objectives are also a concern. As previously discussed, this management direction would apply only to proposed or new projects following adoption of this amendment. Site-specific access related decisions made through previous NEPA analyses and with completed USFWS consultation will not be affected by this programmatic decision. The amendments are not expected to have an effect on non-motorized or motorized, developed forms of recreation (final EIS, pp 3-117 and 3-118). Motorized dispersed recreation will be most affected by these amendments. Though seven to ten percent of the total motorized mileage within the recovery zones will eventually no longer be available to motorized uses, only 34 to 46 miles of currently open road will be reclaimed with our decision. Of the miles of road to be reclaimed, a large portion is currently non-drivable due to brush, down tree, or other obstacles (final EIS, pp. 3-145 and 3-146). Therefore, we do not expect a significant change in motorized access opportunities as a result of this amendment. Opportunities also exist to reopen reclaimed or restricted roads to motorized access when habitat security standards have been met in each BMU.

Implementation of these amendments will help achieve existing goals contained in our respective forest plans for the conversation and recovery of threatened and endangered wildlife species. The amendments are designed to provide for increases in the amount of habitat and security for other grizzly bear. However, improved habitat and security for other threatened and endangered wildlife species, including northern gray wolf, woodland caribou (Kootenai and Idaho Panhandle national forests), and Canada lynx is also expected to be provided (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment).

The amendments will also contribute positively to existing forest plan objectives for maintaining and improving fish habitat capacities across the three national forests. As we have previously stated, implementation of these amendments within the recovery zones will provide opportunities to address watershed concerns, thereby providing a benefit to aquatic systems (final EIS, p. 3-92).

The management direction provided by these amendments, in combination with their timing, does not significantly alter the long-term relationships between the levels of goods and services projected by the forest plans, thereby supporting our determination that the proposed changes do not constitute a significant amendment of the forest plans.

4) *Management Prescription* – The management prescription factor involves the determination of (a), "whether the change in a management prescription is only for a specific situation or whether it would apply to future decisions throughout the planning area" and (b), "whether or not the change alters the desired future condition of the land and resources or the anticipated goods and services to be produced" [Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, section 5.32(d)]. In this criterion, time remaining in the 15-year planning period and changes in desired future conditions or the anticipated goods and services to be produced are relevant considerations.

The changes in access management direction are applicable only to the 30 BMUs for which standards are displayed in Table 2 of this ROD and those areas of identified grizzly bear occupancy outside of the recovery zones. The changes in access management direction will remain in effect until each forest plan is revised (expected to be within 3 years). Thus, the change and effects are short-term regarding application to future decisions throughout the planning area;

thereby supporting our determination that the proposed changes do not constitute a significant amendment of the forest plans.

The management direction provided by these amendments will work to accomplish an element of the multiple-use desired future condition currently described in our forest plans by providing direction (standards and guidelines) for access management within the grizzly bear recovery zones, consistent with Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan objectives and IGBC access direction (final EIS pp. 3-18 and 3-19). The amendments will also provide additional tools to help us, as land managers, achieve the desired future conditions described in our existing forest plans. The desired future conditions and land allocations of the three forest plans will not change. As we have discussed in "goals, objectives, and outputs", the long-term levels of goods and services projected in current plans are not substantially changed by the proposed management direction over the next two to three years. This information supports our determination that the proposed changes do not constitute a significant amendment of the forest plans.

Finding

On the basis of the information and analysis contained in the final EIS and all other information available as summarized above, it is our determination that adoption of the management direction reflected in our decision does not result in a significant amendment to the existing forest plans. Though the area covered by these amendments amounts to almost one-half of the combined land base of the forests; goals, objectives, and associated outputs will not be substantially altered from existing levels. Therefore, the *timing factor* substantially mitigates the potential effects the *size factor* could have upon the *goals, objectives and associated outputs* factor.

This decision is programmatic and does not supercede any direction currently in the forest plans that protects air quality, water quality, cultural resources, farm lands (prime or unique), floodplains, wetlands, Native American religious concerns, environmental justice, hazardous or solid wastes, water quality, wild and scenic rivers, migratory birds, and wilderness.

2. Forest Plan Consistency

The amendment will not change the basic purpose and need of the respective forest plans, nor will it change the goals and objectives originally established in the forest plans. The changes to the forest-wide standards and management area prescriptions are consistent with the direction found in the respective forest plans. The intent of the amendment is to provide direction for implementing site-specific projects on the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests. We find that this amendment is consistent with our respective forest plans goals and objectives.

The selected alternative is consistent with the respective forest plans as amended by the Inland Native Fish Strategy (INFISH) in 1995. INFISH is designed to protect riparian values and aquatic resources. The selected alternative will not affect the current direction for protecting aquatic resources as provided in the respective forest plans (final EIS, p. 3-92).

B. Endangered Species Act

The purposes of ESA are to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved and to provide for the conservation of such endangered species and threatened species. Section 7(a)(1) of the Act requires federal agencies to carry out programs for the conservation of listed species. In addition, ESA requires federal agencies to insure that any agency action does not jeopardize the continued existence of the species [ESA Section 7(a)(2)]. ESA also

requires the USFWS and Forest Service, respectively, to base the biological opinion and subsequent agency action on the use of best scientific and commercially available data [16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)].

As we have previously discussed in sections *VI(A)* and *VI(C)(3)(a)(1)* of this document, our decision is consistent with the goals of contributing to the conservation and recovery of grizzly bear within the Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk grizzly bear recovery zones. The best available scientific information regarding access management in grizzly bear habitat has also been considered in this analysis (see section *VI (C)(a)* of this document for additional discussion).

In accordance with Section 7(c) of the Act, USFWS identified the listed and proposed threatened or endangered species that may be present on the three forests. Biological Assessments/Evaluations were prepared and concurrence from USFWS was documented regarding threatened and endangered species (Project Record, Volume 15, Biological Assessment, p.25). The USFWS concurred with our determination that the amendments ***may effect - not likely to adversely affect*** the threatened bald eagle, northern gray wolf and woodland caribou (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p.1).

A biological opinion for grizzly bear, Canada lynx, and bull trout was issued to the Forest's following review of the project (February 9, 2004).

1) *Grizzly Bear* - The biological opinion includes "reasonable and prudent alternatives" that if implemented in a timely manner would assure that the implementation of the forest plans would not jeopardize the continued existence of the grizzly bear. It also specifies mandatory terms and conditions that minimize incidental take of grizzly bear (see Appendix B and Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, pp.134 to 140).

2) *Canada Lynx* - The USFWS concluded that no incidental take of this species was anticipated; therefore, no reasonable and prudent measures or terms and conditions are required to minimize take (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p. 132).

3) *Bull Trout* – The USFWS was unable to anticipate all possible circumstances related to the implementation of activities necessary to meet the standards; therefore, they were unable to issue an all-encompassing incidental take statement or a comprehensive list of reasonable and prudent measures. While the USFWS determined that the level of anticipated take associated with the activities necessary to meet road density standards are not likely to jeopardize the Columbia River DPS, they did not authorize incidental take of bull trout for any specific actions carried out by the forests to meet the road density standards. Incidental take, if any, will be authorized at the site-specific action level (Project Record, Volume 2, USFWS Biological Opinion, p.132).

This amendment incorporates appropriate elements of the biological opinion as either modification to existing standards, additions to standards, or modification to the respective forest plan monitoring requirements (see sections *V(A)* and *V(B)* and Appendix B). Therefore, we have determined that this amendment is in full compliance with the requirements of ESA.

C. Migratory Bird Treaty Act

On January 10, 2001, President Clinton signed an Executive Order outlining responsibilities of federal agencies to protect migratory birds. Upon review of the information regarding neotropical migratory birds in the project record (Volume 15, Migratory Birds Analysis and Consideration), we find that the selected alternative complies with this Executive Order.

This amendment is access driven and roads contribute to fragmentation of habitat and potential habitat loss from associated activities using the roads (i.e. firewood cutting, timber sales). Consequently, natural processes will continue to influence vegetative patterns, creating a mosaic of habitat conditions and age classes that are expected to provide a diversity of habitat values for forest birds. This programmatic decision supports access management that reduces the risk of habitat loss. Site-specific analysis will be done at the project scale where effects will be detailed.

D. Clean Water Act and State Water Quality Standards

Full implementation of this amendment is expected to maintain or improve water quality and satisfy all state (Idaho and Montana) water quality requirements. We base this finding on the analysis, existing standards and guidelines contained in the respective forest plans, and the application of best management practices (BMPs) specifically designed to protect water quality.

During implementation of this amendment at the project level, road decommissioning/obliteration activities, as well as restricting motorized access to roads, could result in sediment that would reach some stream systems during the short-term, but BMPs and use of stream buffers are expected to reduce the effects to a minimal level (final EIS, pg. 3-89).

The forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests were amended by INFISH in 1995 and contain standards and guidelines for road management. Application of these measures and the implementation of the Roads Analysis Process (USDA 1999) are expected to provide for identifying road status, areas of concern and appropriate treatments as individual projects are developed in order to protect water quality. Our decision will not affect the current direction for protecting aquatic resources as provided in the respective forest plans.

E. Clean Air Act

Access management activities proposed with this decision are not anticipated to degrade air quality or violate state law. Future site-specific management activities that implement this decision would be required to comply with applicable air quality standards.

F. National Historic Preservation Act

The selected alternative is consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). In accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, forest plans require integration of cultural resource management into the overall multiple resource management effort. In addition, national forests must work closely with the appropriate scientific community and American Indian Tribes concerning cultural resources. Heritage inventories will be completed prior to any ground disturbing activities associated with project level decisions.

The guidelines of the forest plans and of other jurisdictions were recognized in the development of the selected alternative. In addition, the laws and policies that govern cultural resource protection on Federal lands are coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) of Montana and Idaho, who serve in an advisory capacity. The policies of the Forest Service and SHPO are consistent.

G. Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, requires that federal agencies make achieving environmental justice part of their mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of their program, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

Social issues associated with this decision were analyzed in Chapter 3, Social and Economic Effects, of the final EIS. The analysis area's economy is heavily dependent upon natural resources of the national forests. Timber harvest has been an important land use for all four counties (final EIS, p. 3-131). The reduction in access to the suitable timberland base posed by these amendments will potentially result in reduced timber harvest levels. However, we do not expect the effects on timber harvest levels to be measurable during the short time that these amendments to our current forest plans will remain in effect. Further, incorporation of the selected habitat standards and guidelines into the revised forest plans is a separate decision, subject to future reviews and public comment during the forest plan revision process currently underway on all three forests. The revised Forest Plans may accept or modify the standards adopted in this amendment.

Based on the analysis presented, we conclude that the risk of disproportionate effects on minority or low-income populations from implementation of our decision is very low. Consultation with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the Kalispel Tribe, and the Coeur d' Alene Tribe has been initiated and is ongoing. The selected alternative is among those alternatives with the lowest risk of adverse environmental effects from land management activities on wildlife and fish habitat and subsistence resources. Site-specific implementation of the selected alternative is expected to maintain or improve big game and fish habitat, thereby improving hunting and fishing opportunities.

Based upon the analysis, we find our decision will not adversely affect human health or minority and low-income populations. There has been ample opportunity for participation in the analysis process and the implementation of this project will not subject anyone to discrimination because of his or her race, color, or national origin.

H. Roadless Area Conservation Rule

On July 14, 2003, the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming permanently enjoined the Forest Service from implementing the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. This decision has been appealed to the United States Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit by the defendant-intervenors. The court has not yet rendered a decision on this appeal. As a result, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule is not in effect and the respective forest plans for the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle national forests govern the management of inventoried roadless areas on the forests. Nevertheless, these amendments are consistent with the intent of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. The purpose of the amendments is to include in the respective forest plans a set of motorized access and security guidelines to meet our responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act to conserve and contribute to recovery of grizzly bears. As a result, the amendment will provide direction for restricting, barriering, and decommissioning existing roads, which should enhance and preserve existing roadless characteristics.

I. Administration of the Forest Development Transportation System – Roads Policy – 36 CFR Part 212 et al. (published in the Federal Register on January 12, 2001)

A roads analysis has been prepared for this project (Project Record, Volume 17, Transportation Analysis Section). We have determined that the selected alternative, complies with the Roads Policy.

IX. Implementation

These amendments will become effective seven calendar days following publication of the legal notice of this decision in the newspapers of record identified in the following section (*Review and Appeal Opportunities).*

X. Review and Appeal Opportunities

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 217. A written Appeal must be submitted within 45 days following publication of the notice of this decision in the following newspapers: 1) *Spokesman Review*, Spokane, Washington; 2) *Daily Inter Lake*, Kalispel, Montana; and 3) *Missoulian*, Missoula Montana. Send appeals to:

USDA Forest Service, Northern Region
Attn: Appeals Deciding Officer
P.O. Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59807

It is the responsibility of those who appeal a decision to provide sufficient written evidence and rationale to show why our decision should be changed or reversed. Appeals must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 217. 9, which state:

- The document is a Notice of Appeal filed pursuant to 36 CFR part 217;
- List the name, address, and telephone number of the appellant;
- Identify the decision about which the requester objects;
- Identify the document in which the decision is contained by title and subject, date of the decision, and name and title of the Responsible Official(s);
- Identify specifically that portion of the decision or decision document to which the requester objects;
- State the reasons for objecting, including issues of fact, law, regulation, or policy, and, if applicable, specifically how the decision violates law, regulation, or policy; and,
- Identify the specific change(s) in the decision that the appellant seeks.

For additional information concerning this decision, please contact: Kirsten Kaiser, 1101 Hwy 2 West, Libby, MT 59923 or Karl Dekome, 3815 Schreiber Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815. Additionally, the Final EIS and this Record of Decision are available on the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee website at http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/wildlife/igbc/.

Ranotta K. McNair

RANOTTA K. MCNAIR
Forest Supervisor
Idaho Panhandle National Forests

3/23/2004
Date

Bob Castaneda

BOB CASTANEDA
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3/23/2004
Date

DEBORAH L. R. AUSTIN
Forest Supervisor
Lolo National Forest

3/24/2004
Date

APPENDIX A

FOREST PLAN AMENDMENTS
CHANGES TO FOREST PLANS FOR THE IDAHO PANHANDLE NATIONAL FORESTS (IPNF), LOLO NATIONAL FOREST (LNF) AND KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST (KNF)

The following tables display how the IPNF, Lolo and KNF Forest Plans are amended by the decision to implement Alternative E, as displayed in the final EIS for Motorized Access Management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Bear Recovery Areas, in this ROD, and in the mandatory terms and conditions identified in the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) biological opinion (February 2004; See ROD Appendix B). Unless noted, changes are identified as only being applicable to lands within the Recovery Zones. Where specifically identified, changes are applicable to identified lands (see figure 1-2 in the ROD) outside of the Recovery Zones.

Table 1- Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) - Changes to Forest Plan

The first column of this table displays standards, goals and objectives identified in the 1987 IPNF Forest Plan. The second column of this table displays attributes of the Interim Rule Set which was utilized from January of 1999 (when it was issued by the Cabinet-Yaak/Selkirk Subcommittee of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee) until the settlement agreement with litigants on March 22, 2001 (FEIS Summary page S-5). This column also displays current implementation direction from the 1987 Forest Plan and 2000 Biological Opinion. The final column displays habitat security standards identified in the selected alternative. The habitat security standards identified in the Lolo Forest Plan are amended as a result of the Access Management decision.

Information in the table and footnotes to the table identify changes as a result of the biological opinion within and outside of the Recovery Zones. See ROD section V for additional information related to this amendment.

Table 1- IPNF Changes to the Forest Plan

IPNF FP 1987	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set & 2001 Forest Plan Biological Opinion (BO)	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Goals & objectives pgs: II-1, II-6 MA(1): 2,3,7,9,10,11 Forest Plan App. U & V	***No change to current Implementation Direction*** Identified in the IPNF Forest Plan included in -Appendix U & V 2001 Forest Plan Biological Opinion	Habitat Security Standards for Individual BMUs

IPNF FP 1987	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set & 2001 Forest Plan Biological Opinion (BO)	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Standards pgs: II-27 Strive for at least 70 sq miles Security habitat per/ BMU. **IGBC Guides (App U)** -Use CEM* to analyze effect (App V)	No change No change	No change No change
Habitat Effectiveness Forest Plan standard for HE (security) is to strive for at least 70 sq miles of security habitat for each BMU.	≥ 70% HE per BMU	[f1]Used to measure impacts of point source disturbances No HE standard
Displacement Area No standard identified in Forest Plan	Replace displacement area with core. See "core area" in this table.	See "core area" in this table.
Core Area Not identified in Forest Plan. Forest Plan identified "displacement area."	**Interim Rule Set:** > or = to 70% HE per BMU **2001 Forest Plan BO** For BMUs that contain at least 75% federal ownership, by 3/31/04, BMUs will contain 52% core habitat; by 3/31/07 BMUs will contain 55% core habitat. Until all BMU's achieve 55% core, all actions must result in improvement in core and no decrease in core in BMU's over 55%.	Numeric standard specific to each BMU. Consider seasonal needs; core fixed in place for 10 years minimum. In BMUs not meeting specific standard, projects affecting core must result in increased post-project core (1)(2).
Total Motorized Route Density (TMRD) No standard identified in Forest Plan	**Interim Rule set:** **No net increase on Forest lands within recovery area.** **2001 Forest Plan BO** **For BMUs containing at least 75% federal ownership, by 3/31/04, no more than 30% of each BMU can exceed 2 mi/sq mi; by 3/31/07** no more than 26% of each BMU can exceed 2 mi/sq mi.	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4, pg. 2-16). In BMUs not meeting their specific standard, projects affecting TMRD must result in post-project movement toward the standard.

IPNF FP 1987	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set & 2001 Forest Plan Biological Opinion (BO)	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD) No standard identified in Forest Plan	**Interim Rule Set** No net increase on Forest lands within recovery area. **2001 Forest Plan BO** For BMUs containing at least 75% federal ownership, by 3/31/04, no more than 36% of each BMU can exceed 1 mi/sq mi; by 3/31/07 no more than 33% of ea BMU can exceed 1 mi/sq mi	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4 p. 2-16). In BMUs not meeting specific standard, projects affecting OMRD must result in post-project movement toward the standard (3).
Administrative Use not identified in Forest Plan. Guidance from USFWS was to use 15 days per road per bear year and up to 15 days of equipment use on one road per bear year.	**Interim Rule Set** 115 round trips divided by season. A 30 day consecutive use period on one Priority 1 road that meets 55% core & in three Priority 2 BMU's that meet 70% security	57 round trips, divided by season
Habitat Based Access Mgmt Forest Plan objective pg.11-6: Grizzly bear mgmt will emphasize maintenance of adequate security in conjunction with providing the seasonal vegetative habitat components.	**Interim Rule Set** Explore habitat based access management approach. **2001 Forest Plan** Provide USFWS with the necessary information to allow completion of RSF* analysis by 1/31/02	Participate in workgroup to pursue habitat analysis
Grizzly Bear Use Outside Recovery Zones	Not Applicable	The ROD incorporates terms and conditions pertaining to linear open road densities (4).

*App.= Forest Plan Appendix
CEM= Unified Cumulative Effects Model (1990)
HE= Habitat Effectiveness
RSF= Resource Selection Factor
BMU= Bear Management Unit
MA= Management Area
MA2 = Consists of lands designated for timber production within identified grizzly bear habitat. .
MA3 = Consists of lands designated for timber production within identified grizzly bear habitat and big game winter range.
MA7 = Consists of lands designated for caribou management within identified caribou habitat.
MA9 = Consists of acres of non-forest lands, lands not capable of producing industrial products, lands physically unsuited for timber production, and lands capable of timber production but isolated by the above type lands or nonpublic ownership. These lands are characterized steep slopes, thin soils and surface rock or rock outcrops.
MA10 = Consists of a cross section of National Forest lands that have high value for semi-primitive recreation. These areas are in blocks of 2,500 acres or more and are part of the roadless resource of the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, with areas scattered throughout the forest. The areas range from dense forest to brush fields to open rocky ridge tops.
MA11 = Consists of existing and proposed wilderness areas on the Idaho Panhandle National Forests. This area includes the IPNF's protions of the existing (9,440 acres) and proposed (17,600 acres) Salmo-Priest Wilderness, proposed (23,900 acres) Scotchman Peaks, proposed Mallard-Larkins (78,500 acres) area and all of the proposed Selkirt Crest (26,700 acres) area.

(1) As a result of incorporating the terms and conditions of the biological opinion in this decision (see ROD Appendix B), standards for Core Area for BMU 13 and Blue Grass have been adjusted from the standards reflected in the final EIS for Alternative E. The adopted standards, per the USFWS BO are 60 and 55 percent, respectively.

(2) Losses of existing core habitat within individual BMUs shall be compensated for with in-kind replacement of core habitat concurrently with or prior to incurring the impacts to or loss of the existing core habitat. See biological opinion (ROD Appendix B), page 137, 1(B)iv.
(3) As a result of incorporating the terms and conditions of the biological opinion in this decision (see ROD Appendix B), the OMRD standard for the Blue Grass BMU was increased from 33 percent to 31 percent (i.e. there will be a decrease in the amount of open routes allowed to exist in the BMU).
(4) See biological opinion (or ROD Appendix B), page 138-139, 2(A)(B) for linear road density standards applicable to areas outside of the Recovery Zones.

Table 2- Lolo National Forest (LNF)- Changes to Forest Plan

The first column of this table displays standards, goals and objectives identified in the 1986 LNF Forest Plan. The second column of this table displays standards, goals and objectives identified in the LNF Grizzly Bear Management Strategy, which became effective in 1994. The third column displays attributes of the Interim Rule Set, which was utilized from January of 1999 (when it was issued by the Cabinet-Yaak/Selkirk Subcommittee of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee) until the settlement agreement with litigants on March 22, 2001 (FEIS Summary page S-5). The final column displays habitat security standards identified in the selected alternative. The habitat security standards identified in the Lolo Forest Plan are amended as a result of the Access Amendment Decision.

Information in the table and footnotes to the table identify changes as a result of the biological opinion within and outside of the Recovery Zones. See ROD section V for additional information related to this amendment.

Table 2- LNF Changes to the Forest Plan

Lolo Forest Plan 1986	Lolo NF Grizzly Bear Management Strategy 1994	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Goals and Standards (1) MA20 and 20a (2)	Meets requirements of Forest Plan (pp II-13-14, #24)	Current Implementation Direction- According to Policy Identified in Forest Supervisor Letter (2/28/96) and 5/24/96 BO	Habitat Security Standards for Individual BMUs
Linear Open Road Density Minimize road density, no permanent roads in key grizzly habitat, maintain roadside cover	≤1 mi/sq. mi by BMAA*, ≤0.75 mi/sq mi. on "high value" BMAAs	≤ 1 mi/sq. mi. by BMAA plus grizzly bear management strategy	No standard
Habitat Effectiveness No permanent roads in key grizzly habitat, maintain roadside cover	No standard	≥ 70% per BMU	Used to measure impacts of point source disturbance No HE standard
Percent cover No standard identified in Forest Plan	≥75% per BMAA	No change	No change (Lolo Strategy stays in place)
Displacement Area No standard identified in Forest Plan.	Required for each BMAA with an ongoing major activity	Replace displacement area with core. See "core area" in this table.	See "core area" in this table

Lolo Forest Plan 1986	Lolo NF Grizzly Bear Management Strategy 1994	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Opening Size is not a Forest Plan standard.	≤40 acres, can be larger if there are no permanent roads within ½ mile of the unit	No change	Existing implementation continues (see column 2)
Activity Scheduling No standard identified in Forest Plan	Major activity cannot occur more than 3 out of 10 years in a BMAA	No change	See core area below
Core Area No standard identified in Forest Plan.	No standard	No net loss of core on federal ownership in all BMUs. Criteria to replace lost existing core: 1) work to achieve 55% in Priority 1 BMUs, 2) consider seasonal needs, 3) flexibility to make major changes.	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4 p. 2-16). Consider seasonal needs, core fixed in place for minimum of 10 years. In BMUs not meeting their specific standard, projects affecting core must result in increased post-project core (3).
TMRD No Forest Plan standard identified	No standard	No net increase on Forest lands within recovery area	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4 pg. 2-16). In BMUs not meeting specific standard, projects affecting TMRD must result in post-project movement toward the standard.
OMRD No Forest Plan standard identified	No standard	No net increase on Forest lands within recovery area	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4 p. 2-16). In BMUs not meeting specific standard, projects affecting OMRD must result in post-project movement toward the standard.
Administrative Use Seasonal Closures on all roads in spring habitat	<14 days or road is considered open	115 round trips divided by season	57 round trips, divided by season

Lolo Forest Plan 1986	Lolo NF Grizzly Bear Management Strategy 1994	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Grizzly Bear Use Outside Recovery Zones	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	ROD incorporates terms and conditions pertain-ing to linear ORD (4).

(1)All Threatened and Endangered Species occurring on the Lolo including the grizzly bear ...will be managed for recovery to non-threatened status (Lolo Forest Plan p. II-13).
(2) MA= Management Area
MA 20=Grizzly bear habitat suitable for timber harvest
MA 20a=Grizzly bear habitat unsuitable for timber harvest
*BMAA= Bear Management Analysis Areas
BMU= Bear Management Unit
(3) Losses of existing core habitat within individual BMUs shall be compensated for with in-kind replacement of core habitat concurrently with or prior to incurring the impacts to or loss of the existing core habitat. See biological opinion (ROD Appendix B), page 137, 1(B)iv.
(4) See biological opinion (or ROD Appendix B), page 138-139, 2(A)(B) for linear road density standards applicable to areas outside of the Recovery Zones.

Table 3- KNF Changes to the Forest Plan

KNF Forest Plan 1987	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Kootenai Forest Plan 1987 Forest-wide goals MA 14 (1) and Forest Plan Appendix 8	Current Implementation Direction- According to Policy Identified in the1987 Kootenai Forest Plan Appendix 8, pages 6-9 (2) Plus Biological Opinions(3)	Habitat Security Standards for Individual BMUs
Forest Plan MA 14 Linear Open Road Density standard is $\leq$ 0.75 mi/sq.mi. by BMU* and BAA* (Forest Plan pg. III-60 and Forest Plan Appendix 8 pg. 12)	$\leq$ 0.75 mi/sq. mi. by BMU and BAA	No standard
Habitat Effectiveness is not a Forest Plan Standard but a measurement to assure compliance with ESA (Forest Plan Goal pg. II-1 #5) Goal is >70% sq. mi. per BMU	$\geq$ 70% per BMU	Used to measure impacts of point source disturbance No HE standard
Displacement area is a Forest Plan standard (Forest Plan pg. III-59 and Appendix 8 pg.10). Definition not provided in Forest Plan.	Replace displacement area with core. See "core area" in this table.	See "core area" in this table.

KNF Forest Plan 1987	12/1/98 Interim Rule Set	FEIS & ROD Selected Alternative E
Core Area Not identified in Forest Plan. Forest Plan identified "displacement area." See column above in this table.	No net loss of core on federal ownership in all BMUs. Criteria to replace lost existing core: 1) work to achieve 55% in Priority 1 BMUs, 2) consider seasonal needs, 3) flexibility to make major changes.	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4 p. 2-16) (4). Consider seasonal needs, core fixed in place for minimum of 10 years. In BMUs not meeting specific standard, projects affecting core must result in increased post-project core (5)(6).
Total Motorized Route Density (TMRD) not identified in Forest Plan	No net increase on Forest lands within recovery area	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4 p. 2-16). In BMUs not meeting specific standard, projects affecting TMRD must result in post-project movement toward the standard.
Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD) not identified in Forest Plan	No net increase on Forest lands within recovery area	Numeric standard specific to each BMU (FEIS Table 2-4 p. 2-16). In BMUs not meeting specific standard, projects affecting OMRD must result in post-project movement toward the standard.
Administrative Use not identified in Forest Plan. Followed Biological Opinion terms which identified 121 trips.	115 round trips divided by season	57 round trips, divided by season
Movement Corridor is a Forest Plan standard (Forest Plan pg. III-59, Appendix 8 p.10) Standard is to maintain at least 600' corridor between harvest units	No Change	No change as a result of Alternative E
Timing Constraint is a Forest Plan standard (Appendix 8 pg. 10)	No Change	No Change as a result of Alternative E
Grizzly Bear Use Outside Recovery Zones	Not Applicable	The ROD incorporates terms and conditions pertaining to linear open road densities (7).

(1) MA 14= Management Area 14. This MA occurs in the Cabinet Yaak grizzly bear ecosystem and in the Whitefish range. The goal of this MA is to maintain or enhance grizzly bear habitat, reduce grizzly/human conflicts, assist in the recovery of the grizzly bear, realize a programmed level of timber production, and provide for the maintenance or enhancement of other wildlife, especially big game.
(2) In all situations, strive to develop a grizzly management program which maintains and enhances identified grizzly bear habitat, incorporates relevant research and management information into all applicable activities, and supports the conservation and recovery of the species (Forest Plan Appendix 8 page 8-6).

- At least annually, the Kootenai will confer with the Fish and Wildlife Service on any changes that are needed in standards and guidelines (Forest Plan Appendix 8 page 8-7).
- Keep abreast of current research activities and data relating to grizzly bears and their habitat. Ensure that current, applicable data is incorporated in management activities (Forest Plan Appendix 8 page 8-8).
- Modify standards and guidelines as needed and with the cooperation of the Fish and Wildlife Service (Forest Plan Appendix 8 page 8-9).

(3) USFWS amended their biological opinion for the 1987 Forest Plan. See the project record for biological opinions providing clarification.
*BMU= Bear Management Unit
*BAA- Bear Analysis Area
(4) Numeric standard specific to each BMU as identified in the FEIS (Table 2-4 p. 2-16) have been modified as identified in the biological opinion (page 135, table 16). Core in BMUs 3, 5, 10 and 13 have been changed to 59, 60, 52, and 60, respectively.
(5)Losses of existing core habitat within individual BMUs shall be compensated for with in-kind replacement of core habitat concurrently with or prior to incurring the impacts to or loss of the existing core habitat. See biological opinion (ROD Appendix B), page 137, 1(B)iv.
(6) Applies to BMUs not meeting standards for core habitat. Term and Condition 1.C applies to those BMUs exceeding the standards for core habitat. See page 137-138 of the biological opinion and Appendix B of the ROD for terms and conditions identifying: (i) No permanent net losses of core habitat within any individual BMU and (ii) Temporary reductions of core habitat may occur under conditions identified in 1.C.(ii)a-d.
(7) See biological opinion (or ROD Appendix B), page 138-139, 2(A)(B) for linear road density standards applicable to areas outside of the Recovery Zones.

Appendix B

Terms and Conditions of the Biological Opinion for the Kootenai, Idaho Panhandle, and Lolo National Forests Land and Resource Management Plans Amendment for Motorized Access Management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones

I. Reasonable and Prudent Measures

The Service believes the following reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate to minimize impacts of incidental take of grizzly bears:

A. Grizzly Bear

1. Ensure that management activities and the associated transportation network maintain or create sufficient core area, maintain or reduce OMRD to acceptable levels, and maintain or reduce TMRD to acceptable levels within individual BMUs of the Selkirk Recovery Zone (SRZ) and Cabinet-Yaak Recovery Zone (CYRZ).
2. Reduce the potential for mortality and displacement of grizzly bears from occupied habitat in the mapped areas of grizzly bear occupancy outside of but adjacent to the CYRZ and SRZ.

II. Terms and Conditions

In order to be exempt from the prohibitions of section 9 of the Act, the Forests must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures (RPM) described above and outline the required reporting/monitoring requirements. These terms and conditions are non-discretionary.

A. Grizzly Bear

1. The following terms and conditions implement RPM A.1:

A. Table 1 contains the standards for all BMUs. Since funding or unplanned circumstances may affect completion by the dates identified below, the Forests shall meet with the Service annually to discuss progress made towards achieving the established standards for each BMU. For those individual BMUs currently deficient in core habitat, or exceeding (being worse than) the OMRD or TMRD standard, all standards as contained in Table 16 will be achieved in 35 percent of the BMUs by 12/31/2009, in 70 percent of the BMUs by 12/31/2011, and by 12/31/2013, all BMUs must equal or be better than the standards. While this provides some flexibility for the Forests to decide when and in which BMUs to improve conditions, emphasis should be given to achieving the identified standards by order of BMU importance (i.e., Priority 1 BMUs, followed by Priority 2 BMUs, followed by Priority 3 BMUs).

Table 1: Bear management unit standards.

BMU	BMU Priority	Maximum Percent OMRD>1mi/mi^2	Maximum Percent TMRD>2mi/mi^2	Minimum Percent Core
1	2	15	15	80
2	2	20	18	75
3	3	33	26	59
4	2	36	26	63
5	1	30	23	60
6	1	34	32	55
7	2	26	23	63
8	3	32	20	55
9	2	33	26	55
10	2	44	34	52
11	1	33	26	55
12	1	45	31	55
13 (Keno)	1	33	26	60
14 (Northwest Peaks)	1	33	26	55
15	1	33	26	55
16	1	33	26	55
17	2	33	26	55
18 (Boulder)	3	33	29	55
19 (Grouse)	3	59	55	37
20 (N. Lightening)	1	35	26	61
21 (Scotchman)	2	35	26	62
22	3	33	35	55
Blue-Grass	1	31	26	55
Long-Smith	1	25	15	67
Kalispell-Granite	1	33	26	55
Lakeshore	3	82	56	20
Salmo-Priest	2	33	26	64
Sullivan-Hughes	1	23	18	61
Myrtle	2	33	22	56
Ball-Trout	2	20	13	69

B. For all BMUs:

i. Core habitat must remain in place for at least 10 years to be functionally effective for grizzly bears. Therefore, except for emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances consulted on with the Service, newly created core habitat shall not be entered for at least 10 years after creation.

ii. Core habitat within BMUs shall not be impacted[20] (i.e., shifted, moved, etc.) by activities more frequently than once every 10 years, unless the activity is to decommission/stabilize an existing closed road (as described in 1.B.iii).

iii. The Forest Service may enter core habitat within a BMU more frequently than once per 10-year time frame for the sole purpose of completing road decommissioning/stabilization activities resulting in long-term improvements in core habitat. However, the effects of such additional entries will be analyzed pursuant to project level consultation and additional measures to minimize potential effects to grizzly bears may be required. Furthermore, such activities may only impact individual blocks of core habitat within a BMU once per 10-year timeframe per individual BMU.

iv. Except as described under 1.B.iii. and 1.C., impacts to or losses of existing core habitat within individual BMUs shall be compensated for with in-kind replacement of core habitat concurrently with or prior to incurring the impacts to or loss of the existing core habitat. Such in-kind replacement of core habitat will be created within the BMU in which the impact to or loss of core habitat will occur, and will remain in place for at least 10 years.

C. For those BMUs exceeding the standards for core habitat (being better than):

i. No permanent net losses of core habitat shall occur within any individual BMU.

ii. Temporary reductions of core habitat may only occur under the following conditions:

a. Temporary reductions of core habitat within individual BMUs shall not decrease core habitat below the minimum core habitat standard within any individual BMU, without compensation as described in 1.B.iv.

b. Activities resulting in temporary reductions of core habitat shall be compressed in time so that no more than 3 consecutive years of the 10-year time-span are impacted within individual BMUs. However, the effects of such activities will be analyzed pursuant to project level consultation and additional measures to minimize potential effects to grizzly bears may be required.

c. Temporary reductions of core habitat shall only occur once (i.e., one action/project) per 10-year timeframe per individual BMU, unless the activity is to decommission/stabilize an existing closed road (as described in 1.C.ii.d).

d. The Forests may enter core habitat within a BMU more frequently than once per 10-year time frame for the sole purpose of completing road decommissioning/stabilization activities resulting in long term improvements in core habitat. However, the effects of such additional entries will be analyzed pursuant to project level consultation and additional measures to minimize

[20] Impact to core: In kind replacement of core habitat may or may not mean actual acre for acre replacement of "impacted" core. Appropriate mitigation for "impacts" to core will vary dependent on site-specific effects determined through projectd level consultation.

potential effects to grizzly bears may be required. Furthermore, such activities may only impact individual blocks of core habitat within a BMU once per 10-year timeframe per individual BMU.

D. Roads closed to create core habitat will be put in a condition such that a need for motorized access for maintenance is not anticipated for at least 10 years. Until such closed roads are placed in the above-described condition, they will not be considered as contributing to core habitat.

E. Road use associated with completing administrative activities shall not exceed 57 vehicle round trips per active bear year per road, and shall be apportioned as follows: #19 round trips in spring (April 1 thru June 15); #23 round trips in summer (June 16 thru September 15); and #15 round trips in fall (September 16 thru November 15).

F..The Forests shall submit annual reports to the Service, due January 15 each year, detailing the progress made toward achieving and maintaining the standards for core habitat, and OMRD and TMRD within the Recovery Zones.

2. The following terms and conditions implement RPM A.2:

A. The Forests shall ensure no increases in linear open road (i.e., non-gated roads open to public use) densities on National Forest System Lands in any individual area of grizzly bear occupancy, above the baseline conditions identified in Table 2 (below). However, roads created, opened or reconstructed to facilitate land management activities may be opened to the public, immediately following completion of all harvest activities requiring use of the road, to allow personal firewood gathering for 30 consecutive days during either the month of July or August.

B. The Forests shall ensure no permanent increases in linear total road densities, above the baseline conditions identified in Table 2 (below). Temporary increases in linear total road densities are acceptable under the following conditions:

i. Newly constructed roads will be effectively gated and will be restricted with a CFR closure clarifying they are not open for public use.

ii. Roads closed to meet the no net increase in linear total road densities shall: 1) be closed immediately upon completion of activities requiring use of the road; 2) be effectively closed with a berm, guardrail or other effective measure; and 3) put in a condition such that a need for motorized access for maintenance is not anticipated for at least 10 years.

iii. Upon completion of a land management project, linear total road densities will return to the baseline levels contained in Table 17.

Table 2: Grizzly Bear Occupancy Areas adjacent to the CYRZ and SRZ; size and 2002 road density status.

Area	Total Size (mi^2)	Area on National Forest Lands Only (mi^2)	Linear Total Road Density on National Forest Lands Only (mi/mi^2)	Linear Open Road Density on National Forest Lands Only (mi/mi^2)
Priest	107	101	7.8	5.0
Pack River	35	32	2.6	0.6
Troy	68	8	2.6	1.2
Clark Fork	442	317	2.6	0.9
Cabinet Face	150	84	3.9	2.2
West	326	299	3.0	1.3
Tobacco	802	503	3.3	1.8
Libby[1]	290	144	3.4	1.9
Fisher	559	196	2.7	1.0
Deer Ridge	64	57	4.2	1.6

[1]Libby and Fisher Areas are outside the projected grizzly distribution area in the short term, but are included in this analysis to complete the process for lands associated with the CYRZ, per verbal agreement with the Service (September 26, 2002).

D. Timber harvest activities that will occur within multiple watersheds shall be scheduled such that disturbance of grizzly bears resulting from road use is minimized. The appropriate scale for scheduling harvest activities will be determined pursuant to project level consultation.

E. The Forests shall submit annual reports to the Service, due January 15 each year, summarizing actions taken to comply with terms and conditions implementing RPM A.2.

The reasonable and prudent measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, are designed to minimize the impact of incidental take that might otherwise result from the proposed Amendment, and continued implementation of the LRMPs. If the terms and conditions implementing the RPMs are not adhered to, this may indicate that the level of exempted take has been exceeded. The Service retains the discretion to determine whether this is the case and reinitiation of consultation is required. The Forests must immediately provide an explanation of the causes of the taking and review with the Service the need for possible modification of the RPMs.

CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Section 7(a)(1) of the Act directs Federal agencies to utilize their authorities to further the purposes of the Act by carrying out conservation programs for the benefit of endangered and threatened species. Conservation recommendations are discretionary agency activities to minimize or avoid adverse effects of a proposed action on listed species or critical habitat, to help implement recovery plans, or to develop information. The Service recommends that:

1. The Forests continue working with the IGBC to develop and implement a Food Storage Order, by December 31, 2005, to reduce the potential for grizzly bear/human conflicts. It would be prudent to implement such an order within the administrative boundaries of each Forest. Improperly stored food and garbage leads to food conditioned and habituated grizzly bears that generally result in their direct mortality or management removal. Attraction of grizzly bears to improperly stored food and garbage is identified by the Recovery Plan as one of the principal causes of grizzly bear mortality, and has been the ultimate reason for several mortalities of grizzly bears within the CYRZ and SRZ.

2. The Forests install grizzly bear information signs at major access points advising the public of grizzly bear presence, proper sanitation/food storage techniques, and providing information on distinguishing characteristics between grizzly bears and black bears.

3. The IPNF, in coordination with the Service and the Colville NF, evaluate for reconfiguration the BMUs that border the two Forests. Specifically, evaluate the appropriateness of reconfiguring the Salmo Priest, Sullivan-Hughes, Kalispell-Granite, and Lakeshore BMUs to more closely approximate the home range size of female grizzly bears within this Ecosystem (i.e., approximately 100 mi^2).

4. The Forests develop, in coordination with the Service and the IGBC, a strategy addressing point source disturbances (e.g., helicopter logging, mining, etc.).

5. The Forests work cooperatively with the Service to identify linkage areas that may be important in providing landscape connectivity within and between geographic areas, across all land ownerships for grizzly bears and Canada lynx.

6. The Forests conduct a moving windows analysis in the areas of grizzly bear occupancy outside of but adjacent to the Recovery Zones to better assess the potential effects of road densities upon grizzly bears in these areas.

7. Within linkage areas, the Forests provide for landscape connectivity by participating in the development and implementation of a management plan to protect and restore habitat connectivity within these areas on federal lands.

8. The Forests plan recreational development, and manage recreational and operational uses to provide for grizzly bear and Canada lynx movement, and to maintain effectiveness of grizzly bear and Canada lynx habitat.

9. The Forests identify and prioritize roads for reclamation or seasonal restrictions within watersheds exceeding > 2 mi/mi^2 of open road density to improve habitat quality and/or security for grizzly bears, Canada lynx, and bull trout, as well as other listed and non-listed fish and wildlife species.

10. The Forests continue to monitor, inventory, investigate and document the bull trout populations and spawning activities throughout the entire action area.

11. The Forests continue to reduce sediment inputs from roads and reduce road density throughout the action area to further minimize risk and impacts from sedimentation to bull trout.

12. The Forests identify those watersheds containing bull trout where the road density exceeds the AFunctioning Appropriately@ standards set forth in the Framework and attempt to bring those watersheds

into agreement with that standard.

13. The Forests rip the road base within the RHCA for all decommissioned roads to facilitate water infiltration rates and reduce surface flow and erosion within watersheds containing bull trout habitat, wherever appropriate.

14. Upon finalization of the Bull Trout Recovery Plan, the Forests review and implement all necessary and appropriate recovery objectives that pertain to meeting road density standards or other relevant standards.

In order for the Service to be kept informed of actions minimizing or avoiding adverse effects or benefiting listed species or their habitats, the Service requests notification of the implementation of any conservation recommendations.

ERRATA TO THE MOTORIZED ACCESS MANAGMENT FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (FEIS)

The following errors were identified after the release of the Final EIS for the Forest Plan Amendments for Motorized Access Management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones on the Kootenai, Lolo, and Idaho Panhandle National Forests. These minor changes do not affect the analysis in the Final EIS or the conclusions made in the Record of Decision (ROD) for this project.

Page B-3 of the Final EIS Bibliography

Losensky, J. 1993. Historical vegetation in Region One by climatic section. USDA Forest Service, Northern Region. Missoula, MT.

Modification

Losensky, J. 1992. Ecological and Historic Role of Fire. USDA Forest Service, Northern Region. Missoula, MT.

Page 3-88 of the Final EIS

Table xxxx shows the range of road miles per BMU that will have changes in access management.

Modification

Tables 3-21 and 3-22 show the range of road miles per BMU that will have changes in access management.

Page 3-125 of the FEIS, Table 3-45

Potential Effects on Weed Spread and Treatment Access

Alternative A	negligible change in potential for chance of weed spread, maintains existing access for treatment of weed infestations
Alternative B	access management would change on 150 to 200 miles of roads with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.
Alternative C	access management would change on 500 to 700 miles of roads with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.
Alternative E	access management would change on 360 to 510 miles of roads with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.

Modification

Potential Effects on Weed Spread and Treatment Access

Alternative A	negligible change in potential for chance of weed spread, maintains existing access for treatment of weed infestations
Alternative B	access management would result in the obliteration/reclamation of 139-197 (approx) miles of road with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.
Alternative C	access management would result in the obliteration/reclamation of 483-684 (approx) miles of road with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.
Alternative E	access management would result in the obliteration/reclamation of 362-509 (approx) miles of road with proportionate potential for changes in weed spread and treatment of infestations.

FEIS Quick Reference Card, Table: Specific Features of the Alternatives Considered in Detail, Row #8 Core Area

Row 8, column 4 (habitat security standards) reads: Consider seasonal needs; fixed in place for 10 years minimum.

Modification

Consider seasonal needs; *core* fixed in place for 10 years minimum.

Row 8, column 2 (proposed action, interim rule set) reads: No net loss on federal ownership in all BMUs, 4 criteria for core established to replace lost existing core, work to achieve existing core, work to achieve 55% in Priority 1 BMUs, consider seasonal needs, flexibility to make major changes.

Modification

No net loss of core on federal ownership in all BMUs. Criteria to replace lost existing core: 1) work to achieve 55% in Priority 1 BMUs, 2) Consider seasonal needs, 3) Flexibility to make major changes.

FEIS Tables 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, PAGES 2-8, 2-11, 2-14, 2-16

Alternatives A, B, C, E- Column % Federal Land- Grouse (19) BMU displayed as: 56

Modification

54

FEIS Table 2-6, Page 2-20

Table Appearing in FEIS

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative E
Transportation				
Miles of Open Road Changed to Restricted	160-161	167-172	59-86	18-26
Miles of Restricted Road Changed to Reclaimed/Obliterated	0	138-190	399-564	334-470
Total miles of road status changes.	160-161	306-369	563-795	385-540

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative E
Transportation				
Miles of Open Road Changed to Restricted	160-161	166-170	59-86	18-26
Miles of Restricted Road Changed to Reclaimed/Obliterated	0	138-190	385-547	334-470
Total miles of road status changes.	160-161	305-367	549-778	385-540

FEIS Table 3-19, Page 3-56

Table Appearing in FEIS

BMU	Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	Barriered Roads (IGBC 3)	Open Roads (IGBC 4)	Open Motorized Routes (IGBC 4 & 5)	Total Motorized Routes (IGBC 2, 4, & 5)
Kalispell-Granite	29	128	67	67	96
Totals	1877	1255	3203	3226	5103

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

BMU	Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	Barriered Roads (IGBC 3)	Open Roads (IGBC 4)	Open Motorized Routes (IGBC 4 & 5)	Total Motorized Routes (IGBC 2, 4, & 5)
Kalispell-Granite	113	34	77	77	190
Totals	1961	1161	3213	3236	5197

FEIS Transportation Section Addition

Miles Of Road For Each Forest For Each Ecosytem

	IGBC 1	IGBC 2	IGBC 3	IGBC 4	TOTAL	IGBC 5	IGBC 4 & 5	IGBC 2, 4, 5
CYE								
KNF	1237	951	779	1425	4392	14	1439	2390
IPNA	123	142	74	473	812	6	479	621
LNF	0	296	0	557	853	0	557	853
TOTAL CYE	1360	1389	853	2455	6057	20	2475	3864
SELKIRKS								
IPNF/CNF	819	508	101	627	2055	3	630	1138
ID state	43	64	207	131		0	131	195
Total SELKIRKS	862	572	308	758		3	761	1333
TOTAL ALL*	2179	1897	954	3082	8112			

*State lands are not included.
IGBC 1= impassable roads
IGBC 2= restricted roads
IGBC 3=barried roads
IGBC4=open roads
IGBC5= open motorized trails

Miles of Road For Each Forest For Each Ecosystem

IGBC CODES	KNF - CYE	IPNF - CYE	LOLO - CYE	SELKIRKS	TOTAL
OPEN ROADS (4)	1425	473	557	627	3082
RESTRICTED ROADS (2)	951	142	296	508	1897
IMPASSABLE & BARRIERED ROADS (1&3)	2016	197	0	920	3133
TOTAL	4392	812	853	2055	8112

*These figures do not include the ID State land for the Selkirks. IGBC 5 (motorized trails) are also not included in any of the calculations.

FEIS Table 3-22, Page 3-60

BMU	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
13	68	25	142	87	31	142
14	78	87	176	67	26	176
Kalispell-Lakeshore	117	30	427	117	30	427

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

BMU	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
13	68	25	142	67	26	142
14	78	87	176	77	88	176
Kalispell-Lakeshore	127	114	333	127	114	333

FEIS Page 3-61

Second Paragraph Reads: It is estimated that the implementation of this alternative would change approximately 167-172 miles of roads open year round to a restricted status during the active bear season, or as a minimum between April 15th and November 15th annually.

Modification

It is estimated that the implementation of this alternative would change approximately 167-177 miles of roads open year round to either reclaimed/obliterated/barriered or restricted status during the active bear season, or as a minimum between April 15th and November 15th annually.

FEIS Table 3-23, Page 3-62

BMU	From Open to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered	From Open to Restricted Road	From Restricted to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered
TOTALS	1-7	167-172	138-190

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

BMU	From Open to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered	From Open to Restricted Road	From Restricted to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered
TOTALS	1-7	166-170	138-190

FEIS Table 3-24, Page 3-63

BMU		Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
Kalispell-Lakeshore	IPNF	117	30	427	100-109	0	465-475

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

BMU		Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
Kalispell-Lakeshore	IPNF	127	114	333	110-119	84	371-390

FEIS Page 3-64

Second Paragraph Reads: To meet the core habitat and route density requirements of this alternative, approximately 399-564 miles of roads with existing seasonal restrictions would need to be reclaimed/obliterated/barriered.

Modification

To meet the core habitat and route density requirements of this alternative, approximately 385-547 miles of roads with existing seasonal restrictions would need to be reclaimed/obliterated/barriered.

FEIS Table 3-26, Page 3-65

BMU	From Open to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered	From Restricted to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered
12	20-30	15-25
Lolo NF (22)	42-52	126-158
TOTAL	105-145	399-564

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

BMU	From Open to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered	From Restricted to Reclaimed/Obliterated And Barriered
12	20-30	0-8
Lolo NF (22)	63-77	126-158
TOTAL	105-145	385-547

FEIS Table 3-27, Page 3-66

BMU	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
6	95	64	73	92~93	52~56	83~87
10	147	85	213	91~111	73-83	251~271
12	110	8	114	80~90	17~7	149-169
17	83	84	140	79~80	47~57	170~180
22	557	296	0	480-497	138~170	189-235
Blue-Grass	61	65	145	61	45-0	160-165
Kalispell-Lakeshore	117	30	427	100-119	0	465-474

IGBC 1= impassable roads; IGBC 2= restricted roads; IGBC 3=barried roads
IGBC4=open roads; IGBC5= open motorized trails

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

BMU	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
6	95	64	73	92~93	53~56	83~87
10	147	85	213	91~111	83	251~271
12	110	8	114	80~90	0-8	134-152
17	83	84	140	79~80	48~57	170~180
21	108	13	12	102~104	15-16	14~15
22	557	296	0	480-494	138~170	
Blue-Grass	61	65	145	61	45-50	160-165
Kalispell-Lakeshore	127	114	333	110-119	84	371-380

IGBC 1= impassable roads; IGBC 2= restricted roads; IGBC 3=barried roads
IGBC4=open roads; IGBC5= open motorized trails

FEIS Table 3-30, Page 3-69

BMU	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
20	78	15	88	69~71	22~24	9-12
Kalispell-Granite	67	29	364	67	0-3	390-393

IGBC 1= impassable roads; IGBC 2= restricted roads; IGBC 3=barried roads
IGBC4=open roads; IGBC5= open motorized trails

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

BMU	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3	Open IGBC 4	Restricted IGBC 2	Impassable/ Barriered IGBC 1 & 3
20	78	15	88	69~71	22~24	88
Kalispell-Granite	77	113	270	77	78-83	300-305

IGBC 1= impassable roads; IGBC 2= restricted roads; IGBC 3=barried roads
IGBC4=open roads; IGBC5= open motorized trails

FEIS Table 3-31, Page 3-72

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	3072	2911	2895	2841	3002
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	1813	1974	1793	1335	1355
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	3227	3227	3424	3936	3755

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	3082	2921	2905	2851	3012
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	1897	2058	1877	1436	1453
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	3133	3133	3330	3825	3647

FEIS Table 3-32, Page 3-72

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	1854	1693	1694	1717	1822
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	1026	1187	1048	756	771
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	2074	2074	2212	2481	2361
Total	4954	4954	4954	4954	4954

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	1425	1267	1265	1309	1402
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	951	1109	973	730	740
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	2016	2016	2154	2353	2250
Total	4392	4392	4392	4392	4392

FEIS Table 3-34, Page 3-73

Table 3-34 - Projected Road Mileage by IGBC Code by Alternative for Idaho Panhandle

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	661	661	644	644	661
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	491	491	449	441	423
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	1153	1153	1212	1220	1221
Total	2305	2305	2305	2305	2305

Modifications in Shaded Blocks

Table 3-34 - For the CabinetYaak Ecosystem

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	473	470	473	452	464
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	142	145	142	110	98
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	197	197	197	250	250
Total	812	812	812	812	812

Addition to Table 3-34 for the Colville National Forest for the Selkirk Ecosystem

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	627	627	610	610	627
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	508	508	466	458	434
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	920	920	979	987	994
Total	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055

Addition to Table 3-34 for the Colville National Forest for the Combined Ecosystem

IGBC Codes	Existing Miles of Road	Alternative A Miles	Alternative B Miles	Alternative C Miles	Alternative E Miles
Open Roads (IGBC 4)	1100	1097	1083	1062	1091
Restricted Roads (IGBC 2)	650	653	608	568	532
Impassable & Barriered Roads (IGBC 1 + 3)	1117	1117	1176	1237	1244
Total	2867	2867	2867	2867	2867

Addition to Transportation Section- Following Page 3-85

Table 1- Kootenai National Forest

Alternative	Open to barriered/reclaimed/ obliterated (miles)	Open to restricted (miles)	Restricted to reclaimed/obliterated
A	0	158	0
B	1-2	158	90-136
C	40-60	36-56	165-277
E	2-6	11-17	137-228

Table 2- Lolo National Forest

Alternative	Open to barriered/reclaimed/ obliterated (miles)	Open to restricted (miles)	Restricted to reclaimed/obliterated
A	0	0	0
B	0	0	0
C	63-77	0	126-158
E	31-38	0	95-115

Table 3- IPNF/Colville National Forests

Alternative		Open to barriered/reclaimed/ obliterated (miles)	Open to restricted (miles)	Restricted to reclaimed/obliterated
A	CYE	0	2-3	0
	Selkirks	0	0	0
	Total	0	2-3	0
B	CYE	0	0	0
	Selkirks	0-5	8-12	48-54
	Total	0-5	8-12	48-54
C	CYE	2-3	15-18	40-50
	Selkirks	0-5	8-12	53-62
	Total	2-8	23-30	93-112
E	CYE	0	7-9	42-53
	Selkirks	0	0	60-74
	Total	0	7-9	102-127

Table 4- Kootenai, Idaho and Lolo National Forest-Totals

Alternative*	Open to barriered/reclaimed/ obliterated (miles)	Open to restricted (miles)	Restricted to reclaimed/obliterated
A	0	160-161	0
B	1-7	166-170	138-190
C	105-145	59-86	384-547
E	33-44	18-26	334-470

*Includes the Colville National Forest.

The following two tables reflect changes to Alternative E as a result of the terms and conditions in the 2/04 biological opinion (BO). A 3% change in core (change from FEIS to BO) will result in 20-30 miles of open or restricted road changed to barriered/reclaimed/obliterated road. Specifically, 1-2 miles of open road and 19-28 miles of restricted road will be changed to barriered/ reclaimed/obliterated. Tables 2 and 3 (above) remain the same.

Table 1 (modified)- Kootenai National Forest

Alternative	Open to barriered/reclaimed/ obliterated (miles)	Open to restricted (miles)	Restricted to reclaimed/obliterated
A	0	158	0
B	1-2	158	90-136
C	40-60	36-56	165-277
E	3-8	11-17	156-256

*Shading indicates modifications.

Table 4 (modified)- Kootenai, Idaho and Lolo National Forest-Totals

Alternative*	Open to barriered/reclaimed/ obliterated (miles)	Open to restricted (miles)	Restricted to reclaimed/obliterated
A	0	160-161	0
B	1-7	166-170	138-190
C	105-145	59-86	384-547
E	34-46	18-26	353-498

*Includes the Colville National Forest. *Shading indicates modifications.

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