

The Payette National Forest Travel Management Plan

Final Environmental Impact Statement

USDA- Forest Service
 Payette National Forest
 Adams, Idaho, Washington, and Valley Counties, Idaho

May 2007

Lead Agency: USDA Forest Service

Responsible Official: Suzanne C. Rainville, Forest Supervisor
 Payette National Forest
 800 West Lakeside Avenue
 McCall, Idaho 83638
 (208) 634-0700

Information Contact: Bill Gamble or Boyd Hartwig
 Team Leader Public Affairs Officer
 (208) 253-0100 (208) 634-0700

Abstract: This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) describes the alternatives for summer and winter travel management on the Payette National Forest. There are five alternatives under consideration in this analysis: the No Action Alternative (Alternative A), which would continue travel management under the current plan; the Proposed Action (Alternative B), which is the Agency’s original proposal for travel management; Alternative C which responds to internal and external comments requesting more motorized opportunities; Alternative D which responds to internal and external comments requesting more non-motorized opportunities, and Alternative E, which responds to comments the Agency received on the DEIS.

The Payette National Forest is located in the west central mountains of Idaho. The project area includes all lands administered by the Payette National Forest with the exception of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.

ABSTRACT

Table of Contents

Summary

Introduction.....	1
Purpose and Need.....	1
Purpose.....	1
Need.....	1
Decisions to be Made.....	3
Public Involvement.....	4
Cooperating Agencies.....	5
Issues.....	5
Significant Issues.....	6
Alternatives.....	8
Introduction.....	8
Changes between the Draft and Final EIS.....	8
Alternative Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study.....	9
Opening portions of the Secesh and Needles Recommended Wilderness Areas to Over- snow Vehicle Use.....	9
Alternatives Considered in Detail.....	10
Features Common to All Action Alternatives.....	10
Project Design Features.....	13
Monitoring and Evaluation.....	14
Description of the Alternatives.....	15
Alternative A – No Action.....	16
Alternative B – Proposed Action.....	17
Alternative C – Additional Motorized Opportunities.....	17
Alternative D – Additional Non-Motorized Opportunities.....	20
Alternative E – Response to Internal and External Comment on the Draft EIS.....	21
Comparison of Alternatives.....	23
Recreation.....	23
Roadless Character and Wilderness.....	30
Soil and Water.....	31
Fisheries.....	34
Wildlife.....	36

Chapter 1. Purpose and Need

1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background.....	1
1.3 Purpose and Need.....	3
1.3.1 Purpose.....	3
1.3.2 Need.....	3
1.4 Proposed Action.....	4
1.5 Project Scope.....	5
1.6 Decisions to be Made.....	5
1.7 Management Direction.....	5

1.7.1 Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan	5
1.8 Public Involvement	7
1.9 Cooperating Agencies	8
1.10 Issues	8
1.10.1 Significant Issues	8
1.10.2 Non-Significant Issues	11
1.11 Legal Requirements and Required Disclosures	20
1.12 Project Record	23
1.13 Availability of the Final EIS	24

Chapter 2: Alternatives

2.1 Introduction	1
2.1.1 Changes between the Draft and Final EIS	1
2.2 Alternative Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study	2
2.2.1 Opening portions of the Secesh and Needles Recommended Wilderness Areas to Over-snow Vehicle Use	2
2.3 Alternatives Considered in Detail	3
2.3.1 Features Common to All Action Alternatives	3
2.3.2 Project Design Features	6
2.3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation	8
2.4 Description of the Alternatives	8
2.4.1 Alternative A – No Action	9
2.4.2 Alternative B – Proposed Action	10
2.4.3 Alternative C – Additional Motorized Opportunities	11
2.4.4 Alternative D – Additional Non-Motorized Opportunities	13
2.4.5 Alternative E – Response to Internal and External Comment on the Draft EIS ..	14
2.5. Alternative Descriptions by Management Area	16
2.5.1 Management Area 1, Hells Canyon – 35,060 acres	17
2.5.2 Management Area 2, Snake River – 151,590 acres	18
2.5.3 Management Area 3, Weiser River – 299,990 acres	21
2.5.4 Management Area 4, Rapid River – 62,140 acres	26
2.5.5 Management Area 5, Middle Little Salmon River – 35,580 acres	28
2.5.6 Management Area 6, Goose Creek/Hazard Creek – 77,120 acres	30
2.5.7 Management Area 7, Payette Lakes – 100,730 acres	33
2.5.8 Management Area 8, Kennally Creek – 34,300 acres	35
2.5.9 Management Area 9, Lake Creek/French Creek – 83,740 acres	37
2.5.10 Management Area 10, Fall Creek/Warren Creek – 105,830 acres	40
2.5.11 Management Area 11, Upper Secesh River – 83,570 acres	42
2.5.12 Management Area 12, South Fork Salmon River – 359,560 acres	44
2.5.13 Management Area 13, Big Creek/Stibnite – 100,270 acres	48
2.6 Management Requirements	50
2.7 Comparison of Alternatives	57
2.7.1 Recreation	57
2.7.2 Soil and Water	64
2.7.3 Fisheries	67
2.7.4 Wildlife	69

2.8 Winter Area Management 72

Chapter 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

3.1 Introduction 1

3.2 Recreation 1

 3.2.1 Scope of the Analysis 1

 3.2.2 Changes between Draft and Final EIS 4

 3.2.3 Forest Plan Direction 4

 3.2.4 Existing Condition 5

 3.2.5 Environmental Consequences 23

 3.2.6 Cumulative Effects 63

3.3 Recommended Wilderness and Inventoried Roadless Areas 67

 3.3.1 Scope of the Analysis 67

 3.3.2 Forest Plan Direction 67

 3.3.3 Existing Condition 68

 3.3.4 Environmental Consequences 70

 3.3.5 Cumulative Effects 75

3.4 Soil and Water 76

 3.4.1 Scope of the Analysis 76

 3.4.2 Changes between Draft and Final EIS 79

 3.4.3 Forest Plan Direction 80

 3.4.4 Existing Condition 81

 3.4.5 Environmental Consequences 100

3.5 Fisheries 140

 3.5.1 Scope of the Analysis 140

 3.5.2 Forest Plan Direction 142

 3.5.3 Existing Condition 143

 3.5.4 Environmental Consequences 148

 3.5.5 Cumulative Effects 170

3.6 Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat 173

 3.6.1 Scope of the Analysis 173

 3.6.2 Changes between Draft and Final EIS 175

 3.6.3 Forest Plan Direction 177

 3.6.4 Existing Condition 179

 3.6.5 Environmental Consequences 193

Chapter 4. Public Involvement

4.1 Public Involvement Summary 1

4.2 List of Recipients 2

 4.2.1 Media 2

 4.2.2 State and County Officials 2

 4.2.3 Federal Agencies and Officials 2

 4.2.4 Tribal Governments 2

 4.2.5 Organizations 3

 4.2.6 State Agencies 3

 4.2.7 Individuals 4

Chapter 5. List of Preparers

5.1 List of Preparers 1
 5.1.1 Interdisciplinary Team Members 1
 5.1.2 Forest Support 2

Chapter 6. Public Comments and Responses

6.1 Comments from Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Officials 2
 6.2 Travel Management Plan DEIS – Public Comment and Response Summary 41

Appendices

Appendix A. Glossary A-1
 Appendix B. References B-1
 Appendix C. Best Management Practices C-1
 Appendix D. Past, Ongoing, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions D-1
 Appendix E. Monitoring Plans E-1
 Appendix F. Project Proposals F-1

Tables

Summary

Table S-1. Forest Summary – Travel Opportunities by Alternative 22
 Table S-2. Recreation Issue 1 23
 Table S-3. Recreation Issue 2 24
 Table S-4. Recreation Issue 3 27
 Table S-5. Recreation Issue 4 28
 Table S-6. Recreation Issue 5 29
 Table S-7. Roadless Character and Wilderness Issue 1 30
 Table S-8. Soil & Water Issue 1 31
 Table S-9. Fisheries Issue 1 34
 Table S-10. Wildlife Issue 1 36
 Table S-11. Wildlife Issue 2 37
 Table S-12. Wildlife Issue 3 37
 Table S-12. Wildlife Issue 4 38
 Table S-13. Wildlife Issue 5 38
 Table S-14. Wildlife Issue 6 38

Chapter 2

Table 2-1. Forest Summary – Travel Opportunities by Alternative 15
 Table 2-2. MA 1 - Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 17
 Table 2-3. MA 1 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 17
 Table 2-4. MA 2 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 18
 Table 2-5. MA 2 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 19
 Table 2-6. MA 3 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 21
 Table 2-6. MA 3 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 22
 Table 2-8. MA 4 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 26

Table 2-9. MA 4 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 27

Table 2-10. MA 5 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 28

Table 2-12. MA 6 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 30

Table 2-13. MA 6 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 31

Table 2-14. MA 7 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 33

Table 2-15. MA 7 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 34

Table 2-16. MA 8 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 35

Table 2-17. MA 8 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 36

Table 2-18. MA 9 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 37

Table 2-19. MA 9 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 38

Table 2-20. MA 10 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 40

Table 2-21. MA 10 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 41

Table 2-22. MA 11 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 42

Table 2-23. MA 11 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 43

Table 2-24. MA 12 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 44

Table 2-24. MA 12 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 45

Table 2-26. MA 13 – Travel Management Proposals by Alternative 48

Table 2-21. MA 13 – Road and Trail Proposals by Alternative 48

Table 2-27. Management Requirements 51

Table 2-28. Recreation Issue 1 57

Table 2-29. Recreation Issue 2 58

Table 2-30. Recreation Issue 3 61

Table 2-31. Recreation Issue 4 62

Table 2-32. Recreation Issue 5 63

Table 2-33. Roadless Character and Wilderness Issue 1 63

Table 2-34. Soil & Water Issue 1 64

Table 2-35. Fisheries Issue 1 67

Table 2-36. Wildlife Issue 1 69

Table 2-37. Wildlife Issue 2 70

Table 2-38. Wildlife Issue 3 70

Table 2-39. Wildlife Issue 4 71

Table 2-40. Wildlife Issue 5 71

Table 2-41. Wildlife Issue 6 71

Table 2-42. Winter Motorized Closures by Main Purpose, Acres, and Alternative 72

Chapter 3

Table REC-1: Forest Plan Direction for Recreation Pertinent to the Travel Management Analysis 4

Table REC-2: Acres of ROS Classes on the PNF 12

Table IRA-1: Forest Plan direction for Recommended Wilderness and Inventoried Roadless Areas Pertinent to the Travel Management Analysis 67

Table IRA-2. Inventoried Roadless Areas by MA and MPC* 68

Table SW-1. The Number of Subwatersheds by Vulnerability and Integrity Ratings and Subwatersheds with 303(d) listed streams, TMDLs, and Public Water Systems by MA 82

Table SW-2. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 1 84

Table SW-3. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 2 85

Table SW-4. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 3.....	86
Table SW-5. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 4.....	88
Table SW-6. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 5.....	89
Table SW-7. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 6.....	90
Table SW-8. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 7.....	91
Table SW-9. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 8.....	93
Table SW-10. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 9.....	94
Table SW-11. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 10.....	95
Table SW-12. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 11.....	97
Table SW-13. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 12.....	98
Table SW-14. Existing Condition of Soil and Water Indicators for MA 13.....	100
Table SW-15. Effects on the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 1.....	103
Table SW-16. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 2.....	105
Table SW-17. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 3.....	108
Table SW-18. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 4.....	111
Table SW-19. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 5.....	114
Table SW-20. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 6.....	116
Table SW-21. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 7.....	119
Table SW-22. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 8.....	122
Table SW-23. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 9.....	125
Table SW-24. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 10.....	127
Table SW-25. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 11.....	130
Table SW-26. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 12.....	133
Table SW-27. Effects to the Soil and Water Indicators for MA 13.....	135
Table F-1: Forest Plan Direction for Fisheries Pertinent to the Travel Management Analysis.....	142
Table F-2. Existing Condition of Relevant Fish Habitat Indicators for Affected Watersheds and Combinations of Watersheds.....	145
Table F-3. Effects of Alternative A on the Fish Habitat Indicators in Affected Watersheds or Combinations of Watersheds Based on Whether Conditions Would Be Improved (I), Maintained (M), or Degraded (D).....	150
Table F-4. Effects of Alternative B on the Fish Habitat Indicators.....	156
Table F-5. Effects of Alternative C on the Fish Habitat Indicators.....	160
Table F-6. Effects of Alternative D on the Fish Habitat Indicators.....	164
Table F-7. Effects of Alternative E on the Fish Habitat Indicators.....	167
Table W-1: Forest Plan Direction for Wildlife Pertinent to the Travel Management Analysis.....	177
Table W-2. Wildlife Species Analyzed, the Rationale for Analysis, and a Brief Description of their Habitats.....	180
Table W-3: Recent (2004-2006) Bull Elk and Adult Bull Elk Population Estimates and Objectives for the Payette National Forest Big Game Hunting Units.....	192
Table W-4. Change in Miles of Groomed Routes and Areas Open and Closed to Over- snow Vehicle Use in Lynx Habitat on the PNF (outside of the FC-RONR Wilderness) for each Travel Plan Alternative.....	208
Table W-5. Change in Acres Open to Over-snow Vehicle Use in Lynx Habitat by LAU (Outside of Wilderness) by Alternative.....	210

Table W-6. Change in Miles of Groomed Routes in Lynx Habitat by LAU on the PNF for each Travel Plan Alternative 212

Table W-7. Change in Miles of Groomed Routes in Lynx Habitat in combination by adjacent LAUs for each Travel Plan Alternative 212

Table W-8. Acres of Wolverine Denning Habitat Open and Closed to Over-snow Vehicle Use in the Project Area (Wilderness not included) by Alternative 227

Table W-9. Acres of Wolverine Denning Habitat Open and Closed to Over-snow Vehicle Use on the entire Payette National Forest (FC-RONR Wilderness included) by Alternative 227

Table W-10. Acres of Wolverine Denning Habitat Closed to Motorized Over-snow Use by Management Area. 227

Table W-11. Summary by Alternative of the Amount of Potential Denning Habitat Closed to Over-snow Motorized Use in the Project Area (Wilderness not included) and in the Cumulative Effects Area (Wilderness included) 228

Table W-12: Acres Open to Cross-country Motor Vehicle Use under Alternative A ... 239

Table W-13. Watersheds Where Summer Road and Motorized Trail Densities Exceed Two Miles per Square Mile by Alternative 240

Table W-14: Acres and Percent of Elk Winter Range Open to Over-snow Motor Vehicle Use by Alternative 243

Figures

Summary

Figure S-1. Project Area for the Payette National Forest Travel Plan 2

Chapter 1

Figure 1-1. Project area for the Payette National Forest Travel Plan 2

Figure 1-2. Watersheds on the Payette National Forest with densities of roads and motorized trails greater than one mile per square mile. 13

Chapter 2

Figure 2-1. Winter Motorized Closure Areas 73

Figure 2-2. Winter Motorized Closure Areas Alternative A 74

Figure 2-3. Winter Motorized Closure Areas Alternative B 75

Figure 2-4. Winter Motorized Closure Areas Alternative C 76

Figure 2-5. Winter Motorized Closure Areas Alternative D 77

Figure 2-6. Winter Motorized Closure Areas Alternative E 78

Chapter 3

Figure W-1. Projected Wildlife Travel Corridors in Winter for Alternative D 206

Figure W-2. Projected Wildlife Travel Corridors in Winter for Alternative E 207

