

# Summary

# Summary

## *Introduction*

The Payette National Forest (PNF) completed this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze the environmental effects of revision of the Travel Management Plan. The plan would designate a system of roads, trails, and areas open to motorized and non-motorized use on the portion of the Payette National Forest outside of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness (FC-RONRW) (Figure 1-1).

This EIS has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant federal and state laws and regulations. The EIS analyzes and discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from approving the proposed plan or one of the alternatives to the plan.

## *Purpose and Need*

### **Purpose**

The Payette National Forest Supervisor identified the following as the purpose for a revised Travel Management Plan:

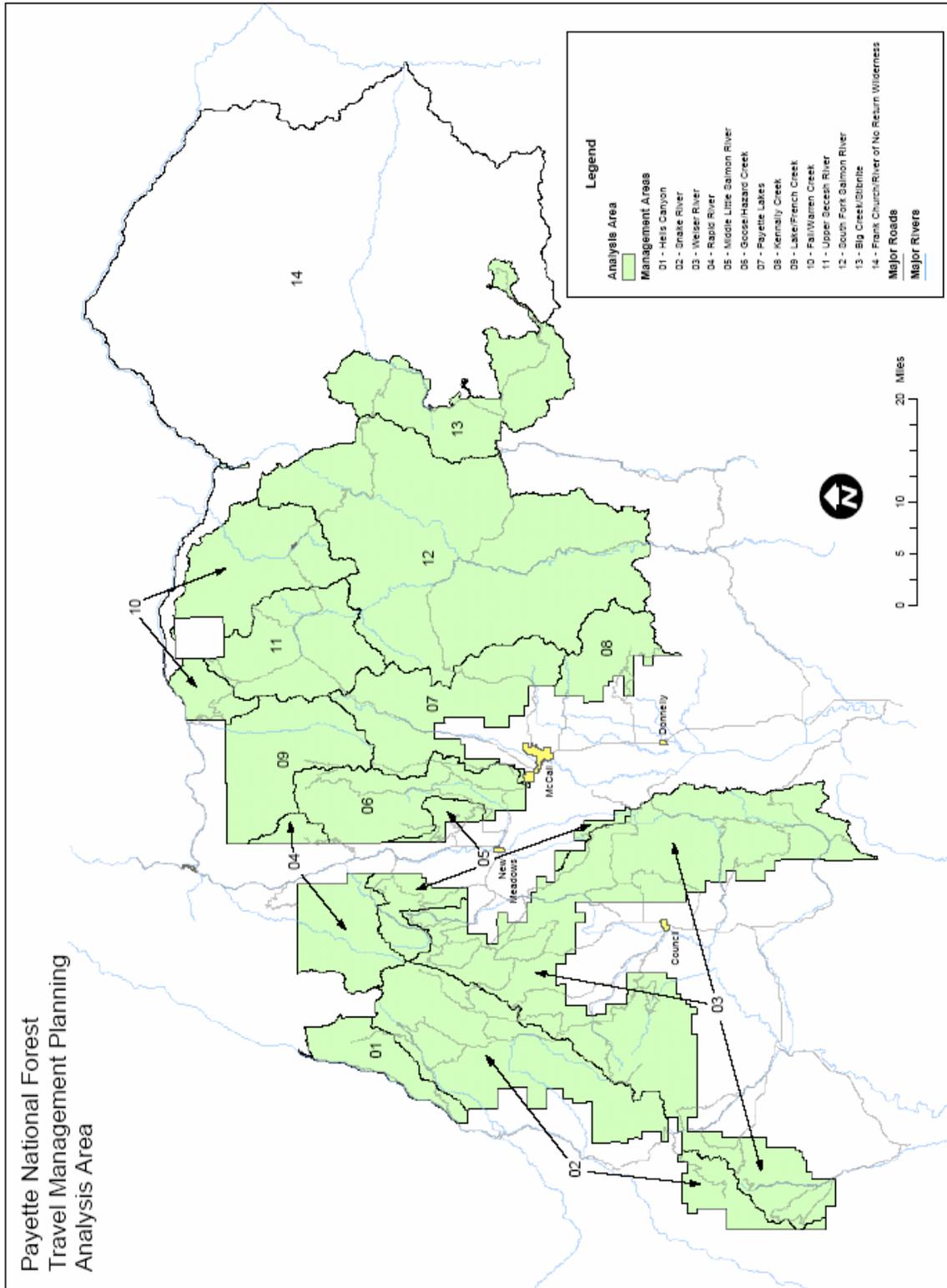
- Meet Forest Plan and national direction.
- Limit indiscriminate motorized cross-country travel.
- Designate a system of roads, trails, and over-snow use areas.
- Balance management considerations (such as maintenance costs and public safety) with recreation opportunities.
- Reduce impacts to Forest resources.
- Reduce conflicts between recreational uses.

### **Need**

The need for revision of the Travel Management Plan was identified in the 2003 Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision (ROD) (Forest Plan 2003). The responsible official for the Forest Plan made the decision to address travel management under a separate, more localized planning process. The Forest Plan provided a framework for travel management planning. This framework requires that travel management (as with all management of the PNF) emphasize maintenance and restoration of watershed conditions, species viability, terrestrial and aquatic habitats, and functioning ecosystems.

The existing Travel Management Plan is required to comply with this framework as well as specific Forest Plan direction. To not identify and adopt a comprehensive revised Travel Management Plan does not mean that the existing Travel Management Plan would be maintained into the future. Compliance with the Forest Plan framework could be achieved incrementally through many small analyses and decisions, or it could be achieved comprehensively through analysis of the Travel Management Plan across the Forest for winter and summer travel. The responsible official chose the latter course.

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



The following Forest Plan goals provide the focus for revision of the Travel Management Plan (additional direction is included in section 1.7.1, and Chapters 2 and 3):

- Provide and maintain a safe, efficient Forest transportation system that meets resource management and access needs, while mitigating degrading resource effects. (Forest Plan 2003: p. III-58: FRGO01)
- Manage motorized and non-motorized travel and travel related facilities to: a) provide for public safety, b) meet resource objectives and access needs, c) mitigate road and trail damage, and d) minimize maintenance costs and user conflicts. (Forest Plan 2003: p. III-62: REGO05)
- Provide an array of winter recreation experiences, while mitigating conflicts between motorized and non-motorized use and wintering wildlife. (Forest Plan 2003: p. III-62: REGO06)

The following Forest Plan standard was a key requirement for the revised Travel Management Plan:

- On all lands outside of designated travel ways, motorized use shall be prohibited unless otherwise authorized (Forest Plan 2003: p. III-64: REST04).

During the Forest Plan revision process, Payette National Forest specialists identified a variety of resource concerns related to travel management including conflicts between recreational uses (particularly in winter), and impacts to wildlife, fish, and water quality from cross-country motorized travel, and use of unauthorized roads. Inconsistent travel management direction across the Forest was also causing problems with the enforcement of travel regulations. Much of the eastern portion of the PNF was closed to cross-country motorized travel, while large areas on the western portion of the PNF were open to cross-country motorized travel.

The need for revision of the PNF Travel Management Plan is also supported by a nationwide awareness within the Forest Service of the harmful effects of indiscriminate off-road travel. This led to the Forest Service final rule in the Federal Register: 36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, 295 “*Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use*” (Federal Register 2005: 70FR68264). This rule requires designation of roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use. The rule prohibits use of motor vehicles off the designated system, as well as use of motor vehicles on routes and in areas inconsistent with the designation. The final rule does not require that over-snow vehicles (such as snowmobiles) are limited to a designated system by exempting them under CFR 212.51 (p.111), but states in CFR 212.81 (p. 116) that “use by over-snow vehicles...on National Forest System lands may be allowed, restricted, or prohibited.” The PNF choose to include over-snow vehicles in this analysis based on direction in the Forest Plan, and the previously identified need to address both conflicts between uses and resource impacts in winter. Designation of over-snow motor vehicle use will be made under 36 CFR 212.81 in this decision.

## ***Decisions to be Made***

The Payette National Forest Supervisor, the responsible official for this project, has determined that preparation of an EIS is required for a decision on the proposed plan under Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR 1500-1508).

Given the purpose and need, the Forest Supervisor will review the Proposed Action and alternatives, and consider the environmental consequences of all alternatives in order to make the following decisions for summer and winter travel on the PNF:

- Which roads, trails, and areas to add or subtract from the existing Travel Management Plan.
- What type of uses to allow on these roads, trails, and areas.
- What design features are necessary to minimize adverse environmental impacts associated with changes in travel management designations.

- How management parameters (such as safety and cost) should be balanced with recreation opportunities.
- What monitoring is to be included to evaluate project implementation.
- What changes are to be made to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum.
- Whether to approve amendments to the Forest Plan.

## ***Public Involvement***

Nine newspaper articles and press releases regarding the travel planning effort were published in the local and regional papers since spring of 2004, including The Star News (McCall), The Long Valley Advocate (Cascade), The Adams County Record (Council), The Weiser Signal American (Weiser), and the Idaho Statesman (Boise). Legal notices were published in The Star News and The Idaho Statesman.

### **Proposed Action**

Public involvement for this project officially began in October 2004 when the proposed action was issued to the public. A Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register on October 4, 2004. Public comment was taken for 96 days through January 7, 2005. Many comments were received, including 130 comment forms, 165 emails, 34 faxes, 254 letters, and 964 postcards. All comments received were reviewed and categorized by issue. Major issues were incorporated into the design of two new alternatives. Documents detailing the review of public comments and how the agency incorporated the substantive comments into new alternative design are available in the Project Record.

The McCall Winter Recreation Forum is a group of people representing various groups interested in winter recreational use of the PNF. The group has worked with the Payette National Forest for many years and identified a variety of proposals to address winter recreation use. Although the group did not come to agreement on a unified proposal, aspects of various members' proposals were incorporated into one or more of the alternatives for the Travel Management Plan.

Five public meetings were held in September and October of 2004, in McCall, Riggins, Council, New Meadows, and Weiser, Idaho. Informational meetings were held at the request of many stakeholders during the scoping phase of the project.

The project (including the Proposed Action, press releases, and additional information) was featured on the PNF website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/payette>. The Proposed Action maps, narratives, and summaries were available for review at the Weiser Ranger District, the Council Ranger District, the New Meadows Ranger District, the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area in Riggins, and the Payette National Forest Supervisor's Office in McCall.

Scoping letters were sent to three Tribal Nations: the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley, and the Nez Perce Tribe. Formal government-to-government consultation on this project has occurred with the Nez Perce Tribe, Shoshone Bannock Tribe, and Shoshone-Paiute Tribe including staff correspondence, and tribal council briefings.

### **Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

The DEIS was published in early February of 2006. The comment period on the DEIS officially began on February 17, 2006 when the Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register. The Forest initially established a 46-day comment period. The comment period was extended an additional 46 days at the request of members of the public.

Five public meetings were held in February and March of 2006, in Boise, Weiser, Council, New Meadows, and McCall. The DEIS and accompanying maps were featured on the PNF website. Copies of the DEIS and the maps were available at all Forest offices.

Copies of the DEIS were sent to three Tribal Nations: the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley, and the Nez Perce Tribe. Formal government-to-government consultation on the project continued with the Nez Perce Tribe and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribe.

During the 92-day comment period on the DEIS, the Forest received approximately 450 comments including letters, emails, and faxes. All comments received were reviewed and categorized by issue. The Forest then developed a new action alternative, Alternative E, to respond to these comments and to address Ranger District specific needs and preferences.

## ***Cooperating Agencies***

At the request of a local Board of County Commissioners, the PNF offered cooperating agency status to the four counties where PNF lands occur. Adams, Idaho, Valley, and Washington counties were offered and accepted cooperating agency status in the environmental analysis process. Cooperating agency representatives from Adams, Valley, and Washington counties participated in meetings, review of public comments, identification of issues and alternatives, briefings, and document reviews with the project NEPA Coordinator, Forest Supervisor, and project Interdisciplinary Team. Representatives of Idaho Parks and Recreation also participated. Due to time limitations, the Idaho County Board of Commissioners decided to withdraw as a cooperating agency.

The cooperating agencies also held public meetings on the Proposed Action and potential alternatives and provided information on these meetings to the Forest Service.

## ***Issues***

Forest Service staff reviewed public, agency, and Tribal comments on the Proposed Action to identify issues and concerns. Potential issues generated from letters and public meetings were catalogued by subject and a determination made as to how the issues would be addressed. Documents detailing the review of public comments and how the agency incorporated the substantive comments into new alternative design are in the Project Record.

Issues were separated into two groups: significant issues used to formulate an alternative or for disclosure, and non-significant issues. The CEQ regulations specify that analysis focus only on significant issues. Issues determined not to be significant or covered by prior environmental review are discussed only briefly and eliminated from detailed study [40 CFR 1500.1(b), 1500.2(b), 1500.4(c), 1501.7(3), 1502.2(b), 1506.3].

Section 102(2) (e) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) states that all federal agencies shall “study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal which involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.”

Unresolved conflicts focused on:

- 1) Allocation of motorized and non-motorized routes and areas in summer and winter, and
- 2) Maintenance of landscape connectivity in winter for large carnivores, specifically wolverine and lynx.

Appropriate alternatives must meet the purpose and need for the project, as well as address the unresolved conflicts determined to be significant issues. Three alternatives to the Proposed Action (Alternative B) were identified (see Chapter 2). Alternative C provides more motorized roads and trails in summer, and larger areas open to over-snow motorized use in winter. Alternative D provides more non-motorized trails in summer and closes additional areas in winter for non-motorized use and maintenance of landscape connectivity. Alternative E responds to comments received in response to the draft EIS. These alternatives are fully described in Chapter 2.

## Significant Issues

Significant issues are issues used to formulate alternatives to the Proposed Action, prescribe mitigation measures, or analyze and disclose environmental effects. Indicators are measures used to track the effects of the actions on the issues. The significant issues and the indicators for each are provided below. For a background statement for each significant issue, see Chapter 3 for the corresponding issue.

The Forest Service identified the following significant issues during scoping:

**Recreation Issue 1:** Travel management may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities in summer.

**Indicators:**

- Miles of open road and seasonally open NFS road.
- Miles of two-wheel motorized trail and non-motorized trail.
- Miles of ATV trail.
- Miles of OHV trail (full four-wheel drive vehicle) trail.
- Acres open to cross-country motor vehicle use.

**Recreation Issue 2:** Travel management may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities in winter.

**Indicators:**

- Acres open and closed to over-snow vehicles.
- Use areas with clear boundary designations.
- Miles of groomed snowmobile trail.
- Proximity of non-motorized areas to parking and access points for winter based activities.
- Approximate acres of skiable terrain (defined by slope, PNF strata, and elevation) in non-motorized areas.

**Recreation Issue 3:** Travel management may affect road and trail program costs.

**Indicators:**

- Costs to program management.

**Recreation Issue 4:** Travel management may affect the safety of recreationists due to the amount and location of motorized and non-motorized areas and trails.

**Indicators:**

- Degree of public safety provided based on separation of uses.

**Recreation Issue 5:** Changes in motorized use may affect Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) settings for both summer and winter use.

**Indicators:**

- Change to Recreation Opportunity Spectrum.

**Roadless Character and Wilderness Issue 1:** Increases in motorized use may affect wilderness potential, and wilderness attributes in Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs).

**Indicators:**

- Effects to wilderness potential.
- Effects to wilderness attributes of Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs): natural appearance, natural integrity, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and special features.

**Soil & Water Issue 1:** The type, extent, and location of roads, trails, and motorized areas in the Travel Management Plan may degrade soil productivity, accelerate erosion, and deliver sediment to streams.

**Indicators:**

- Percent of the Management Area (MA) designated open to cross-country motor vehicle use and/or limited motorized access.
- Percent of Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs) in designated areas open to cross-country motor vehicle use and/or limited motorized access.
- Miles of designated roads.
- Miles of designated two-wheel motorized trails.
- Miles of designated ATV and OHV trails.
- Miles of designated roads and motorized trails in subwatersheds with a high watershed vulnerability rating.
- Miles of designated roads and motorized trails within RCAs.
- Number of inventoried stream crossings on designated roads and motorized trails.

**Fisheries Issue 1:** Travel management may impact habitats for threatened, endangered, and sensitive fishes including the bull trout (a Management Indicator Species).

**Indicators:**

- Change in the watershed condition indicator (WCI) for substrate embeddedness.
- Change in the watershed condition indicator for stream bank condition.

**Wildlife Issue 1:** Motorized travel may affect summer and winter elk habitat and elk vulnerability during hunting season.

**Indicators – Summer:**

- Acres open to cross-country motor vehicle use.
- Density of open NFS roads and motorized trails by watershed in summer.

**Indicators – Hunting Season:**

- Percent of elk security habitat available during hunting season.
- Density of open NFS roads and motorized trails by watershed in fall.

**Indicators – Winter:**

- Miles of groomed snowmobile routes within elk winter range.
- Acres and percent of elk winter range open to over-snow vehicle use during the winter.

**Wildlife Issue 2:** Motorized travel may affect Canada lynx habitat during summer and winter (over-snow).

**Indicators – Summer:**

- Density of roads and motorized trails within lynx habitat.

**Indicators – Winter:**

- Acres open and closed to over-snow vehicle use in lynx habitat.
- Miles of groomed snowmobile routes within lynx habitat.
- Effects of over-snow vehicle use on habitat connectivity.

**Wildlife Issue 3:** Over-snow vehicle use may affect wolverine denning habitat.

**Indicators:**

- Percent of wolverine denning habitat closed to over-snow vehicle use.

- Effects of over-snow vehicle use on habitat connectivity during winter.

**Wildlife Issue 4:** Travel management may affect habitat and/or populations of the pileated woodpecker (PNF Management Indicator Species (MIS) for large tree and snag dependent species), the white-headed woodpecker (MIS and sensitive species), and the three-toed woodpecker (sensitive species).

**Indicators**

- Changes in habitat and potential effects on individuals and populations.

**Wildlife Issue 5:** Travel management may affect habitat and/or populations of threatened, endangered, and Forest Service Sensitive Species.

**Indicators**

- Changes in habitat and potential effects on individuals and populations.

**Wildlife Issue 6:** Travel management may affect migratory bird species.

**Indicators:**

- Changes in habitat and potential effects on individuals and populations.

**Alternatives**

**Introduction**

This section describes the Proposed Action and a range of alternatives developed based on public involvement during the scoping period for the Proposed Action, the comment period on the Draft EIS, the Purpose and Need, and issues described in Chapter 1. The alternatives present a range of analysis options, as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 CFR 1502.14). Five alternatives were considered in this Final EIS including the Proposed Action described in Section 1.4. A No Action alternative, and four additional action alternatives are described in Section 2.2.

**Changes between the Draft and Final EIS**

Several changes have been made between the DEIS and the FEIS. These changes include items that affect each alternative. Changes for individual resources are described in Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences. Specific changes within an individual alternative are discussed in the individual Management Area sections below. General changes between the DEIS and FEIS are as follows:

- Alternative E was added to the analysis. This alternative responds to internal and external comment on the DEIS.
- Regional Forester direction narrowed the allowed use in designated motorized corridors along designated motorized routes to dispersed camping only. Game retrieval and other Forest uses will have to be achieved on foot from a designated motorized route.
- Miles and acres for all alternatives have been updated to reflect the most current state of management.
- In response to public comments, the recreation section now incorporates a discussion of loop trail opportunities.
- The analysis for all resources has been updated and expanded. See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of the analysis changes.

- Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) expressed concern that the areas of wolverine denning habitat protected in Alternative D did not include the highest priority. Based on input from IDFG an additional closure area (Bruin Mountain) is included in Alternative D. The wildlife analysis in Chapter 3 discusses the potential benefits of this additional closure.
- The Idaho State Snowmobile Association (ISSA) expressed concern that all of the areas they proposed to be open to over-snow motorized use in their comments on the proposed action were not included as part of Alternative C. Some of these areas, outside of Recommended Wilderness, have been added to Alternative C.
- ISSA also recommended entering the Recommended Wilderness in their comments on the Proposed Action. An alternative analyzing allowing winter motorized use in portions of the Secesh and Needles IRA is discussed below in *Opening portions of the Secesh and Needles Recommended Wilderness Areas to Over-snow Vehicle Use*.

### ***Alternative Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study***

Federal agencies are required by NEPA to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives and to briefly discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives not developed in detail (40 CFR 1502.14). Public comments received in response to the Proposed Action and the alternatives presented in the Draft EIS provided suggestions for alternatives methods for achieving the purpose and need. Some of these alternatives may be outside the scope of travel plan revision or determined to be components that would cause unnecessary environmental harm. Therefore, one alternative was considered but dismissed from detailed consideration for the reasons summarized below.

### **Opening portions of the Secesh and Needles Recommended Wilderness Areas to Over-snow Vehicle Use**

In public comment on the project proposal, the Idaho State Snowmobile Association (ISSA) recommended consideration of opening portions of the Secesh/Needles Recommended Wilderness to motorized over-snow use. The Forest analyzed this proposal and concluded the following:

- At this time, and in the foreseeable future it is unlikely there is a need for additional motorized over-snow areas above and beyond those already proposed in the five alternatives. While trailheads and parking lots are sometimes overcrowded on weekends and holidays, use quickly disperses away from the trailhead, and most users do not experience crowding (Gary Elliot pers.comm; USDA Forest Service 2003b).
- The area in the recommended Wilderness was analyzed for available terrain for potential snowmobile use. Approximately 25 percent of the area could be suitable for use by current technology machines. The remaining terrain is too steep, rugged, and/or rocky for safe access. In addition, access points into these recommended Wilderness areas all require travel over this type of hazardous terrain.
- Forest Plan direction (Standard for MPC 1.2, Recommended Wilderness, USDA Forest Service 2003: III-82) states that “No new motorized or mechanical uses will be allowed, except where these uses must be allowed in response to outstanding rights, statute, or treaty.” Part of the purpose and need for this project was to meet Forest Plan direction. The Forest Plan is relatively new (2003), and during the public involvement process for Plan revision, both motorized and non-motorized public respondents supported the designation of both of the recommended wilderness areas.
- The recent (September 20, 2006) Petition of Governor James Risch for State Specific Rulemaking for Roadless Areas in Idaho, lead to the recommend designation for these areas as Wildland Recreation. The emphasis of this designation is essentially the same as the direction and objectives set for these

areas in the current Forest Plan. The Governors petition process included additional public involvement and further indicates the publics desire to retain these areas “as-is”.

## ***Alternatives Considered in Detail***

The ID Team developed and analyzed in detail five alternatives, including the Proposed Action and a No Action Alternative. The alternatives are detailed below by a description of proposed designations for each management area, followed by a summary for the Forest. In the following text and tables describing the alternatives, all numbers are estimates based on the best available information. Corrections and adjustments will occur during further environmental analysis and in project implementation.

## **Features Common to All Action Alternatives**

Travel management is the administrative process of designating the types of use allowed on routes and areas. Ground-disturbing activities associated with this process are limited to the application of stated project design features necessary to minimize or avoid adverse environmental effects or provide for public safety. These required Project Design Features (PDFs) are found in Section 2.3.2. While this EIS makes decisions on travel route designations, the actual authorization of routes from a non-motorized to motorized use, or unauthorized routes being added to the designated motorized route system would require application of the PDF’s before they are formally authorized and displayed on the motor vehicle use map for public use.

## **Types of Routes**

Cross-country Motor Vehicle Use: Motorized travel is considered cross-country when a motorized vehicle (except motorized over-snow vehicles on snow) leaves a designated road or a designated motorized trail.

Designated Route: Roads and trails identified by the agency where the appropriate type and time period of use is specified. Any routes or areas not designated for motorized use are restricted to non-motorized use.

Roads are defined as a motor vehicle travelway for vehicles over 50 inches wide. Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs such as ATVs and dirt bikes) operated by licensed drivers are also legal, as prescribed in Idaho law. Unlicensed drivers may not operate motor vehicles on NFS roads. Hikers, bicyclers, and horseback riders are encouraged to travel safely along road edges.

Roads fall into one of two categories:

- 1) Unauthorized roads are roads that are not National Forest System roads and not included in a forest transportation atlas. These include roads also known as unclassified, unplanned, non-system, and undetermined roads. These roads are restricted to non-motorized use in all action alternatives, unless they are proposed for designation to motorized use.
- 2) Classified roads include roads wholly or partially within or adjacent to National Forest System lands needed for long-term motor vehicle access, including State roads, county roads, privately owned roads, National Forest System roads (see below), and other roads authorized by the Forest Service.

National Forest System (NFS) Road: A forest road other than a road authorized by a legally documented right-of-way held by a State, county, or other local public road authority. These roads may be classified as open, closed, or seasonal.

Motorized trails, OHV trails, or ATV trails are routes available for Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs) as well as non-motorized users. They include trails available to all OHVs, and those available

specifically to All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), and motorcycles. Trails may be closed seasonally for resource protection or public safety reasons.

Two-wheel motorized (Motorcycle) trails are single-track trails available for motorcycles and dirt bikes, as well as non-motorized users.

Non-motorized trails are routes available for hikers, bicyclers (except in Wilderness) and horseback riders. Use by motorized wheelchair is allowed when feasible within the defined trail-bed. Routes restricted to non-motorized use are closed to motorized use administratively.

Groomed Snowmobile trails are roads, trails, or other authorized overland routes groomed to allow over-snow motor vehicle use. Groomed snowmobile routes are closed to all standard wheeled vehicles designed for snow-free travel-ways.

Over-snow vehicle use or motorized over-snow use areas are designated areas available for over-snow vehicle use. Areas designated as open to over-snow vehicle use would be available as long as there is sufficient snow pack to allow travel.

## Summer and Winter Use Regulations

For all alternatives, a new Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) reflecting the revisions to travel management would replace the 1995 Travel Management Map. The MVUM will be displayed by Ranger District. There would be a set of maps for both summer and winter. Maps will be available free of charge at all District offices and on the Forest web page.

User education and enforcement of the new regulations would occur in all alternatives. The Forest would work to partner with local volunteer groups and the State to increase the “reach” of user education and enforcement. In all alternatives, implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue.

All of the alternatives would have summer and winter use regulations. Summer use is defined as use that occurs during the snow-free season when tracked vehicles or equipment such as a snowmobile or skis are not required for travel. Winter use is defined as use requiring tracked vehicles or equipment such as snowmobiles, snow cats, or skis for transportation across the snow.

**Summer travel management** would include the following:

- Motorized and non-motorized travel routes, designated by the Forest Service as open to public travel. Designated motorized routes would be identified on the PNF Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) using nationally directed uniform standards. Road number signs identifying those routes open to public travel would be posted on the ground to the extent practicable. Designation of travel routes and areas would follow requirements in 36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, and 295 (Federal Register 70FR68264).
- Limited motorized access for dispersed camping within 300 feet of designated roads and 100 feet of designated motorized trails on most areas of the Forest as long as it does not result in resource damage such as rutting, fording of streams, crossing wet meadows, creating new unauthorized routes, spreading noxious weeds, or similar resource degradation.
- Some areas identified in the analysis and shown on the maps, would be closed to any motorized travel off designated routes including dispersed camping due to sensitive resource protection needs. Areas with sensitive resources proposed for closure to motorized off-route travel include: known areas with northern Idaho ground squirrel colonies, the Lake Creek area on the McCall Ranger District, and the entire Krassel Ranger District. In these areas, all dispersed camping would be restricted to designated sites.

- A designation for a road or trail includes all terminal facilities, trailheads, parking lots, and turnouts associated with the designated road or trail. The designation also includes parking a motor vehicle within one vehicle length from the edge of the road surface when it is safe to do so and without causing damage to NFS resources. (Proposed Washington Office Directive FSM 7716.1).
- Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) operation for general travel would not be allowed off of any designated motorized route.
- Unauthorized routes would be restricted to non-motorized use unless designated for motorized use in the selected alternative.
- All areas and routes in the project area are open to non-motorized use (by foot, mountain bike, or horse), unless prohibited for administrative reasons such as safety.
- Mountain bikes would be permitted on all roads and trails outside of the Frank Church--River of No Return Wilderness, unless otherwise posted.
- Hiking and horseback riding would be permitted anywhere on the Forest, unless otherwise posted.

**Winter travel management** would include the following:

- Designated areas open to over-snow vehicle use and groomed over-snow vehicle trails. Designated areas and trails would be identified on the PNF MVUM using nationally directed uniform standards. Designation of winter use areas would be under 36 CFR 212.81 (Federal Register 70FR68264).
- The location of the open area boundaries would, where practical, be located along features that are readily distinguished on maps and on the ground during winter. Area closure signs would continue to be posted where heavily used routes or play areas approach a closed area.

**Other common features:**

- Grants and Agreements – the Forest Service will pursue partnerships and grants with Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation to maintain motorized and non-motorized trails.
- Mixed Use Traffic - State of Idaho law allows for motorized mixed use of licensed drivers in registered OHVs and highway legal vehicles on unpaved NFS roads designated as open to motorized public travel. The Forest Service may choose to regulate this use based on a Mixed Use Traffic Study which determines the safety of such use. Routes deemed to be unsafe as a result of the traffic study may be closed to mixed use by the Forest Service, thus eliminating use by OHVs.

***Standards, Maintenance, and Construction***

Road and trail standards vary depending on intended use. Standards allow for a range of route conditions from primitive to high standard. Improvements that may be required to bring individual roads or trails up to standard largely consist of light reconstruction or routine maintenance. Road and trail maintenance, required by Forest Service Manual direction, would continue as available funding is allocated by Congress. In all action alternatives, portions of some roads and trails would require reconstruction or relocation in order to meet standards. Most of the new construction would consist of short “connector” segments, which would tie existing roads or trails together. The Project Design Features (PDFs) found in the section below cover some of the standards that would be used in construction and relocation. Newly designated trails or roads would be designed to meet the trail or road standards as defined by the USDA Forest Service Standard Specifications for Construction of Trails, EM-7720-102; or the FSH 7700 Roads USDA Forest Service Handbook for roads.

## Project Design Features

Project design features (PDFs) include Best Management Practices (BMPs) (see Appendix C) standards operating procedures (SOPs), identified design features (below), and Forest Plan Management Requirements (Table 2-27). These items are included to protect public safety and Forest resources, and are integral parts of all action alternatives.

- User education and enforcement of the new travel management regulations would occur. User education would include public meetings, and brochures describing the new travel management policy and use of the MVUM. The Forest has requested additional funding to help with extra enforcement and education, and to bring signs up to the standards required by Agency policy.
- The Payette National Forest would follow National direction for signing and maps. The Forest Service plans to develop a standard national format for motor vehicle use maps (MVUM). These maps will be available at local Forest Service offices and, as soon as practicable, on Forest Service web sites. The Forest Service plans to issue additional travel management guidance in its sign standards handbook to ensure consistent messages and use of standard interagency symbols.
- **Newly Designated Roads and Trails.** Newly designated roads and trails would be subject to the following project design features (a) through (m). A Newly designated road or trail is defined as a route designated on a previously unauthorized or closed system road that would now be open to public travel; or a non-motorized trail designated as motorized. All newly designated roads or trails will not be authorized or placed onto the MVUM until on the ground assessments are made and all applicable PDFs are implemented.
  - a) Cultural Resources.** The Forest Archaeologist will conduct a cultural resources survey and evaluation, and receive concurrence from the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office. Concurrence requires that no impacts would occur to cultural resource sites, or impacts would be mitigated to acceptable levels. Although most routes have been inventoried and cleared for use, a Programmatic Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement may be used to ensure all cultural resource requirements have been met.
  - b) Plants.** Complete a rare plants survey and evaluation, and enact necessary protection measures so that no unacceptable impacts would occur to rare plants, or impacts would be mitigated to acceptable levels.
  - c) ATV Trail Condition Assessments.** Qualified personnel complete an ATV Trail Condition Assessment on all new ATV routes to identify problems, recommend corrective measures and to establish a baseline for future monitoring.
  - d) Route Standards.** Design roads and trails to meet minimum road or trail standards as defined by the Forest Service Handbook FSH section 7700 for roads, or the Forest Service Standard Specifications for Constructions of Trails (EM-7720-102). Road to ATV trail conversion will include reclamation of excessive road width, and installation of water management/erosion control features to meet the new ATV trail designation.
  - e) Trail Rerouting.** Reroute trails where water management structures cannot function or be properly maintained, where trails cross soils or sites poorly suited for motorized use, or to avoid impacting other sensitive resources (such as cultural sites).
  - f) Trail Reclamation.** Reclaim abandoned trail segments by physical closure, installation of water management structures, and pulling available slash over the abandoned trail.
  - g) Water Management Structures.** On all new ATV trails, construct and maintain water management features (such as waterbars, grade dips, culverts, sheet drains, check dams, ditches, or bridges).

- h) Reclaim unauthorized spur roads accessed by newly designated ATV trails.** Reclaim all unauthorized spur roads which originate off the newly designated ATV trails by physical closure, installation of water management structures, de-compacting the abandoned travel way, and pulling available slash over the roadway.
- i) Trail Improvement.** When rerouting a poorly located trail segment is not feasible, improve the trail surfaces so it will support use without unacceptable resource impacts. Improvement techniques include replacing or capping unsuitable soils including fills with geotextiles, gravel, corduroy, wood matrix, puncheon, porous pavement panels, or matting.
- j) Fish Bearing Streams.** All stream crossings on fish bearing streams will meet the Regional Aquatic Organism Passage Guidelines. Qualified personnel will review and concur on all stream crossings to verify if the stream is fish bearing, provides passage, and protects and maintains habitat.
- k) Weeds.** Include measures to prevent the spread of noxious weeds such as: use of weed-free gravel or soil, use of weed-free hay or straw, and prompt re-vegetation of areas of disturbed soil. Treat identified noxious weed sites as appropriate.
- l) Public Safety.** Qualified personnel will complete assessments to determine measures needed to provide for safe use.
- m) Implementation Monitoring.** Prepare implementation monitoring plans and evaluate results to ensure all PDFs are implemented before authorization of any new road or trail. This is considered a critical component of these PDFs. Monitoring plans are included in Appendix E.
- If a wolverine den is discovered, implement measures on a case-by-case basis to help ensure den sites and natal areas receive minimal disturbance. A no-activity snowmobile buffer of ½ mile would be placed around each known active den site.
  - Recreation specialists and wildlife biologists would coordinate efforts to map over-snow use areas, to assess location and intensity of snow compacting activities within lynx habitat, to facilitate future analysis of effects on lynx as information becomes available. The map would include: plowed roads, groomed snowmobile routes, regular and moderate use non-groomed routes, snowmobile play areas, and cross-country ski use areas.
  - Forest wildlife biologists would further monitor and analyze main wildlife travel corridors and propose actions, if necessary, to promote their viability for use for lynx, wolverine, and other forest carnivores.
  - The wildlife biologist will evaluate road or trail activity prior to implementation of designated routes in potential habitat of the northern Idaho ground squirrel or other listed species.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The goal of travel plan monitoring is to determine how the travel plan is or is not working, and to help identify changes needed in travel management or monitoring methods. Monitoring and evaluation tell how travel management decisions have been implemented (called “implementation monitoring”) and how effective the implementation has proven to be in accomplishing the desired outcomes (called “effectiveness monitoring.”).

Not all distinctive variables can be monitored. Monitoring has administrative costs to the agency and is contingent on future funding, so a selection of a monitoring item in the Record of Decision for the Travel Plan represents a statement of management intent to fund the implementation of that monitoring item in the future.

The following monitoring items are associated with this Travel Plan:

**Wildlife:**

- ✓ Effectiveness of closures at Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel sites
- ✓ Effectiveness of closures in areas where elk habitat security is a concern
- ✓ Verification and protection of potential wolverine denning habitat, lynx habitat, and wildlife habitat connectivity

**Recreation:**

- ✓ Effectiveness of Over-snow motorized closures
- ✓ Levels of use on motorized trails

**Soil and Water:**

- ✓ Implementation and effectiveness of travel plan ATV Project Design Features (PDFs)
- ✓ Effectiveness monitoring of the travel plan's designation of areas open to "limited motorized access" on the protection of the soil, water, riparian, and aquatic (SWRA) resources within riparian conservation areas (RCAs)
- ✓ Implementation and effectiveness of closure of unauthorized routes

**Fish:**

- ✓ Monitoring related to Terms and Conditions from National Marine Fisheries Service

Monitoring plans associated with these items are located in Appendix E.

## ***Description of the Alternatives***

These following measures were used to display how winter and summer travel opportunities varied by alternative and by management area. Descriptions of the travel opportunities under each alternative are provided in the following pages and summarized for the Forest in Table 2-1. This is followed by alternative descriptions and summaries by management area. Winter and summer travel maps are located in the Map Packet. More detailed maps can be viewed on the PNF website at <http://www.fe.fed.us/r4/payette/main.html>.

### Summer Travel Measures

Cross-country motor vehicle use (acres): The acreage open to motorized cross-country travel during the snow-free months.

Two-wheel motorized trail (miles): The miles of trail designated open to motorized use by two-wheel vehicles as well as non-motorized users.

ATV trail (miles): The miles of trail open to motorized use by ATVs. They are also open to two-wheel motorized and non-motorized users.

OHV trail (miles): The miles of trail open to motorized use by all OHVs.

Non-motorized trail: The miles of trail open to non-motorized use only. Use by motorized wheelchair is allowed when feasible within the defined trail-bed.

NFS open road: The miles of road designated open to travel by full-sized vehicles, and licensed and unlicensed OHVs operated by licensed drivers. Hikers, bicyclers, and horseback riders may also use the road.

NFS seasonally open road: The miles of road designated open as described above, except for a period of time each year (most often during big game hunting season) to manage or protect various resources.

#### Winter Travel Measures

Groomed snowmobile trails (miles): The miles of trail to be approved for annual grooming (generally under a Cost Share Agreement with the appropriate County) for snowmobile use.

Motorized over-snow use (acres): The acreage open to access by motorized over-snow equipment. Over-snow use by non-motorized users is also allowed.

Closed to motorized use (acres): The acreage open only to non-motorized use. Motorized use by all motorized vehicles, including over-snow vehicles, is prohibited.

### Alternative A – No Action

This alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and serves as a baseline for analyzing effects. The No Action Alternative represents “no immediate change” from current management (see further discussion on p. 2-1). Implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue on a site-specific basis when resource concerns are identified.

#### Winter Travel

The current level of motorized over-snow access would remain unchanged. This alternative would continue unrestricted snowmobiling in areas that are not part of an area closure as identified on the Payette National Forest *Backroads* Map. The transportation system for over-snow travel would include:

Groomed snowmobile trail:	245.9 miles
Motorized over-snow use:	1,078,540 acres
Closed to motorized use:	451,200 acres

#### Summer Travel

Alternative A would retain 1125.3 miles of open and 512.2 miles of seasonally open roads. Some areas contain many miles of unauthorized road where travel impacts may be concentrated, but the extent is unknown. Cross-country motor vehicle use is allowed on 510,930 acres of the 1,529,740 acre project area. As with all alternatives, vegetation and terrain limits cross-country motor vehicle use. In areas where cross-country motor vehicle use is not allowed, the current policy allowing dispersed camping for 300 feet on either side of designated NFS roads and 100 feet of designated NFS trails would continue.

Motorized cross-country travel:	510,930 acres
Two-wheel motorized trail:	581.9 miles
ATV trail:	75.3 miles
OHV trail:	2.8 miles
Non-motorized trail:	504.3 miles
NFS open road:	1,125.3 miles
NFS seasonally open road:	512.2

## Alternative B – Proposed Action

This alternative was proposed by the Forest Service to meet the purpose and need for a revised Travel Management Plan as described in Chapter 1. The Travel Plan should provide a system of designated NFS roads, motorized and non-motorized trails, groomed over-snow routes, and over-snow vehicle use areas and respond to direction provided in the Forest Plan, as well as meet current law, regulation, and policy. Current direction is to limit indiscriminant cross-country motor vehicle use, minimize maintenance costs, protect Forest resources, provide a diversity of recreation opportunities, and reduce user conflicts (more accurately called conflicts between uses). Implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue and Alternative B is consistent with Forest Plan Standards.

### Winter Travel

The current level of motorized over-snow opportunity would decrease by 17,410 acres leaving over a million acres open to motorized over-snow use. The amount of currently groomed snowmobile trail is reflected in this alternative, rather than in Alternative A. (Alternative A reflects the miles of trail available for grooming under the Memorandum of Understanding authorization between the Forest Service and the counties.) This alternative designates nearly 226 miles of groomed snowmobile trails.

Groomed snowmobile trails:	225.5 miles
Motorized over-snow use:	1,061,130 acres
Closed to motorized use:	468,610 acres

### Summer Travel

Nearly 89.0 miles of trail would be open for ATV use (motorized off-highway vehicles 50” or less in width), and 3.1 miles for OHV use (all motorized off-highway vehicles). Two-wheel motorized traffic could use these trails, in addition to the 434.5 miles of trail specifically designed for two-wheel vehicles.

Designated roads (open and seasonally) available for full size vehicles would decrease by 24.8 miles. All unauthorized roads would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 300 feet of designated roads and 100 feet of designated motorized trails as long as it does not result in resource damage such as rutting, fording of streams, crossing wet meadows, creating new unauthorized routes, spreading noxious weeds, or similar resource impacts (hereafter referred to as *resource damage*).

Motorized cross-country travel:	0 acres
Two-wheel motorized trail:	434.5 miles
ATV trail:	89.0 miles
OHV trail:	3.1 miles
Non-motorized trail:	596.1 miles
NFS open road:	1,118.1 miles
NFS seasonally open road:	494.6 miles

## Alternative C – Additional Motorized Opportunities

Alternative C responds to issues raised by both summer and winter motorized user groups. This alternative would create increased opportunities for motorized users in summer and winter by retaining most of the current motorized trails, adding more miles of ATV trail, and opening more area to over-snow vehicle use. Between the Draft and Final EIS some additional open over-snow vehicle areas were added to this alternative. The closures respond to concerns expressed by the Idaho State Snowmobile Association that not all the areas they identified in their comments on the proposed action were

incorporated into Alternative C. This alternative would meet Forest Plan direction to limit cross-country motor vehicle travel, but does less to minimize maintenance costs and protect Forest resources than Alternative B, D or E. Alternative C would not be consistent with several Forest Plan standards and would require amending the Forest Plan (see below).

### Forest Plan Amendments

Further analysis between the Draft and Final EIS revealed Alternative C would require approval of forest plan amendments to several Forest Plan standards in specific Management Areas (MAs) and lynx analysis units (LAUs). The amendments would be limited to this one project and specific Management Areas or LAUs; they would not affect outputs of Forest Plan goods and services, and would not change Forest management prescriptions (FSH 1909.12 section 5.32). Therefore, they would be non-significant amendments.

Increased motorized use in both summer and winter would result in long-term negative impacts to soil, fisheries, and wildlife resources over the current condition. The Forest Plan requires all actions with greater than temporary (< 3 years) impacts to have accompanying long-term (15+ years) demonstrable improvements in watershed conditions (Forest Plan Standard SWST04). This requirement is intended to ensure actions result in movement towards desired conditions outlined in the Forest Plan. Alternative C does not meet this requirement.

The Forest Plan also incorporates guidance from the lynx conservation assessment strategy (LCAS) on snow compaction effects on lynx (Forest Plan Standard TEST34), and sets a standard for no net increase in groomed or designated over-the-snow routes or play areas outside of baseline areas. The intent of this standard is to minimize snow compaction and potential disturbance to lynx and their habitat. Discussion related to these standards follows:

### **WATER**

Alternative C, Proposal 1-1, would not be consistent with the Forest Plan for protection of the soil and water resources. This proposal opens a closed system road in a closed area and designates that road open to ATV use. Since there are no activities proposed in MA 1 to offset the effects and move toward Desired Conditions for soil and water resources, proposal 1-1, would require a one-time, site-specific, non-significant amendment in Management Area 1 for Forest Plan Standard SWST04 which requires:

*“Management actions will neither degrade nor retard attainment of properly functioning soil, water, riparian, and aquatic desired conditions, except: a) where outweighed by demonstrable short- or long-term benefits to watershed resource conditions” (Forest Plan, p. III-22)*

### **FISH**

Alternative C would not be consistent with the Forest Plan standards SWST01 and SWST04 (Forest Plan 2003, p. III-21 and III-22). SWST01 states:

*“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.”*

SWRA Standard #4 (also known as SWST04) provides additional direction stating:

*“Management actions will neither degrade nor retard attainment of properly functioning soil, water, riparian, and aquatic desired conditions, except:*

*Where outweighed by demonstrable short- or long-term benefits to watershed resource conditions; or*

*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.*

*Use the MATRIX located in Appendix B to assist in determining compliance with this standard.”*

Appendix B in the Forest Plan outlines a set of watershed condition indicators (WCI's) and desired conditions for the WCIs to determine potential impacts associated with an action. The fisheries analysis revealed that in Alternative C, 2 WCIs would be degraded without demonstrable short to long-term benefits to watershed conditions.

Alternative C is not consistent with Forest Plan direction to avoid degradation of the substrate embeddedness WCI. Accelerated erosion associated with additional motorized use in currently non-motorized areas is expected to increase substrate embeddedness in fish habitat resulting in degradation of the substrate embeddedness WCI in the South Fork Salmon River – Goat Creek, and the East Fork South Fork Salmon River watersheds located in MA 12.

In addition, Alternative C is not consistent with Forest Plan direction to avoid degradation of the streambank condition WCI. The stream bank condition WCI in the tributaries to the South Fork Salmon River (except those in the Secesh River and East Fork South Fork Salmon River) are expected to degrade because of the increase in stream crossings by motorized trails. The new motorized routes and associated stream crossings would occur in areas currently closed to cross-country motor vehicle use.

The above descriptions of negative impacts to WCIs would result in reductions to habitat quality for fisheries without demonstrable short to long-term benefits to watershed resource conditions. Thus, selection of Alternative C would require a non-significant amendment to waive these standards for this project in MA 12.

## **WILDLIFE**

Alternative C proposes to open approximately 59,000 acres in lynx habitat that are currently closed to over-snow vehicle for a total of about 746,500 open acres or about 81 percent of the lynx habitat on the PNF outside of designated Wilderness. Hence, Alternative C would expand open areas and snow compaction in lynx habitat potentially increasing interference from other carnivores in lynx habitat.

The PNF Forest Plan has adopted the LCAS standard for snow compaction. Forest Plan standard (TEST34) states:

*“Allow no net increase in groomed or designated over-the-snow routes or play areas, outside of baseline areas of consistent snow compaction, by lynx analysis unit (LAU) or in combination with immediately adjacent LAUs unless the Biological Assessment demonstrates the grooming or designation serves to consolidate use and improve lynx habitat.... Also, permits, authorizations or agreements could expand into baseline routes and baseline areas of existing snow compaction, and grooming could expand to routes of existing snow compaction and routes that have been designated but not groomed in the past and still comply with this standard. (USDA Forest Service 2003a)”*

Expansion of over the snow motorized use areas without accompanying reductions elsewhere would not meet Forest Plan direction in five LAUs in Alternative C. In addition, lynx habitat and habitat corridors in winter would be more fragmented due to an additional 58,900 acres in lynx habitat open to over-snow motorized use. Alternative C would not adequately ensure protection of the five main habitat corridors on the Forest. Thus, selection of Alternative C would require a non-significant amendment to waive standard TEST34 for 5 LAUs.

Winter Travel:

This alternative increases the area open to over-snow motorized use by 78,160 acres and mileage of groomed snowmobile trail by 11.3 miles above the No Action alternative.

Groomed snowmobile trails: 236.8 miles  
 Motorized over-snow use: 1,156,700 acres  
 Closed to motorized use: 373,040 acres

Summer Travel:

Nearly 127.9 miles of trail would be open for ATV use, and another 3.1 miles would be open to all OHVs. Two-wheel motorized traffic could use these trails, in addition to the 572.8 miles of trail specifically designed for two-wheel vehicles.

Designated roads (open and seasonally) available for full size vehicles would decrease by 2.7 miles. All unauthorized roads would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 300 feet of designated roads and 100 feet of designated motorized trails as long as it does not result in resource damage.

Motorized cross-country travel: 0 acres  
 Two-wheel motorized trail: 572.8 miles  
 ATV trail: 127.9 miles  
 OHV trail: 3.1 miles  
 Non-motorized trail: 495.2 miles  
 NFS open road: 1,118.7 miles  
 NFS seasonally open road: 516.1 miles

**Alternative D – Additional Non-Motorized Opportunities**

Alternative D responds to issues raised by non-motorized users relating to a need for more non-motorized opportunities, particularly in winter. It also addresses associated concerns with noise and safety related to overlapping motorized and non-motorized use areas. This alternative would create more opportunities for both summer and winter non-motorized users. It also responds to Forest Plan direction to limit cross-country motor vehicle use, protect Forest resources, minimize maintenance costs, and reduce user conflicts (conflicts between uses). Protection of wildlife habitat connectivity corridors, particularly wolverine denning habitat, is emphasized in Alternative D. Implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue. Alternative D is consistent with Forest Plan Standards.

Between the Draft and Final EIS an additional over-snow vehicle area closure was added to this alternative. The closure responds to concerns expressed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game that the priority areas for wolverine denning habitat were not being protected in the areas identified in the DEIS.

Winter Travel:

This alternative decreases the area open to over-snow motorized use by 204,800 acres below the No Action alternative. The amount of currently groomed snowmobile trail is reflected in this alternative, rather than in Alternative A. (Alternative A reflects the miles of trail available for grooming under the Memorandum of Understanding authorization between the Forest Service and the counties.)

Groomed snowmobile trails: 225.5 miles  
 Motorized over-snow use: 873,740 acres  
 Closed to motorized use: 656,000 acres

#### Summer Travel:

Alternative D incorporates all the non-motorized trails in the Proposed Action and provides additional non-motorized trails. The alternative includes the fewest motorized trails of any alternative.

Designated roads (open and seasonally open) available for full size vehicles would decrease by approximately 31.8 miles. All unauthorized roads would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 300 feet of designated roads and 100 feet of designated motorized trails as long as it does not result in resource damage.

Motorized cross-country travel:	0 acres
Two-wheel motorized trail:	408.4 miles
ATV trail:	69.0 miles
OHV trail:	2.8 miles
Non-motorized trail:	614.2 miles
NFS open road:	1,111.7 miles
NFS seasonally open road:	494.1 miles

### **Alternative E – Response to Internal and External Comment on the Draft EIS**

Alternative E responds to issues raised during the comment period on the Draft EIS. Alternative E was developed by the Forest Supervisor, the interdisciplinary team, local county commissioners, and representatives from Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. These parties worked to balance resource protection, input from the public, and non-motorized and motorized recreation opportunities. Implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue. Alternative E is consistent with Forest Plan Standards.

#### Winter Travel:

Alternative E would reduce the amount of area open to motorized use by 114,010 acres. These non-motorized acres would protect wildlife habitat connectivity in winter and provide semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities. Groomed snowmobile trail would increase by 11.3 miles above current levels.

Groomed snowmobile trails:	236.8 miles
Motorized over-snow use:	964,530 acres
Closed to motorized use:	565,210 acres

#### Summer Travel:

Designated roads (open and seasonally open) available for full size vehicles would decrease by approximately 14.5 miles. All unauthorized roads would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 300 feet of designated roads and 100 feet of designated motorized trails as long as it does not result in resource damage.

Motorized cross-country travel:	0 acres
Two-wheel motorized trail:	506.7 miles
ATV trail:	108.0 miles
OHV trail:	7.4 miles
Non-motorized trail:	537.9 miles
NFS open road:	1,114.3 miles

S U M M A R Y

NFS seasonally open road: 508.7 miles

**Table S-1. Forest Summary – Travel Opportunities by Alternative**

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<b>Winter Travel</b>					
Groomed snowmobile trails (miles)	245.9	225.5	236.8	225.5	236.8
Motorized over-snow use (acres)	1,078,540	1,061,130	1,156,700	873,740	962,790
Closed to motorized use (acres)	451,200	468,610	373,040	656,000	566,950
<b>Summer Travel</b>					
Motorized cross-country travel (acres)	510,930	0	0	0	0
Two-wheel motorized trail (miles)	581.9	434.5	572.8	408.4	506.7
ATV trail (miles)	75.3	89.0	127.9	69.0	108.0
OHV trail (miles)	2.8	3.1	3.1	2.8	7.4
Non-motorized trail (miles)	504.3	596.1	495.2	614.2	537.9
NFS open road (miles)	1,125.3	1,118.1	1,118.7	1,111.7	1,114.3
NFS seasonally open road (miles)	512.2	494.6	516.1	494.1	508.7

### Comparison of Alternatives

This section provides a comparative summary of how the alternatives respond to the purpose and need for action and how they respond to the significant issues. It also displays the projected outputs and other environmental effects that may influence alternative selection. Based on this information and the analysis provided in Chapter 3, the responsible official and the public should be able to see why some alternatives affect resources and issues differently than others, and what the trade-offs are between alternatives; that is, to provide “a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker and the public” (40 CFR 1502.14).

The tables and discussion on the following pages compare issue indicators and resource effects by alternative for each significant issue in a summary form. Chapter 3 provides detail of the effects of alternative implementation.

### Recreation

**Table S-2. Recreation Issue 1**

Travel management may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities in summer.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Miles of open road and seasonally open NFS road	1,637.5	1,612.7	1,634.8	1,605.8	1,623.0
Miles of: 1) Two-wheel motorized, and 2) Miles of non-motorized trail	581.9	434.5	572.8	408.4	506.7
Miles of ATV trail	75.3	89.0	127.9	69.0	108.0
Miles of OHV trail	2.8	3.1	3.1	2.8	7.4
Acres open to cross-country motor vehicle use	510,930	0	0	0	0
	Motorized cross-country travel allowed	Motorized cross-country travel prohibited			

**Table S-3. Recreation Issue 2**

Travel management may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities in winter.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<p><b>Acres open and closed to over-snow vehicles</b></p>	<p><b>1,078,540 acres open</b>  <b>451, 200 acres closed</b>                      70% of the project area open to snowmobile use - all acres are usually within snow levels.                      29% of the project area available for non-motorized over-snow use - some acres are below snow levels. Existing closures used by skiers are located in Jughandle Mountain, Squaw Point, Sturgill Peak.</p>	<p><b>1,061,130 acres open</b>  <b>468,610 acres closed</b>                      69% of the project area open to snowmobile use – all acres are usually within snow levels.                      31% of the project area available for non-motorized over-snow use - some acres are below snow levels. Proposed closures in Granite Basin, Bear Basin and Lick Creek area would provide non-motorized areas with better access, safer conditions and untracked snow for longer periods of time.</p>	<p><b>1,156,700 acres open</b>  <b>373,040 acres closed</b>                      73% of the project area open to snowmobile use - are acres are usually within snow levels.                      27% of the project area available for non-motorized over snow use - some acres are below snow levels. Least amount of proposed closures of all alternatives. Proposed closure in Granite, Bear Basin and Lick Creek area would provide non-motorized areas with better access, safer conditions and untracked snow for longer periods of time.</p>	<p><b>873,740 acres open</b>  <b>656,000 acres closed</b>                      57% of the project area open to snowmobile use - all acres are usually within snow levels.                      42% of the project area available for non-motorized over-snow use – some acres are below snow levels. Largest amount of proposed closures. Proposed closure of Granite, Bear Basin and Lick Creek area with additional closures in Slab Butte, Upper Payette Lake, and expansion of existing Jug Handle closure would provide non-motorized areas with better access, safer conditions and untracked snow for longer periods of time</p>	<p><b>962,790 acres open</b>  <b>566,950 acres closed</b>                      63% of the project area open to snowmobile use – all acres are usually within snow levels. 37% of the project area available for non-motorized over-snow use – some acres are below snow levels, and many areas too far for recreational use. Proposed motorized closures greater than in Alternative B and C, but less than Alternative D. Proposed closures in Slab Butte, Patrick Butte, Hazard Creek, Bear Pete, Marshall Meadows, Big Creek, and Crestline South, Bear Basin and Granite closures are similar to Alternative C. Proposed closure is similar to Alternative B for Lick Creek. Proposed open motorized areas provide for multiple snowmobile play areas. Proposed non-</p>

**Table S-3. Recreation Issue 2**

Travel management may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities in winter.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
					motorized areas provide improved access for skiers and snowshoers with safer conditions and longer periods of untracked snow.
<b>Use areas with clear boundary designations</b>	<b>Poor-Moderate</b> Numerous documented snowmobile intrusions to non-motorized areas. Areas somewhat laid out on visible terrain features making accidental entry into some areas unlikely.	<b>Moderate</b> New areas proposed for non-motorized use have been laid out on visible terrain and man-made features making accidental entry into areas unlikely.	<b>Moderate-Good</b> New areas proposed for both non-motorized use and motorized use have been laid out on visible terrain and man-made features making accidental entry into areas unlikely.	<b>Moderate-Good</b> New areas proposed for non-motorized use have been primarily laid out on visible terrain and man-made features making accidental entry into areas unlikely.	<b>Poor-Moderate</b> Proposed non-motorized areas designed for recreation use have visible terrain and man-made feature boundaries making accidental entry into areas unlikely, but the multiple wildlife closure areas will be difficult to find on the ground and are too large to sign effectively.
<b>Miles of groomed snowmobile trail</b>	<b>245.9</b> = miles approved in the 2000 trail grooming Cost Share Agreement with the state and Valley County [note the distinction with other alternatives]	<b>225.5</b> = miles actually being groomed on the ground (not all trails approved in 2000 are groomed)	<b>236.8</b> = miles desired in the future to be incorporated into the new 2005 grooming Cost Share Agreement	<b>225.5</b> same as Alternative B	<b>236.8</b> same as Alternative C

**Table S-3. Recreation Issue 2**

Travel management may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities in winter.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<p><b>Proximity of non-motorized areas to parking and access points for winter based activities</b></p>	<p><b>Poor</b> Main backcountry ski areas are located more than 3 miles from developed trailheads and access points.</p>	<p><b>Poor-Good</b> Proposed closures provide non-motorized over-snow opportunities within 3 miles of trailheads and access points.</p>	<p><b>Poor-Moderate</b> Proposed closures provide minimal non-motorized over snow opportunities within 3 miles of trailheads and access points.</p>	<p><b>Good-Excellent</b> Proposed closures provide multiple access points to non-motorized over snow opportunities within 3 miles of trailheads and access points.</p>	<p><b>Good</b> Proposed closures provide multiple access points to non-motorized over-snow opportunities within 3 miles of trailheads and access points.</p>
<p><b>Approximate acres of skiable terrain</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate</b> <b>160,490 acres</b> non-motorized skiable terrain acres (does not include the Brundage ski area)</p>	<p><b>Good</b> <b>172,477 acres</b> These acres incorporate the proposed Granite Mountain, Bear Basin and Lick Creek non-motorized areas</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b> <b>159,188 acres</b> Includes more limited areas compared to Alt B: in Granite Mountain, Bear Basin, Lick Creek areas. Two previously non-motorized areas are proposed for conversion to motorized over-snow use.</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> <b>222,468 acres</b> Includes larger areas compared to Alt B in Granite Mountain, Bear Basin, Lick Creek areas &amp; proposes additional areas in Jughandle, Upper Payette Lake, Slab Butte Marshall Mountain area.</p>	<p><b>Good – Excellent</b> <b>205,016 acres</b> Includes a portion of Granite Basin and Slab Butte area which would provide excellent non-motorized skiing opportunities, and Crestline South and Lick Creek which would provide good skiing opportunities.</p>

**Table S-4. Recreation Issue 3**

Travel management may affect road and trail program costs.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<p><b>Costs to program management</b></p>	<p><b>No savings</b>  <b>Trails:</b>                      Existing program costs do not keep up with needed trail maintenance. Grants and volunteer program support still do not meet trail program demands.  <b>Roads:</b>                      For all alternatives, existing congressional funding is insufficient to fund scheduled road maintenance.</p>	<p><b>Modest savings</b>  <b>Trails:</b>                      With a reduction of approximately 42 miles in trails, program costs come closer to balancing with program needs, but will not keep up with needed trail maintenance. Grants and volunteer support will continue to be relied on to meet trail program goals.  <b>Roads:</b>                      For all alternatives, existing congressional funding is insufficient to fund scheduled road maintenance.</p>	<p><b>No savings</b>  <b>Trails:</b>                      An increase of approximately 35 miles of trail is added to the trail system. Cost to maintain trail system would continue to exceed allocated and grant funding available for basic maintenance. Grant and volunteer support will continue to be relied on to help achieve trail program goals. Large investments would be needed to get proposed ATV trails to standard.  <b>Roads:</b>                      For all alternatives, existing congressional funding is insufficient to fund scheduled road maintenance.</p>	<p><b>Modest savings</b>  <b>Trails:</b>                      With a reduction of approximately 70 miles of trails, program cost comes closest to meeting trail program demands, but will not keep up with needed trail maintenance. Grants and volunteer support will continue to be relied on to meet trail program goals.  <b>Roads:</b>                      For all alternatives, existing congressional funding is insufficient to fund scheduled road maintenance.</p>	<p><b>No savings</b>  <b>Trails:</b>                      A reduction of approximately 4 miles of trail. Program costs come closer to balancing with program needs, but will not keep up with needed trail maintenance. Grant and volunteer support will continue to be relied on to help achieve trail program goals. Large investments would be needed to get proposed ATV trails to standard.  <b>Roads:</b>                      For all alternatives, existing congressional funding is insufficient to fund scheduled road maintenance.</p>

**Table S-5. Recreation Issue 4**

Separation of potentially conflicting uses – particularly motorized and non-motorized – in travel management may affect the safety of recreationists.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<p><b>Degree of public safety provided based on separation of uses</b></p>	<p>Potentially unsafe in winter. Safety issues include potential and documented collisions between snowmobiles and backcountry skiers, and skiing hazards created by deep snowmobile tracks.</p> <p>In summer, potential for motorized and non-motorized collisions on motorized ATV and two-wheel single track trails.</p>	<p>Potentially more safe in winter. Proposed non-motorized use areas would reduce the potential for collisions between backcountry skiers and snowmobiles and the hazards formed by snowmobile tracks.</p> <p>Summertime trail safety may improve on trails proposed for conversion to non-motorized use by eliminating motorized vehicles.</p>	<p>Potentially moderately more safe in winter. Proposed non-motorized use areas are smaller in Alt C than in Alts B and D. Separation of motorized and non-motorized uses would reduce the potential for collisions between backcountry skiers and snowmobiles and the hazards formed by snowmobile tracks.</p> <p>Summertime trail safety issues could increase with more non-motorized trails being converted to motorized trails.</p>	<p>Potentially most safe in winter. Proposed non-motorized use areas are greatest in Alt D, would provide greatest reduction in the potential for collisions between backcountry skiers and snowmobiles and the hazards formed by snowmobile tracks.</p> <p>Summertime trail safety could improve on trails proposed for conversion to non-motorized use by removing motorized vehicles.</p>	<p>Potentially more safe in winter. Proposed additional non-motorized use areas would reduce the potential for collisions between backcountry skiers and snowmobiles and the skiing hazards created by snowmobile tracks.</p> <p>Summertime trail safety would be similar to Alternative A.</p>

**Table S-6. Recreation Issue 5**

Changes in motorized use may affect Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) settings for both summer and winter use.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<p><b>Change to Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)</b></p>	<p>No change to current ROS in winter or summer</p>	<p>Potential minimal changes in both winter and summer ROS from SPM to SPNM areas due to conversions of motorized trails to non-motorized and winter motorized over-snow closures</p>	<p>Potential minimal changes from SPNM to SPM in summer, large scale changes from SPNM to SPM in winter over-snow</p>	<p>Potential minimal changes in summer ROS from SPM to SPNM, large scale changes from SPM to SPNM in winter over-snow</p>	<p>Potential minimal change in summer ROS from SPM to SPNM, potential minimal change in winter over-snow. Area changes from SPM to SPNM would be almost balanced by changes from SPNM to SPM.</p>

## Roadless Character and Wilderness

**Table S-7. Roadless Character and Wilderness Issue 1**

Increases in motorized use may affect wilderness potential and wilderness attributes in Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs).

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<b>Effects to wilderness potential</b>	No effects to wilderness potential of IRAs.	No measurable effects.	No measurable effects.	No measurable effects.	No measurable effects
<b>Effects to wilderness attributes of Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs): solitude, primitive recreation, and natural integrity</b>	No change to existing wilderness attributes.	Summer: Beneficial effects in MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,12  Winter: Beneficial effects in MAs 7, 12	Summer: Negative effects in MA 3  Winter: Beneficial effects in MA 7 Negative effects in MAs 10, 11	Summer: Beneficial effects in MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12  Winter: Beneficial effects in MAs 7, 8, 12	Summer: Beneficial effects in MAs 6, 7, 10, 12  Winter: Beneficial effects in MAs 6, 7, 9, 12, 13 Negative effects in MAs 10, 11

## Soil and Water

**Table S-8. Soil & Water Issue 1**

The type, extent, and location of a designated motorized system of roads, trails, and areas may degrade soil productivity, accelerate erosion, and deliver sediment to streams.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<b>Percent of the Management Area designated open to cross-country motor vehicle use and/or limited motorized access.</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: No Change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: Degrade	MAs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: No Change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: No Change
<b>Percent of Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs) in designated areas open to cross-country motor vehicle use and/or limited motorized access</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: No Change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: No Change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: No Change	As 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MA 1: No Change
<b>Miles of designated roads</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 3, 6, 8, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13: No Change  MAs 2, 7, 11: Degrade	MAs 6, 10: Improvement  MAs 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13: No Change  MAs 2, 3, 7, 11: Degrade	MAs 3, 6, 8, 10, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 13: No Change  MAs 7, 11: Degrade	MAs 3, 6, 10, 12, 13: Improvement  MAs 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9: No Change  MAs 7, 11: Degrade
<b>Miles of designated two-wheel motorized trails.</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 5, 7, 13: No Change	MAs 2, 3, 9, 10, 11: Improvement  MAs 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13: No Change  MA 12: Degrade	MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 2, 5, 13: No Change	MAs 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: Improvement  MAs 1, 5, 7, 8: No Change  MA 4: Degrade

**Table S-8. Soil & Water Issue 1**

The type, extent, and location of a designated motorized system of roads, trails, and areas may degrade soil productivity, accelerate erosion, and deliver sediment to streams.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
<b>Miles of designated ATV and OHV trails.</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 4, 11, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13: No Change  MAs 2, 3, 11, 12: Degrade	MAs 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13: No Change  MAs 1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 11: Degrade	MAs 4, 7, 9, 11: Improvement  MAs 1,2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13: No Change	MAs 2, 4, 7: Improvement  MAs 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12: No Change  MAs 2, 3, 6, 10, 11, 13: Degrade
<b>Miles of designated roads and motorized trails in subwatersheds with a high watershed vulnerability rating.</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13:  No Change	MAs 10: Improvement  MAs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13: No Change  MAs 1, 2, 12: Degrade	MAs 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13:  No Change	MAs 2, 10, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13: No Change
<b>Miles of designated roads and motorized trails within RCAs.</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 5,, 13: No Change  MA 7, 11: Degrade	MAs 9, 10: Improvement  MAs 1, 4, 5, 8, 13: No Change  MAs 2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 12: Degrade	MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 5, 13: No Change	MAs 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13: Improvement  MAs 1, 4, 5, 8, : No Change  MA s2, 7, 11: Degrade

**Table S-8. Soil & Water Issue 1**

The type, extent, and location of a designated motorized system of roads, trails, and areas may degrade soil productivity, accelerate erosion, and deliver sediment to streams.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<b>Number of inventoried stream crossings on designated roads and motorized trails.</b>	All Management Areas (MAs): No change	MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 5, 7, 11, 13: No Change  MAs 11: Degrade	MAs 3, 9, 10: Improvement  MAs 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13: No Change  MAs 2, 6, 11, 12: Degrade	MAs 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12: Improvement  MAs 1, 5, 13: No Change	MAs 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13: Improvement  MAs 1,4, 5, 7, 8, 13: No Change  MAs 6, 11: Degrade

## Fisheries

**Table S-9. Fisheries Issue 1**

Travel management may impact habitats for threatened, endangered, and sensitive fishes including the bull trout (a Management Indicator Species).

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<p><b>Change in WCI for substrate embeddedness</b></p>	<p>All watersheds are temporarily maintained and would degrade in the short and long term. Direct <b>effects not consistent</b> with Forest Plan direction to avoid degradation of WCIs, because there is no long term benefit. Travel management revisions and compliance with Forest Plan direction would occur at an unknown rate.</p>	<p>Temporarily, condition would be maintained in Deep Creek and tributaries to the Brownlee Reservoir, Weiser River basin, Little Salmon River basin, Salmon River most tributaries between the Little Salmon River and SFSR, and the SFSR tributaries. All these areas would degrade in short and long term at lower rates than by making no change, hence this would benefit listed fish. Big Creek, Partridge, and Lake Creeks are maintained. This <b>Alternative is consistent</b> with Forest Plan.</p>	<p>Conditions in Deep Creek, tributaries to Brownlee Reservoir, Weiser River basin, Little Salmon River basin, most Salmon River tributaries between the Little Salmon and SFSR (except Partridge and Lake creeks), and lower SFSR tributaries and in the Secesh River would degrade in short and long term at lower rates than by making no change, hence this would benefit listed fish. Big Creek, Partridge Creek and Lake Creek are maintained. Tributaries to upper SFSR basin &amp; East Fork SFSR would degrade, and are therefore, <b>not consistent</b> with Forest Plan.</p>	<p>Conditions in Deep Creek, tributaries to the Brownlee Reservoir, Weiser River basin, most Little Salmon River basin, Salmon River between the Little Salmon River and the upper SFSR, and the SFSR tributaries in the Secesh would degrade in short and long term, at lower rates than by making no change, hence this would benefit listed fish. Big Creek, Little Salmon River – Elk, Partridge Creek, and Lake Creek are maintained. Tributaries to the lower SFSR basin and in the East Fork SFSR would improve. This <b>Alternative is consistent</b> with Forest Plan.</p>	<p>Conditions in Deep Creek, tributaries to the Brownlee Reservoir, Weiser River basin, most of the Little Salmon River basin, most Salmon River tributaries between the Little Salmon River and the upper and lower SFSR, and the SFSR tributaries in the Secesh would degrade in short and long term, at lower rates than by making no change, hence this would benefit listed fish. Big Creek, Little Salmon River – Elk, Partridge Creek, and Lake Creek are maintained. Tributaries to the SFSR basin in the East Fork SFSR would improve. This <b>Alternative is consistent</b> with Forest Plan.</p>

**Table S-9. Fisheries Issue 1**

Travel management may impact habitats for threatened, endangered, and sensitive fishes including the bull trout (a Management Indicator Species).

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<p><b>Change in WCI for stream bank condition</b></p>	<p>All watersheds would be maintained during all time periods. This Alternative is consistent with Forest Plan.</p>	<p>Conditions would be maintained in Deep Creek, Indian Creek, and tributaries to Weiser River basin, some tributaries to Little Salmon River basin, some tributaries to Salmon River between Little Salmon River and SFSR, and SFSR tributaries in the Secesh River and downriver from there, and Big Creek. Tributaries to Brea Creek and Crooked River, Most Little Salmon River basin tributaries, Middle Salmon- Indian, Warren Creek, French Creek, Partridge Creek, Lake Creek, and SFSR basin except those in the Secesh River basin would improve. This Alternative <b>is consistent</b> with Forest Plan.</p>	<p>Conditions would be maintained in Deep Creek, Wildhorse River tributaries, and tributaries to Weiser River basin, Little Salmon River tributaries between the Little Salmon River &amp; SFSR (except tributaries to Warren Creek) and SFSR in the East Fork SFSR and Secesh River. Tributaries to Middle Salmon - Indian and Warren Creek, and French Creek would improve. Tributaries to upper and lower SFSR would degrade. This alternative is <b>not consistent</b> with Forest Plan direction for the tributaries to the upper and lower SFSR.</p>	<p>Conditions would be maintained in Deep Creek, Indian Creek, most tributaries to the Weiser River basin, most tributaries to the Little Salmon River basin, and Big Creek. Bear Creek, Crooked River, and Little Weiser River, several Little Salmon River tributaries, and Salmon River tributaries between the Little Salmon River and SFSR and the entire SFSR basin would improve. This Alternative <b>is consistent</b> with Forest Plan.</p>	<p>Conditions would be maintained in Deep Creek, tributaries to the Brownlee basin, tributaries to the Weiser River basin, tributaries to the Little Salmon River (Boulder Creek), most tributaries to the Salmon River between the Little Salmon River and the SFSR, and the Secesh River and upper SFSR. Tributaries to Brownlee Reservoir basin, East Fork Weiser River, Rapid River and Hard Creek and Hazard Creek and Little Salmon River tributaries, Middle Salmon-Indian, Warren Creek, French Creek, and the East Fork and lower SFSR would improve. This Alternative <b>is consistent</b> with Forest Plan.</p>

## Wildlife

**Table S-10. Wildlife Issue 1**

Motorized travel may affect summer and winter elk habitat and elk vulnerability during hunting season.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<i>Summer</i>					
<b>Acres open to cross-country motor vehicle use.</b>	No change from 511,000	0*	0*	0*	0*
<b>Density (mi/mi.<sup>2</sup>) of open NFS roads and motorized trails by watershed<sup>1</sup> in summer</b>	No change: 4 of 43 watersheds $\geq 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	See Table W-13 Slight decrease: 4 of 43 watersheds $\geq 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	See Table W-13 Slight increase: 4 of 43 watersheds $\geq 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	See Table W-13 Decrease: 3 of 43 watersheds $\geq 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	See Table W-13 Slight decrease: 4 of 43 watersheds $\geq 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>
<i>Hunting Season</i>					
<b>Percent of elk security habitat available during hunting season</b>	3 of 27 Elk Analysis Areas (EAAs) $>30\%$	Slight benefits: 3 of 27 EAAs $>30\%$	Slight reduction: 3 of 27 EAAs $>30\%$	Slight benefits: 3 of 27 EAAs $>30\%$	Slight benefits: 3 of 27 EAAs $>30\%$
<b>Density (mi/mi.<sup>2</sup>) of open NFS roads and motorized trails by watershed<sup>1</sup> in fall</b>	No change: all 43 watersheds $< 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	Slight decrease: all watersheds $< 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	Slight increase: all watersheds $< 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	Decrease: all watersheds $< 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>	Slight decrease: all watersheds $< 2$ mi/mi. <sup>2</sup>
<i>Winter</i>					
<b>Miles groomed snowmobile routes within elk winter range</b>	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55
<b>Acres and percent elk winter range open to over-snow vehicle use</b>	81,000 (43%)	81,000 (43%)	90,200 (48%)	72,700 (39%)	76,000 (41%)

\* - except for travel 300 feet off open roads and 150 off motorized trails for purpose of dispersed camping

<sup>1</sup> - Five watersheds comprised of very low amounts (less than 1,000 acres) of NFS lands were not included in analysis

**Table S-11. Wildlife Issue 2**

Motorized travel may affect Canada lynx habitat during summer and winter (over-snow).

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<i>Summer</i>					
Density of roads and motorized trails within lynx habitat	< 2 miles/sq. mile				
<i>Winter</i>					
Acres open and closed to over-snow vehicle use in lynx habitat	687,600 open (74%) 239,000 closed (26%)	675,100 open (73%) 251,500 closed (27%)	746,500 open (81%) 180,000 closed (19%)	533,100 open (58%) 393,500 closed (32%)	607,700 open (66%) 318,800 closed (34%)
Miles groomed snowmobile routes within lynx habitat	137	129	137	129	137
Effects of over-snow vehicle use on habitat connectivity	Moderate	Moderate	High	Low	Low

**Table S-12. Wildlife Issue 3**

Over-snow vehicle use may affect wolverine denning habitat.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Wolverine denning habitat closed to over-snow vehicle use	31%	33%	28%	65%	56%
Effects of over-snow vehicle use on habitat connectivity	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to high	Very Low	Low

**Table S-12. Wildlife Issue 4**

Travel management may affect habitat and/or populations of the pileated woodpecker (MIS), the white-headed woodpecker (MIS and Sensitive species), and the three-toed woodpecker (Sensitive species).

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Changes in habitat and potential effects on individuals and populations	All alternatives may impact individuals but <i>would not likely contribute to a trend toward Federal listing or cause a loss of viability to populations or species of three-toed woodpecker, white-headed woodpecker, and pileated woodpecker.</i>				

**Table S-13. Wildlife Issue 5**

Travel management may affect habitat and/or populations of threatened, endangered and Forest Service Sensitive Species.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Changes in habitat and potential effects on individuals and populations	Any alternative <i>may affect bald eagles but is not likely to adversely affect bald eagles or their habitat.</i>  <i>None of the action alternatives would jeopardize the continued existence of the gray wolf.</i>  Any alternative <i>is likely to adversely affect</i> northern Idaho ground squirrels or their habitat.  For the <i>spotted frog, boreal owl, flammulated owl, great gray owl, goshawk and fisher</i> all alternatives may impact individuals but <i>would not likely contribute to a trend toward Federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or species.</i>				

**Table S-14. Wildlife Issue 6**

Travel management may affect migratory bird species.

Indicator	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Changes in habitat and potential effects on individuals and populations	Minimal habitat modification would take place under the alternatives proposed for the PNF Travel Plan. All alternatives <i>may impact individuals and habitat, but would not indicate a local or regional change in habitat quality or population status</i> of migratory birds.				