



# 1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

## 1.1 Introduction

The Nez Perce National Forest has prepared this Environmental Assessment in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4331 et seq.) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This Environmental Assessment (EA) discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives of the Salmon River Recreation Sites project.

This environmental analysis is tiered to and supplements the analysis in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) prepared for the Nez Perce National Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1987a), hereafter referred to as the Nez Perce Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1987b). The Nez Perce Forest Plan guides management of the Nez Perce National Forest. This environmental analysis is also tiered to and supplements the analysis in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (ROD) for the Boise National Forest, Payette National Forest, and Sawtooth National Forest Plan Revision (USDA Forest Service 2003b), hereafter referred to as the Payette Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 2003c). The Payette Forest Plan guides management of the Payette National Forest.

***In Chapter 1  
you will find:***

- *An introduction to the Salmon River Recreational Sites Renovation project*
- *Why we are proposing actions (the purpose and need for action)*
- *A description of our proposed action*
- *The scope of our proposal*
- *Criteria for making a decision*

The ID team initiated the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project in 2006. The ID team analyzed area conditions in the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area and developed the following Proposed Action based on that assessment.

## 1.2 Project Area Location

The Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area, about eight to 26 miles east of Riggins, Idaho, is located on public lands administered by the Salmon River Ranger District of the Nez Perce National Forest (Map 1). The Salmon River Ranger District of the Nez Perce National Forest administers the portion of the Krassel and McCall Ranger Districts of the Payette National Forest that occur in the project area (USDA Forest Service 2008). The Spring Bar Boat Ramp is located on the Nez Perce National Forest, and Carey Creek and Vinegar Creek Boat Ramps and Wind River Trailhead are located on the Payette National Forest. The entire project area lies in Idaho County, Idaho and can be accessed by the Salmon River road (Forest Road #1614).

The legal description of the project area includes portions of the following Sections: T24N, R3E, Section 15, T24N, R4E, Sections 2 and 3, and T25N, R5E, Section 31, Boise Meridian (Map 2).



The project area encompasses all proposed activities; however, not all acres located within the project area are proposed for treatment, nor is it necessarily the area that is analyzed for effects on each issue or resource. The project area delineates the geographic boundaries considered in the proposal. The analysis area is the total area resource specialists study for their effects analysis. The analysis area may or may not have the same boundary as the project area, depending on the scope of effects on the resource and availability of data.

**Map 1. The Vicinity Map for the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation Project.**

**See link on website for map.**



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**Map 2. The Project Area for the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation Project.**

See link on website for map.



## 1.3 Purpose and Need for Action

The **purpose** of the proposed action is:

To decrease congestion at recreation sites along the Salmon River road by improving parking, traffic flow and boat ramps, and developing changing areas. This action responds to the direction outlined in the Nez Perce Forest Plan to meet demand, and maintain or enhance existing sites (USDA Forest Service 1987b) and in the Payette Forest Plan to continue to develop, support, and improve private and public recreation and tourism programs (USDA Forest Service 2003c).

The Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project would enhance recreation sites to provide for user convenience, safety, maintenance or enhancement of Wild and Scenic Recreation River Corridor values, and reduction of impacts to natural resources.

The **need** for the Proposed Action is generated by the difference between current and desired conditions in the project area.

### 1.3.1 Current Conditions

Currently, the recreation sites along the Salmon River road do not meet the demand for parking, loading and unloading, and restroom and other improvements and facilities during much of the boating and trail use season. Employees of the Salmon River Ranger District have observed congestion regularly at the four recreation sites and received feedback from private parties, outfitter and guide businesses, and Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) members requesting improved facilities at Vinegar Creek, Wind River Trailhead, Carey Creek, and Spring Bar recreation sites, including:

- More parking and better traffic flow;
- Improved boat ramps:
  - Enlarged ramps: length and width
  - De-rigging areas; and
- Changing areas.

Typically, boaters use the Salmon River ten months out of the year, from mid-February through early December. Permits are required for those boating between Corn Creek and Long Tom Bar during the control season, which lasts from June 20 to September 7.

We estimate that 80% of the annual recreation site use occurs during the control season. While float boaters make up the vast majority of users, jet boat use also occurs. There are commercial and private river trips along the Salmon River as well as access for those residents who own property along the river. The Salmon River Corridor serves approximately 15,000-20,000 boaters a year. Of those, an estimated 12,000 to 15,000 would use the recreation sites we propose to renovate.

Currently, the lack of available parking spaces results in uncontrolled parking in undesignated areas, and user-created footpaths result as river users walk to their vehicles, resulting in soil erosion and vegetation disturbances.



The Wind River Trailhead is a popular trailhead used by both private parties and commercial outfitters. Currently, the lack of available parking, and restroom facilities, and the limited stock facilities reduce users' recreational experience. Additionally, the Huntz Gulch access road is difficult to negotiate, especially with a vehicle and trailer.

### 1.3.2 Desired Conditions

The improvements would provide for user convenience and safety, and reduce impacts to natural resources. The proposed improvements, including increasing parking areas, hardening or resurfacing sites, and improving the flow of vehicle and foot traffic at the recreation sites, satisfy user demand and meet Nez Perce Forest Plan direction to develop sites to meet demand, and maintain or enhance existing sites (USDA Forest Service 1987b). These improvements also meet Payette Forest Plan direction to continue to develop, support, and improve private and public recreation and tourism programs (USDA Forest Service 2003c).

Ground disturbance caused by current long term parking in undesignated area would be reduced, therefore reducing sediment entering the Salmon River from existing sources.

## 1.4 Proposed Action

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The Salmon River Ranger District of the Nez Perce National Forest proposes to renovate and upgrade facilities at developed sites located along the Salmon River from Spring Bar to Vinegar Creek. The Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area includes the specific locations with proposed improvements at Spring Bar Boat Ramp, Carey Creek Day use facility and Boat Ramp, Wind River Trailhead, and Vinegar Creek Boat Ramp.

The ID team designed the proposed improvements to provide for user convenience and safety, and reduce impacts to natural resources. Proposed improvements include increasing parking areas, hardening or resurfacing sites, and improving the flow of vehicle and foot traffic at the recreation sites by improving ramps, roads and pathways, and other facilities. These improvements would satisfy user demand and meet Payette and Nez Perce Forest Plans direction to develop recreation sites to meet demand, and maintain or enhance existing sites. The improvements would also reduce sediment entering the Salmon River from existing sources.

The actions specific to each recreation site are:

### 1.4.1 Spring Bar

1. CONSTRUCT NEW PARKING AREA
  - Add asphalt paved parking for eight vehicles on west end.
2. CONSTRUCT A NEW PATHWAY TO BOAT RAMP AREA
  - Add 102 square feet of accessible pathway, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
3. REPAIR EXISTING RAMP
  - Remove the center sections of the existing concrete ramp and replace with 2,400 square feet of concrete. Replace existing shoulder armor with a stem wall, a



concrete wall on the side of the ramp. Place barrier rock along ramp edges to prevent driving on beaches.

### 1.4.2 Carey Creek

1. WIDEN BOAT RAMP ENTRANCE BY 13,000 SQUARE FEET TO ACCOMMODATE A PASSENGER VEHICLE TOWING A TRAILER
  - Widen boat ramp entrance turning radius to accommodate traffic traveling west/downriver from 5,000 square feet to 18,000 square feet;
  - Widen existing access road from a single to a double lane.
2. IMPROVE VEHICLE TURNAROUND AREA (includes turnaround and new day use only parking for 8 vehicles)
  - Construct 10,238 square feet of new concrete vehicle turnaround area near ramp, increasing the total area to 21,650 square feet.
3. WIDEN EXISTING CONCRETE BOAT RAMP
  - Widen concrete ramp area from 5,200 square feet to 8,360 square feet.
4. CONSTRUCT STAIRCASE
  - Construct staircase, impacting 90 square feet.
5. CONSTRUCT NEW RESTROOM
  - Construct a double vault restroom with attached changing wings, occupying 300 square feet, within the 18,000 square feet area impacted for the entrance widening.
6. REALIGN CAREY CREEK RAMP ACCESS ROAD (roadway next to parking/concrete pad)
  - Shift Carey Creek ramp access roadway to the east to attain additional parking, increasing the roadway area from 2,670 square feet to 3,670 square feet (up to about 100 feet in length);
  - Recondition and gravel the first 50 feet of approach and construct drainage dip.
7. UPGRADE TWO EXISTING PICNIC AREAS
  - Maintain and improve two existing picnic sites;
  - Remove stone chimney and re-use chimney rock for retaining wall material;
  - Delineate path from the Salmon River roadway into picnic area;
  - Remove fire rings and replace with pedestal barbeques.

### 1.4.3 Wind River Trailhead

1. IMPROVE WEST PARKING AREA
  - Excavate 2,480 square feet of new area;
  - Gravel 6,980 square feet of parking area.



2. IMPROVE EAST PARKING AREA

- Excavate 750 square feet to extend existing parking area.

3. EXTEND EXISTING CULVERT

- Extend existing 18” culvert by ten feet to accommodate sediment catch basin for parking area runoff.

4. UPGRADE EXISTING STOCK FACILITIES

- Remove existing loading ramp, hitch rails, and feed bunks;
- Install two new feed bunks;
- Install two new hitch rails.

### 1.4.4 Vinegar Creek Boat Ramp

The following key will help readers understand the following descriptions of the proposed activities at Vinegar Creek.

Ramp Locator Description	
<b>Ramp A:</b>	Existing furthest upriver ramp with concrete panels
<b>Ramp B:</b>	Existing steep, short middle ramp
<b>Ramp C:</b>	Existing downriver ramp across from restroom that receives sand deposition
<b>Ramp D:</b>	Existing downriver ramp near re-fueling station
<b>Ramp E:</b>	Proposed new ramp between ramps A and B

1. REMOVE AND RELOCATE SAND

- Remove and relocate annual sand deposits. Relocate material to naturally occurring sand beaches downstream.

2. SURFACE AND DELINEATE EXISTING PARKING AREA (located approximately from Ramp C to Ramp A)

- Surface 27,900 square feet of existing hardened parking area from restroom upriver/east toward Ramp A with concrete;
- Create bus and vehicle turnaround (one-way traffic) within the 27,900 square feet proposed concrete area.

3. CONSTRUCT ACCESSIBLE PATHWAY TO RESTROOM

- Add 285 square feet new concrete path to restroom, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

4. CONSTRUCT NEW ANGLED PARKING AREA

- Clear vegetation;
- Place fill material;
- Excavate 5,248 square feet up to embankment;



- Construct stacked rock buttresses.
5. STABILIZE EXISTING CONCRETE BOAT RAMPS (Ramps B and C)
    - Stabilize Ramp B by constructing approximately 50 to 200 square feet of stem walls, concrete walls on the side of the ramp, below mean flow;
    - Stabilize Ramp C by replacing deteriorating panels at the end of the ramp below mean flow.
  6. WIDEN EXISTING CONCRETE BOAT RAMP A
    - Widen Ramp A from 3,195 square feet to 4,500 square feet.

Additional information on the Proposed Action is available in Chapter 2 under *Alternatives Considered in Detail* (Section 2.3.3).

## 1.5 Management Guidance

The Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project analysis and documentation of effects in this Environmental Assessment is consistent with direction found in the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and implementing regulations in 36 CFR 219; the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) implementing regulations under 40 CFR 1500-1508; the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and implementing regulations under 36 CFR 800; the Clean Water Act (Federal Water Pollution Control Act) together with implementing regulations under 40 CFR 130; the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 96-159 1531(c)) (ESA) and implementing regulations pursuant to 50 CFR 402.06 and 40 CFR 1502.25, and the Clean Air Act (CAA) and implementing regulations in 40 CFR 50.

### Management Practices

National Forest management must be consistent with forest plans prepared under authority of the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) (16 U.S.C. 1604 and 36 CFR 219.10).

#### 1.5.1 Nez Perce National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Nez Perce Forest Plan)

The Nez Perce Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1987b) established goals and objectives for the management of the Forest. The Nez Perce Forest Plan provides direction for developed recreation to construct additions to developed sites to meet demand, or to maintain or enhance existing sites (USDA Forest Service 1987b, p. VI-5). This direction applies to the Spring Bar Boat Ramp.

On February 24, 1995, the Chief of the Forest Service amended the Nez Perce Forest Plan in order to implement a strategy for managing anadromous fish-producing watersheds and National Forest lands. The provisions and management measures outlined in Nez Perce Forest Plan's Amendment Number 20 ("PACFISH" Amendment) apply to all proposed or new projects. Amendment 20 also applies to all ongoing projects that pose an unacceptable risk to anadromous fish. PACFISH is an ecosystem-based, aquatic habitat and riparian-area management strategy aimed at protecting and restoring Pacific salmon, steelhead, and bull trout



populations. The direction in Amendment 20 replaced Nez Perce Forest Plan direction in all cases except where existing Forest Plan direction provided more protection for anadromous fish and their habitat.

The proposed action follows Nez Perce Forest Plan direction as amended by PACFISH [Interim Strategies for Managing Anadromous Fish-Producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and Portions of California (USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management 1995)].

## Nez Perce Forest Plan Implementation

Nez Perce Forest Plan implementation includes the identification and scheduling of resource activities (site-specific projects) that meet the direction provided by the Nez Perce Forest Plan. These resource activities are necessary to meet the desired future condition defined in the Nez Perce Forest Plan.

Completion of the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project would transition the area toward desired future conditions (DFCs), as defined in the Nez Perce Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1987b). The following describes the DFCs and whether or not they are applicable to this project, and if so, where the ID team addressed them in this analysis, relative to the forestwide goals listed in Chapter II of the Nez Perce Forest Plan:

- *Resource outputs would be provided to help support the economic structure of local communities (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-1, Goal 1) – Not applicable to this project.*
- *Habitat would be provided to contribute to the recovery of Threatened and Endangered plant and animal species in accordance with approved recovery plans. Habitat would be provided to ensure the viability of those species identified as sensitive (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-1, Goal 4) – See Fisheries analysis (Section 3.6), Wildlife analysis (Section 3.8), and Rare Plants analysis (Section 3.9).*
- *The intrinsic ecological and economic value of wildlife and wildlife habitats would be recognized and promoted. A high quality and quantity of wildlife habitat would be provided to ensure diversified recreational use and public satisfaction (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-1, Goal 6) – Not applicable to this project.*
- *Air quality would be maintained (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-1, Goal 10) – Not applicable to this project.*
- *Significant prehistoric, historic, and cultural resources would be located, protected and interpreted (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-1, Goal 11) – See Heritage Resources analysis (Section 3.11).*
- *A stable and cost-efficient transportation system would be provided through reconstruction, maintenance, or transportation system management (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-1, Goal 12) – Not applicable to this project.*
- *Soil productivity would be maintained and any irreversible impacts to the soil resource would be minimized (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-2, Goal 18) – Not applicable to this project.*
- *Stream channel stability and favorable conditions for water flow would be maintained*



or enhanced (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-2, Goal 20) – See Watershed analysis (Section 3.7).

- Water of sufficient quality to meet or exceed Idaho State Water Quality Standards and local downstream beneficial uses would be provided (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-2, Goal 21) – See Watershed analysis (Section 3.7).
- Riparian-dependent resources would be protected or enhanced (Nez Perce Forest Plan II-2, Goal 22) – See Fisheries analysis (Section 3.6) and Watershed analysis (Section 3.7)

### Management Areas

The Nez Perce Forest Plan defines Management Area (MA) goals and standards that guide resource activities to achieve the resource objectives for each MA and the Forest. The MA objectives in the Nez Perce Forest Plan provide a framework for site-specific project planning and implementation. The Nez Perce Forest Plan contains 26 Forest-wide Management Areas. One is represented in the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area (Table 1-1).

**Table 1-1. Nez Perce Forest Plan Management Areas within Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation Project Area**

Management Area and Description		Percent of Project Area	Management Emphasis
7	Developed Recreation Sites	25*	Developed recreational opportunities (USDA Forest Service 1987b, III-15-16)

\*Recall, only the Spring Bar Boat Ramp recreation site occurs on the Nez Perce National Forest. An applicable management area description for the other three recreation sites is described in the Payette Forest Plan management guidance section.

Management Area 7 consists of 42 campgrounds, picnic areas, or other developed recreation sites. Also included in this Management Area are leased National Forest recreational facilities. Development ranges from an essentially natural environment with minimal facilities to a high degree of site modification with comfort and convenience facilities including paved roads, water systems, toilets, and boat ramps. These areas are not displayed on management area maps.

Nez Perce Forest Plan Goals for Management Area 7 are “Manage for developed recreation opportunities, providing interpretation and enhancement of cultural and natural resources. Maintain or enhance existing developed recreation sites.”

Nez Perce Forest Plan Standards for Management Area 7 applicable to the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project are displayed in Table 1-2.



**Table 1-2. Nez Perce Forest Plan Standards for Management Area 7**

Resource	Standard
<p>The Forestwide management direction included in Chapter II of this Plan applies to this management area.</p>	
<p><b>Forestwide Management Direction: Nez Perce Forest Plan Standards, as Amended</b></p>	
<p><b>Recreation</b></p>	<p>2. Provide for appropriate access based on an evaluation of user needs and a transportation analysis.</p> <p>3. Manage for a full array of recreation opportunities, from primitive to roaded natural, as described by the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS).</p> <p>10. Promote a "pack it in, pack it out" policy through signing and public education.</p> <p>13. Continue to develop, support, and improve private and public recreation and tourism programs.</p>
<p><b>Visual Resources</b></p>	<p>1. All landscape-altering activities will meet adopted Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs). Duration of visual impacts should meet the guidelines outlined for each VQO in Agriculture Handbook No. 462-Chapter 2.</p> <p>2. Visual Quality Objectives will be adopted during Forest Plan implementation. Interim VQOs developed during the Forest planning process will be compared to inventoried VQOs by interdisciplinary teams during project analysis. Adopted VQOs will be determined for the project area by the responsible official. Rationale for adopting VQOs included will be included in environmental documents for proposed projects. (USDA Forest Service 1989b; Amendment #4)</p>
<p><b>Cultural Resources</b></p>	<p>1. Survey all areas of potential land disturbance for cultural resources.</p> <p>2. Sites will be evaluated and protected on a site-by-site basis unless larger areas such as historic or prehistoric districts are involved.</p> <p>3. Ensure that Forest actions are not detrimental to the protection and preservation of significant Native American religious and cultural sites.</p> <p>4. Protect and preserve National Register and National Register-eligible cultural resources.</p> <p>5. The Forest Service and the Tribe will undertake a process of consultation to protect cultural sites of prehistoric or present use. The Forest Service will notify the Tribe of all land disturbing activities This notification will occur at a stage when the Forest Service's plans are sufficiently definite that the Tribe will be able to judge the possible location and extent of impacts to cultural sites. Notification will also include information of sufficient detail to allow the Tribe to determine if there may be potential adverse impacts to cultural sites. Notification will also be timed early enough in the decision making process so that the Forest Service will be able to alter its plans based on the Tribe's comments and suggestions. (Amendment #7, 1990)</p>
<p><b>Wilderness</b></p>	<p>1. Emphasize public education by utilizing wilderness education techniques, providing useful interpretive materials on wilderness values and ethics, and developing and distributing materials on no-trace camping.</p> <p>3. Provide the public the opportunity to join in management through appropriate use. Involve the public in preparing wilderness management plans and in monitoring implementation of these plans.</p>



Resource	Standard
<p><b>Wildlife and Fish</b></p>	<p>1. Maintain viable populations of existing native and desirable non-native vertebrate wildlife species.</p> <p>3. Monitor population levels of all Management Indicator Species on the Forest. These include bald eagle, grizzly bear, gray wolf, peregrine falcon, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, pileated woodpecker, goshawk, pine marten, fisher, westslope cutthroat trout, summer steelhead, and spring chinook. These species have been selected because (a) they are threatened and endangered; (b) they have special habitat needs that may be influenced significantly by planned management programs; (c) they are commonly hunted, fished, or trapped; (d) they are non-game species of special interest; or (e) their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management activities on other species of selected major biological communities or on water quality. Population levels will be monitored and evaluated as described in the Nez Perce Forest Plan Monitoring Requirements (Chapter V of the Nez Perce Forest Plan).</p> <p>5. Coordinate with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to achieve mutual goals for fish and wildlife resources.</p> <p>21. Meet established fishery/water quality objectives for all prescription watersheds as shown in Appendix A.</p>
<p><b>Water</b></p>	<p>1. Apply State water quality standards and "Best Management Practices" to land-disturbing activities to ensure State water quality standards are met or exceeded. In Idaho, "Best Management Practices," as defined by State regulation or agreement between the State and Forest Service, include the "Idaho Forest Practices Rules," "Best Management Practices for Road Activities," and "Rules and Regulations and Minimum Standards For Stream Channel Alterations." These documents are appended to, and are part of, this Nez Perce Forest Plan and are available upon request (see Appendix L).</p> <p>In the absence of established "Best Management Practices," activities will be conducted in a manner that demonstrates a knowledgeable and reasonable effort to minimize adverse water quality impacts.</p> <p>3. Evaluate site-specific water quality effects as part of project planning. Design control measures to ensure that projects will meet Forest water quality goals; projects that will not meet State water quality standards shall be redesigned, rescheduled, or dropped.</p> <p>8. Meet established fishery/water quality objectives for all prescription watersheds as shown in Appendix A.</p>
<p><b>Soils</b></p>	<p>1. Evaluate the potential for soil displacement, compaction, puddling, mass wasting, and surface soil erosion for all ground-disturbing activities.</p> <p>2. A minimum of 80 percent of an activity area shall not be detrimentally compacted, displaced, or puddled upon completion of activities. This direction does not apply to permanent recreation facilities and other permanent facilities such as system roads.</p> <p>3. Maintain sufficient ground cover to minimize rill erosion and sloughing on road cut and fill slopes and sheet erosion on other activity areas.</p>



# Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation Environmental Assessment



Resource	Standard
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Riparian</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allow no management practices in riparian areas that will cause detrimental changes in water temperature or chemical composition, blockages of water courses, or deposits of sediment that seriously and adversely affect water conditions and fish habitat. (See 36 CFR 219.27a)</li> <li>2. Give preferential consideration to riparian-area-dependent resources in cases of unresolvable conflict (resources such as fish, certain wildlife, certain water-dependent vegetation, and water are totally dependent upon riparian areas). (See FSM 2526.03--2) Actions within or affecting riparian areas will include protection and, where applicable, improvement of riparian-dependent resources.</li> <li>3. Effects on wetlands and flood plains must be considered for all alternatives during the environmental analysis process. (See Executive Orders 11988 and 11990)</li> <li>4. Delineate and evaluate riparian areas in project areas prior to implementing any project activity (FSM 2526.03--3).</li> <li>5. Manage riparian areas to maintain cover and security for riparian-dependent species with emphasis on habitats for threatened and endangered species. Use "Guidelines for Evaluating and Managing Summer Elk Habitat in Northern Idaho" to evaluate the need for and to provide adequate hiding cover and security areas for big game. Biological evaluations, during site-specific project analysis, shall identify needs and recommendations. (USDA Forest Service 1989a; Amendment #3)</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain or enhance the recreation, visual, wildlife, fisheries, and water quality values of the existing and proposed "Wild," "Scenic," and "Recreation" Rivers.</li> <li>2. No management activities will be carried out that would alter the eligibility or potential classification of study waterways. NOTE: The statement about impoundments that was in this standard is now covered in #10.</li> <li>3. The Wild and Scenic corridor is defined as an area extending the length of the river segment and 1/4 mile in width from each bank of the river. Boundaries may include adjacent areas needed to protect the resources or facilitate management of the river corridor.</li> <li>4. In eligible and existing "Wild" river corridors, new road construction and timber harvest are excluded. In eligible "Scenic" river corridors, roads may occasionally bridge the river. Short stretches of conspicuous or long stretches of inconspicuous and well-screened roads could be allowed. Timber harvest can be allowed; however, the existing character and visual condition of the river corridor shall be maintained. Special emphasis will be placed on visual quality for activities within seen areas outside of the river corridors. In eligible and existing "Recreational" river corridors, roads are allowed. Consideration will be given to the type of use and protection of resource values within the river corridor. Timber harvest can be allowed; however, the existing character and visual condition of the immediate river corridor shall be maintained.</li> <li>6. Manage for recreation experiences in context with the existing or proposed designation. "Wild" - primitive or semiprimitive nonmotorized. "Scenic" - semiprimitive motorized or semiprimitive nonmotorized. "Recreation" - semiprimitive motorized or roaded natural.</li> <li>7. Encourage participation and cooperation of public and private landholders in the study and implementation of river classification on non-National Forest lands.</li> <li>8. Cultural resource surveys for location and identification of significant resources are encouraged. (USDA Forest Service 1988b; Amendment #1)</li> </ol>
<b>Management Area 7 Standards</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RECREATION Developed Recreation  Visual Resource</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manage developed campgrounds at least to reduced service levels, except for fee campgrounds which will be managed at full service level. Emphasize health, safety, and resource problems.</li> <li>2. Make selected developed sites accessible to physically disadvantaged individuals during the first decade.</li> <li>3. Adopted VQOs established during Plan implementation will recognize the high visual sensitivity of these use areas. This text reflects changes made by Amendment #4 (USDA Forest Service 1989b).</li> <li>4. Analyze the need for species diversity and screening in developed and dispersed recreation sites. Plant where planning indicates need.</li> </ol>



Resource	Standard
<b>LANDS</b> Special Use Permits	1. Encourage the use of permits in providing recreation opportunities.
<b>RANGE</b> Range Management	1. Exclude grazing of domestic livestock during the use season.
<b>TIMBER</b> Timber Harvest	1. Lands are classified as "unsuitable" for timber management; do not schedule timber harvest. 2. Remove hazard trees.
<b>WATER</b>	1. Meet established fishery/water quality objectives for all prescription watersheds as shown in Appendix A.
<b>FACILITIES</b> Roads Trails	1. Construct and maintain as needed. 2. Maintain existing trails commensurate with use. Reconstruct to provide public safety and reduce environmental damage.

### 1.5.2 Payette National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Payette Forest Plan)

The Payette Forest Plan provides direction to plan and manage the recreational program to meet established standards to provide for health and cleanliness, safety and security, facility conditions, responsiveness to customers, environmental setting, and permit administration, and to manage recreation uses and facilities to mitigate degrading effects from recreation to other resources (USDA Forest Service 2003c, p. III-62). This direction applies to the sites at Carey Creek Boat Ramp, Wind River Trailhead, and Vinegar Creek Boat Ramp.

#### Payette Forest Plan Implementation

Payette Forest Plan implementation includes the identification and scheduling of resource activities (site-specific projects) that meet the direction provided by the Payette Forest Plan. These resource activities are necessary to meet the desired future conditions defined in the Payette Forest Plan.

Completion of the project would transition the area toward the desired future conditions (DFCs), as defined in the Payette Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 2003c). The following describes the DFCs and whether or not they are applicable to this project, and if so, where they are addressed in this analysis, relative to the forestwide goals listed in Chapter III of the Payette Forest Plan (III-6 to III-77):

- *A broad range of developed and dispersed recreational opportunities and experiences would be managed, operated, and maintained in the recreational program (REG001) – See Recreation (Section 3.4) and Visual Resources (Section 3.5) analyses.*
- *Established standards would be met to provide for health and cleanliness, safety and security, facility conditions, responsiveness to customers, environmental setting, and permit administration (REG002) – See Recreation (Section 3.4) and Visual Resources (Section 3.5) analyses.*
- *Recreational conflicts would be addressed, while maintaining recreational*



- opportunities (REG003)* – See Recreation (Section 3.4) and Visual Resources (Section 3.5) analyses.
- *Degrading effects to other resources would be mitigated (REG004)* – See Fisheries (Section 3.6), Watershed (Section 3.7), Wildlife (Section 3.8), Rare Plants (Section 3.9), Weeds and Non-Native Vegetation (3.10), and Heritage Resources (Section 3.11) analyses.
  - *Travel-related facilities would be managed to provide for public safety, meet resource objectives and access needs, mitigate road and trail damage, and minimize maintenance costs and user conflicts (REG005)* – See Recreation (Section 3.4), Visual Resources (Section 3.5), and Watershed (Section 3.7) analyses.
  - *Recreation operations provide opportunities, facilities, and services that respond to a demonstrated public need while mitigating conflicts with other uses and resources (REG007)* – See Recreation (Section 3.4), Visual Resources (Section 3.5), Fisheries (Section 3.6), Watershed (Section 3.7), Wildlife (Section 3.8), Rare Plants (Section 3.9), Weeds and Non-Native Vegetation (3.10), and Heritage Resources (Section 3.11) analyses.
  - *Human-caused disturbances would be managed to avoid or reduce degrading effects to aquatic populations, particularly during critical life stages (SWG011)* – See Fisheries (Section 3.6) and Watershed (Section 3.7) analyses.
  - *Human-caused disturbances that cause undesirable effects to wildlife populations during critical life stages would be reduced (WIG002)* – See Wildlife analysis (Section 3.8).
  - *Plant community habitats would be managed to provide for the desired amount, quality, and distribution of habitats, reduced fragmentation within habitats, juxtaposition and connectivity to other habitats, and ecosystem processes (BTG006)* – See Rare Plants (Section 3.9) and Weeds and Non-Native Vegetation (Section 3.10) analyses.
  - *Noxious weed would be managed with an Integrated Weed Management approach (NPG001)* – See Weeds and Non-Native Vegetation (Section 3.10) analysis.
  - *Livestock grazing would be coordinated with other resources to address conflicts (RAG006)* – See Table 3-12 (Section 3.12).
  - *Safe and efficient Forest facilities would be provided and maintained (FRG001)* – See Recreation (Section 3.4) and Visual Resources (Section 3.5) analyses.
  - *The Heritage Program will be integrated into land and resource management (HPG003)* – See Heritage Resources analysis (Section 3.11).
  - *Recreational and visual resource values would be maintained while managing the Forest's scenic resources (SCG001)* – See Recreation (Section 3.4) and Visual Resources (Section 3.5) analyses.
  - *Wilderness values would be protected (WRG001)* – See Recreation (Section 3.4) and Visual Resources (Section 3.5) analyses.



- *River segments that are eligible or suitable for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be managed to meet the requirement of the Wild and Scenic River Act (WSG001) – See Recreation (Section 3.4) and Visual Resources (Section 3.5) analyses.*

## Management Areas and Management Prescription Categories within the Project Area

### Management Areas

Management Area direction is designed to tier to Forest-wide direction, and to meet Forest-wide goals and desired conditions. However, Management Area direction is intended to be more specific, addressing specific concerns related to each program area.

The Payette Forest Plan defines Management Area (MA) standards that guide resource activities to achieve the resource objectives for each MA and the Forest. The MA objectives in the Payette Forest Plan provide a framework for site-specific project planning and implementation. The Payette Forest Plan contains 14 Management Areas. One is represented in the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area (Table 1-3).

**Table 1-3. Payette Forest Plan Management Areas within Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation Project Area**

Management Area and Description		Percent of Project Area	Management Emphasis
10	Fall Creek/Warren Creek	75*	<i>Management Prescription Categories within the Project Area:</i> 3.2 – Passive Restoration and Maintenance of Aquatic, Terrestrial & Hydrologic Resources 5.1 – Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Forested Landscapes USDA Forest Service 2003c, pp. III-214-227)

\*Recall, only the Carey Creek Boat Ramp, the Wind River Trailhead, and the Vinegar Creek Boat Ramp recreation sites occur on the Payette National Forest. An applicable management area description for the Spring Bar Boat Ramp recreation site is described in the Nez Perce Forest Plan management guidance section.

Management Area 10 is comprised of Payette National Forest system lands along the Salmon River and the area lies almost entirely in Idaho County. Although, Management Area 10 consists of Management Prescription Categories (MPCs) 3.2 and 5.1 within the project area, these MPCs do not apply to this project because the project sits in the excepted administrative MPC 2.1 (Wild and Scenic River Corridor) and MPC 4.2 (Roaded Recreation Emphasis), as described below.

### Management Prescription Categories

A second type of standards and guidelines relates to Management Prescription Categories (MPCs) found within a Management Area. Management Prescription Categories are intended to show general management emphasis prescribed for a given area, and varying degrees of constraints on the types and intensity of management practices. There are exceptions within the MPCs, as some administrative areas (Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River corridors) are managed according to the laws or policies governing their establishment. In addition, many distinctive areas may have different management requirements than the overall MPC direction. An example relevant to this project includes recreation sites. Applicable MPCs for this project follow:



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### *MPC 2.1 Wild and Scenic Rivers and Their Corridors*

Wild and Scenic Rivers and their corridors are managed to protect their free-flowing waters, outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs), and their classification status. The ORVs for the Salmon River “Wild” and “Recreational” stretches are fish and wildlife, historical and cultural, recreational, scenic, and water of high quality.

The Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area is outside the designated Wild and Scenic River portion of the Salmon River, however it is located in an “eligible” recreational section. Under the Payette Forest Plan goals, river segments that are eligible or suitable for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be managed to meet the requirement of the Wild and Scenic River Act.

There are no Forest Plan standards specific to MPC 2.1, but the forestwide management direction included in Chapter III of the Forest Plan applies to this MPC (USDA Forest Service 2003c, p. III-80).

### *MPC 4.2 Roaded Recreation Emphasis*

This prescription applies to lands where dispersed and developed recreational uses are the primary emphasis. A wide range of recreational activities and developments occur. Facilities are maintained, and both motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities may be provided.

The one Forest Plan standard for MPC 4.2 is in reference to vegetation management actions, and does not apply to this project. The forestwide management direction included in Chapter III of the Forest Plan applies to this MPC (USDA Forest Service 2003c, p. III-80).

### ***Management Area and Management Prescription Category Forest Plan Standards***

Table 1-4 displays Management Area and Management Prescription Category Forest Plan Standards applicable to the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project.



**Table 1-4. Payette Forest Plan Standards**

Resource Area	Standard
<p>The Forestwide management direction included in Chapter III of this Plan applies to this management area.</p>	
<p><b>Forestwide Management Direction: Payette Forest Plan Standards</b></p>	
<p><b>Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate Species</b></p>	<p>TEST01 The Forest shall consult with the NMFS and Fish and Wildlife Service as needed, and appropriate, to comply with consultation requirements under the Endangered Species Act and Magnuson-Stevens Act.</p> <p>TEST06 Management actions shall be designed to avoid or minimize adverse effects to listed species and their habitats. For listed fish species, use Appendix B for determining compliance with this standard.</p> <p>TEST08 Avoid management actions within occupied TEPC plant species habitat that would adversely affect the long term persistence of those species</p> <p>TEST13 Mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, management actions within known winter roosting sites of TEPC species if those actions would adversely affect the survival of wintering or roosting populations. During project planning, determine sites, periods, and appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimize effects.</p> <p>TEST33 Where it is documented that float -boating activities may have an adverse effect on TEPC species, consult with USFWS and/or NMFS to determine what action is appropriate and necessary to minimize or avoid those effects.</p>
<p><b>Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic Resources</b></p>	<p>SWST01 Management actions shall be designed in a manner that maintains or restores water quality to fully support beneficial uses and native and desired non-native fish species and their habitat, except as allowed under SWRA Standard #4 below. Use the MATRIX located in Appendix B to assist in determining compliance with this standard.</p> <p>SWST04 Management actions will neither degrade nor retard attainment of properly functioning soil, water, riparian, and aquatic desired conditions, except:</p> <p>a) Where outweighed by demonstrable short- or long term benefits to watershed resource conditions; or</p> <p>b) Where the Forest Service has limited authority (e.g., access roads, hydropower, etc.). In these cases, the Forest Service shall work with permittee(s) to minimize the degradation of watershed resource conditions.</p> <p>Use the MATRIX located in Appendix B to assist in determining compliance with this standard.</p> <p>SWST10 Trees or snags that are felled within RCAs must be left unless determined not to be necessary for achieving soil, water, riparian, and aquatic desired conditions. Felled trees or snags left in RCAs shall be left intact unless resource protection (e.g., the risk of insect infestation is unacceptable) or public safety requires bucking them into smaller pieces.</p> <p>SWST11 Do not authorize storage of fuels and other toxicants or refueling within RCAs unless there are no other alternatives. Storage of fuels and other toxicants or refueling sites within RCAs shall be approved by the responsible official and have an approved spill containment plan commensurate with the amount of fuel.</p>



## Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation Environmental Assessment



Resource Area	Standard
<b>Wildlife</b>	<p>WISTO2 Design and implement projects within occupied habitats of Sensitive species to help prevent them from becoming listed. Use Forest Service-approved portions of Conservation Strategies and Agreements, as appropriate, in the management of Sensitive species habitat to keep management actions from contributing to a trend toward listing for these species.</p> <p>WISTO3 Mitigate management actions within known nesting or denning sites of MIS or Sensitive species if those actions would disrupt the reproductive success of those sites during the nesting or denning period. Sites, periods, and mitigation measures shall be determined during project planning.</p>
<b>Botanical Resources</b>	<p>B15103 Design and implement projects to meet the Forest Service approved portions of Conservation Strategies and Agreements for Sensitive species.</p>



Resource Area	Standard
<p><b>Non-Native Plants</b></p>	<p>NPST01 Only certified noxious weed-free hay, straw, or feed is allowed on National Forest System lands.</p> <p>NPST02 All seed used on National Forest System lands will be certified to be free of seeds from noxious weeds listed on the current <i>All States Noxious Weeds List</i>.</p> <p>NPST03 To prevent invasion/expansion of noxious weeds, the following provisions will be included in all special use authorizations, timber sale contracts, service contracts, or operating plans where land-disturbing activities are associated with the authorized land use (additional direction may be found in timber sale and service contract provisions and in Forest Service handbooks):</p> <p>a) Revegetate areas, as designated by the Forest Service, where the soil has been exposed by ground-disturbing activity. Implement other measures, as designated by the Forest Service, to supplement the influence of re-vegetation in preventing the invasion or expansion of noxious weeds. Potential areas would include: construction and development sites, underground utility corridors, skid trails, landings, firebreaks, slides, slumps, temporary roads, cut and fill slopes, and traveled ways of specified roads.</p> <p>b) Earth-disturbing equipment used on National Forest System lands--such as cats, graders, and front-loaders--shall be cleaned to remove all visible plant parts, dirt, and material that may carry noxious weed seeds. Cleaning shall occur prior to entry onto the project area and again upon leaving the project area, if the project area has noxious weed infestations. This also applies to fire suppression earth- disturbing equipment contracted after a WFS/WFIP has been completed.</p> <p>NPST04 Contractors, with the exception of fire suppression prior to completion of WFS/WFIP, shall be required to clean earth-disturbing, construction, and road maintenance equipment, of all sizes, to remove all plant parts, dirt, and material that may carry noxious weed seeds, prior to entry onto the Forest, or movement from one Forest project area to another.</p> <p>NPST07 Source sites for gravel and borrow materials shall be inspected for noxious weeds before materials are processed, used, or transported from the source site into the project area or onto the National Forest.</p> <p>NPST08 Gravel or borrow material source sites with noxious weed species present shall not be used, unless effective treatment or other mitigation measures are implemented.</p> <p>NPST09 The Forest shall comply with the intent and direction established in the above provisions or clauses in a manner similar to that required of contractors or permittees.</p> <p>NPST10 Projects that may contribute to the spread or establishment of noxious weeds shall include measures to reduce the potential for spread and establishment of noxious weed infestations.</p> <p>NPST12 Implement the Forest Noxious Weed Management Plan upon completion.</p>



Resource Area	Standard
<p><b>Recreation</b></p>	<p>RESTO 1 Where Primitive, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized, and Semi-Primitive Motorized ROS classes occur within designated wilderness areas, follow the wilderness management direction contained in the appropriate wilderness management plans.</p> <p>RESTO2 When new recreation facilities and trails must be located in RCAs, they shall be developed such that degrading effects to RCAs are mitigated. Where reasonable and practical location alternatives exist, new recreation facilities and trails should be located outside of RCAs.</p> <p>RESTO3 Access will be managed in accordance with the existing travel management maps and amendments, or as authorized by permit, contract, or special-use authorization.</p>
<p><b>Scenic Environment</b></p>	<p>SCSTO1 All projects shall be designed to meet the adopted Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) as displayed on the Forest VQO map.</p>
<p><b>Heritage Program</b></p>	<p>HPSTO1 Review undertakings that may affect cultural resources to identify potential impacts. Compliance with Sections 106 and 110 of the NHPA shall be completed before the responsible agency official signs the project decision document.</p> <p>HPSTO2 Conduct cultural resource inventories in consultation with the appropriate Tribal and State Historic Preservation Offices and other individuals and organizations likely to have knowledge of historic properties in the area.</p>
<p><b>Tribal Rights and Interests</b></p>	<p>TRSTO1 Affected tribes shall be consulted prior to or during initial scoping of site-specific project proposals in order to identify tribal interests</p> <p>TRSTO5 Decisions for environmental documents shall demonstrate how tribal interests raised during consultation or scoping were considered.</p>
<p><b>Wild and Scenic Rivers</b></p>	<p>WSSTO1 When management actions are proposed that may compromise the outstandingly remarkable value, classification, or free-flowing character of an eligible Wild and Scenic River segment, a suitability study must be completed for that eligible river segment prior to initiating the actions.</p> <p>WSSTO2 Assign VQOs to the classifications of eligible, suitable, and designated Wild and Scenic River corridors as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Preservation to a Wild classification,</li> <li>b) Retention to a Scenic classification,</li> <li>c) Partial Retention to a Recreational classification.</li> </ul>

### 1.5.3 Interior Columbia River Basin Science Assessment of 1996

The Interior Columbia River Basin Science Assessment (ICRB) (Quigley et al. 1997) provides an evaluation of the health of the Upper Columbia River Basin. The report was used as the first step in the development of a scientifically sound, ecosystem-based management strategy for Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management administered lands within the Basin. While this document presents a general appraisal of the area, it does not provide specific instructions



for managing the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area.

### **1.5.4 The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (W&SRA) of 1968**

Under the *National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968* (W&SRA) (16 USC 1271-1287), amended in 1992, selected rivers in the United States are preserved in their free-flowing condition and their outstandingly, remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values are protected. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (W&SRA) declares a three-fold purpose to designate and preserve rivers: free-flowing condition, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs).

Designation as a Wild and Scenic River does not confer the same level of protection as a Wilderness Area designation. Instead of enacting mandatory conservation measures, the goal is often to preserve the character of a river.

The three river classifications provided by the W&SRA are “Recreational,” “Scenic,” and “Wild,” with wild being the most primitive and restrictive classification. The “Recreational” classification characterizes rivers that are readily accessible by road that may have some development along shorelines.

In 1968, Congress established the National W&SR System, with eight initial components. Reports to Congress also named rivers to be studied for potential designation as “Wild” or “Scenic” rivers. The 237-mile stretch of the Salmon River downstream from North Fork was one of these.

A potential designation study was accomplished in conjunction with the wilderness potential studies of the adjacent Idaho and Salmon River Breaks Primitive Areas. These studies were completed in 1974, with the recommendation that the Salmon River be included in the National W&SR System.

In addition to establishing the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness (FC-RONRW) (see below), the CIWA of 1980 amended the W&SRA to add the part of the Salmon River between North Fork and Long Tom Bar to the W&SR system, as “Recreational” and “Wild” river segments.

The portion of the river in the project area of the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project, however, remains an eligible “Recreational” segment.

### **1.5.5 The 1978 Gospel-Hump Wilderness**

In 1978, Congress recognized 206,053 acres of undeveloped federal land east of Riggins, Idaho, and north of the main Salmon River as a special area and designated it the Gospel-Hump Wilderness. Since then, the area has been managed to preserve its natural condition and to provide opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

### **1.5.6 The Central Idaho Wilderness Act (CIWA) of 1980**

The *1980 Central Idaho Wilderness Act* (CIWA) established the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness (FC-RONRW) and amended the W&SRA to designate two portions of the Salmon River as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. The Salmon River was classified as a National Recreation River for the 46 mile stretch from North Fork to Corn



Creek, and a National Wild River for the 79 mile stretch from Corn Creek to Long Tom Bar. The section of the river that lies within the FC-RONR and Gospel Hump Wilderness areas was noted under section 9(F) of the CIWA to be managed under the provisions of the W&SRA, despite section 10(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act or any provisions of the Wilderness Act to the contrary.

Both House and Senate committee reports offer supporting arguments that the less restrictive W&SRA management direction would prevail over the Wilderness Act direction. There was clear intent by Congress to define the Main Stem of the Salmon by its exemptions to the Wilderness Act, thus allowing a broader spectrum of recreational opportunities, including heavier visitation, motorized powerboat use, and continued commercial and private interests.

The Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project's proposed site renovations would occur at sites that are located within the eligible "Recreational" river segment, outside of the FC-RONRW. These sites also serve as powerboat put-ins and floatboat take-outs for the designated "Wild" and "Recreational" river segments mentioned above.

### **1.5.7 Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Management Plan of 1984**

The *Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Management Plan* was approved in December of 1984, and includes management direction for the entire FC-RONRW. This plan was incorporated into the Forest Plans for the six national forests administering the FC-RONRW. The Plan was recently updated in 2003 (USDA Forest Service 2003a).

The FC-RONRW Management Plan designated and described the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) of the Salmon River.

## **1.6 Scope of the Proposal**

The proposed action is limited to the specific recreation site improvements and design criteria and mitigations proposed on National Forest System land in the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project area, although the geographic extent of some areas used to analyze different components may extend beyond the project area.

## **1.7 Numbers and Rounding**

It is important to note that our analysis and documentation is based largely on current information and data available in many forms, from historic data and local databases to GIS and spatially derived queries. Some adjustments or differences in areas could occur during project design and layout to conform to on-the-ground conditions or anomalies. For example, in the Alternative descriptions in Chapter 2, all measurements are estimates, and subject to some change through design and implementation. In all cases, adjustments would only be made to better meet the intent of the purpose and need and the Payette and Nez Perce Forest Plans.



## 1.8 Public Involvement

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The Salmon River Ranger District initiated the Salmon River Recreation Sites Renovation project in June of 2006, consistent with the Payette and Nez Perce Forest Plans. On August 15, 2006, the Salmon River Ranger District sent informational letters to interested publics and organizations on the Nez Perce National Forest's and the Salmon River Ranger District's NFMA/NEPA mailing lists, and to 21 outfitters. The project description has also been included in the Forest's Quarterly Schedule of Proposed Actions from 2006 to the present. We received seventeen written comments in response to the initial letter, along with several phone calls.

The Forest Service conducted several meetings and field visits with individuals, landowners, interested groups and nongovernmental organizations, and representatives of federal, state, and local agencies, and Tribal representatives to further revise and develop the proposed action and alternatives. The Forest Service consulted with the US Army Corps of Engineers, USDI-Bureau of Land Management, Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Salmon Challis National Forest, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, Idaho Department of Water Resources, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)- Fisheries, Idaho Waterways Committee (Idaho County and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation), and the Nez Perce Tribe. The Forest Service initiated Tribal consultation with the Nez Perce Tribe at a Level 1 meeting on April 8, 2006, and with the August 18, 2006 scoping letter, and would continue consultation at the Tribe's request.

The proposed action and the action alternative in the analysis evolved from the issues, concerns, and recommendations identified through this public involvement process. Specialists revised the proposed action and alternative based on feedback from the meetings and written comments, and to best meet the purpose and need while reducing potential environmental impacts. The interdisciplinary team considered the comments and incorporated them in the analysis documented in this Environmental Assessment. Additional information on public involvement can be found in Chapter 4. The complete record of the public involvement process is available for review in the Project File.

## 1.9 Decisions to be Made

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The deciding official for this proposal is the Acting District Ranger of the Salmon River Ranger District of the Nez Perce National Forest. The Acting District Ranger will make the following decisions and document them in a Decision Notice accompanying or following the EA:

Should the Forest Service implement recreation site renovation?

If so:

- ❖ Which alternative best enhances recreation sites to provide for user convenience and safety, maintains or enhances Wild and Scenic Recreation River Corridor values, and reduces impacts to natural resources?
- ❖ What management requirements, design criteria, and mitigation measures should be implemented to meet Payette and Nez Perce Forest Plans standards and guidelines for all resources?



- ❖ What monitoring requirements are appropriate to evaluate project implementation?

The Salmon River Recreation Sites project is subject to legal notice and opportunity to comment pursuant to 36 CFR 215.3. Written comments, including any attachments, must be filed with the Responsible Official within 30 days following the publication date of the legal notice in the newspaper of record (§215.6(a)(2)). It is the responsibility of all individuals and organizations to ensure that their comments are received in a timely manner.

## **1.10 Project Record**

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This EA hereby incorporates by reference the Project Record (40 CFR 1502.21). The Project Record contains specialists' resource reports and other technical documentation used to support the analysis and conclusions in this EA.

Relying on specialists' resource reports and the Project Record helps implement the CEQ Regulations' provision that agencies should reduce NEPA paperwork (40 CFR 1500.4). This EA also incorporates documented analyses by summarization and reference where appropriate. The objective is to furnish enough site-specific information to demonstrate a reasoned consideration of the environmental impacts of the alternatives and how these impacts can be mitigated, without repeating detailed analysis and background information available elsewhere. The Project Record is available for review at the Salmon River Ranger District Office, Nez Perce National Forest in Slate Creek, Idaho.



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