



## **CHAPTER 2**

# **BACKGROUND AND DIRECTION FOR MANAGEMENT**

## CHAPTER 2

### Background and Direction for Management by Administrative and Resource Topic

#### *I. Introduction*

In order to describe the environment within the FC-RONRW, it is beneficial to consider the area by administrative and resource topic. These topics are addressed in alphabetical order in this chapter.

Each resource discussion will include a brief description of the Background and Desired Future Condition (DFC) for the resource. Goals for the resource, the Objectives to be met, the Standards that will provide sideboards for management, and the Guidelines that provide useful management advice for operations in the wilderness, are provided. For each resource, Standards and Guidelines are presented under the same sub-heading, and are distinguished by an (S), which indicates a Standard, or a (G), which indicates a Guideline. Monitoring Indicators by resource are identified where needed, and then summarized in Chapter 3 Monitoring.

#### *II. Wilderness Desired Future Condition*

The purpose of wilderness is "...to insure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition..." (Sec. 2.(a), The Wilderness Act of 1964). It is "...devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation and historical use." (Sec. 4.(b), The Wilderness Act of 1964).

Wilderness areas are defined as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain, "...an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation...and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value." (Sec. 2. (c), The Wilderness Act of 1964).

Wild and Scenic Rivers (W&SR) include the Salmon River, the Middle Fork of the Salmon River and the Selway River, which "...possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreation, geologic, fish, wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values. (They) shall be preserved in a free-flowing condition and...they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations" (Sec. 1. (b) Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968) ([Appendix F](#)).

A portion of the Salmon River Wild and Scenic River is within the FC-RONRW, with the "wild" section of river from Corn Creek to Long Tom Bar. The Act specifically provided for a continuation of the then existing motorized jetboat use at no less than 1978 levels. Congress also provided that the wild section of the Salmon River, existing within designated wilderness, be managed under the provisions of the Wild and Scenic River Act – notwithstanding section 10(b) of that Act or any provisions of the Wilderness Act to the contrary.

Preserving the wilderness character of the FC-RONRW is the overriding goal of the CIWA legislation and management. Congress found that the wildlands of central Idaho constituted the largest block of primitive and undeveloped land in the conterminous United States and of immense national significance. The Act provides statutory protection for the lands and waters and the wilderness-dependent wildlife and the resident anadromous fish that thrive within this undisturbed ecosystem. The FC-RONRW shall remain large and remote with the unique western flavor of its human heritage. Wilderness managers and users make efforts to prevent degradation of wilderness resources and to restore the wilderness values if they have been degraded beyond the intent of the law.

### **III. Administrative Sites**

#### **A. Background**

The FC-RONRW contains 31 lookout sites, 8 communication sites, and 19 administrative sites, all of which have facilities in place. Of the total, 13 administrative sites, 12 fire lookouts, and two communication sites are used in actual administration of the wilderness during the non-winter months. Six administrative sites and 19 fire lookouts have structures that are occasionally used. Some of the historic guard stations and fire lookouts have been determined as eligible and/or have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Boundary Creek, Indian Creek, Chamberlain, Cold Meadows, Magruder, Big Creek, Little Creek, Seafoam, Loon Creek, and Corn Creek administrative sites are recreational portals to the wilderness. These sites typically have administrative personnel on site during the summer season. Nine of the above administrative sites are associated with airfields.

Communications are achieved through eight radio nets, and are dependent on radio links, relays, and repeaters located within and/or near the wilderness. Three repeater sites located in the wilderness include Sheepeater, Sheep Hill, and Artillery Dome.

Other administrative sites within the wilderness include: Bernard, Cache Creek Cabin, Corral Camp, Falconberry, Forty-four Creek Guard Station, Hot Springs Meadow, Lantz Bar, Little Creek, Mahoney Creek Cabin, Simplot, Swet Lake Cabin, Thompson Flat, Warm Springs, and White Creek Cabin.

#### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Administrative facilities are the minimum necessary to administer the wilderness. All structures are appropriately sized, harmonize with the local environment, and support wilderness purposes. Sites are maintained and reflect a professional appearance to the public.

#### **C. Goals**

1. Utilize only the structures and facilities that are the minimum necessary to administer the wilderness, and only in a manner that minimizes their physical and visual impact on the wilderness resource. Each administrative facility will be used, managed, and maintained in accordance to an approved O & M Plan.
2. Retain existing facilities only when they are determined to be the minimum necessary for the purposes of administering the wilderness.

3. Restore or rehabilitate past management activities at administrative sites that adversely affect the wilderness.
4. Rehabilitate and restore administrative sites that do not meet the minimum requirements needed for use as an administrative facility.

**D. Objectives**

1. Develop a radio communications plan for the entire wilderness in order to minimize the communication system's impact on the wilderness resource while providing the minimum necessary level of administrative communication.
2. Periodically, evaluate those administrative sites that are used intermittently for their contribution and need in wilderness protection and management. Remove unneeded buildings within heritage resource guidelines.
3. Remove remnants of abandoned telephone lines.
3. Remove all non-burnable refuse resulting from past administrative activities, within heritage resource guidelines.

**E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Perform maintenance on needed administrative improvements in a manner that harmonizes with the wilderness environment and meets wilderness management objectives, including cultural guidelines. (S)
2. Structures where heritage resource values are indeterminate will be evaluated to determine their historic significance before any maintenance activity. (S)
3. Communications facilities will be maintained and constructed only if deemed essential for administration and protection of the wilderness. (S)
4. Perform a minimum requirements analysis to determine if a facility is needed for the administration of the area. (G)

## **IV. Air Quality**

### **A. Background**

The Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, and its associated Wild and Scenic Rivers, are designated Class II. It may not be redesignated to Class III. Management of air quality within the wilderness focuses on monitoring outside influences that could degrade the air quality beyond Clean Air Act Class II standards. There is increasing interest in monitoring internal smoke production from fire activities because of impacts they may have on surrounding communities and areas.

There have been three new stationary sources subject to Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) permit requirements in the vicinity of the wilderness in recent years. These sources include the Thompson Creek Mine, approximately 11 miles southeast of the wilderness boundary; the Stibnite mine, three miles west of the wilderness boundary; and the Blackbird mine, four miles east of the wilderness boundary. Their planned emissions, as modeled, are well within required standards.

Lake sampling started in 1985 with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducting phase one of a five-year National Water Survey for acid rain effects. Within the wilderness, eight lakes were sampled for pH, ANC and cation and anions. A detailed lake sampling program was started in 1989 and is on-going.

A few of the EPA lakes were re-sampled in 1994 and 1995 and results show very close correlations with the 1985 Western Lake Survey data. In 1988, lichen bio monitoring was started with the collecting of lichens on the east side of the FC-RONR Wilderness. Included with the sampling was some basic elemental analysis for copper, lead and sulfur along with 18 other elements. Preliminary results showed that the air quality is in excellent condition.

In 1989, both visibility monitoring and particle sampling for air chemistry was started. Visibility is generally excellent during most of the year, except seasonally in the summer, due to large wildfires. Visibility during this time can be less than 15 micrograms per cubic meter for 5 years, and PM-2.5 averaging less than 10 micrograms per cubic meter for 1994. In 1992, bryophyte (moss and liverwort) collecting was started to identify species within the wilderness. The on-going projects include: lichen bio monitoring, moss collecting and identification, particle sampling, and lake sampling.

The major summer wind pattern is from the southwest and west. During the winter, it is from the northwest and north.

The potential for frequent large fires continues to exist. Smoke from Wildland Fire Use, wildland fire, and prescribed fire will continue to be an output source to be monitored.

The State of Idaho has not acted upon the Class I re-designation proposal from the last planning period.

## **B. Desired Future Condition**

Air quality in the FC-RONRW is generally excellent. People visiting the FC-RONRW Wilderness have the opportunity to experience clean air and spectacular vistas in a natural setting, while recognizing that those vistas may be affected periodically by smoke from management actions or wildfires. Smoke emissions from wildland fires do not exceed estimated historical frequency and distribution for the various vegetation types across the landscape. Ambient air quality and visibility across the wilderness are within federal and state standards for Class II air sheds. Airborne pollutants from manufacturing, mining, or roads are scarce to non-existent. Management of the wilderness will not change the air quality.

## **C. Goals**

1. Assure that air quality over the wilderness is protected from pollution in excess of established standards.
2. Meet federal and state ambient air quality and visibility standards and other applicable air quality direction.
3. Manage smoke, while achieving wilderness management objectives, to provide for desirable air quality and visibility.

## **D. Objectives**

1. Await State action on Class I re-designation. Provide support, on request by state or federal units of government for such re-designation.
2. Await Class I re-designation before determine visibility standards and objectives.
3. Monitor visibility to determine baseline air quality information. Within five years establish visibility baseline and put mechanisms in place to track visibility trends.
4. Comply with federal, state, and local requirements related to the Clean Air Act. This includes, but is not limited to, participating in the respective state's Smoke Management Programs, and following State Implementation Plans.
5. Within five years or within the timeframe required by the State Implementation Plans, develop emissions data and trend information for fire use to be stored in a centralized database. Use data to document meeting regional haze requirements established by the State.

**E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Pending sampling data to establish a total suspended particulates baseline, 10 to 20 micrograms per cubic meter will be considered the norm in monitoring new pollution sources. (S)
2. Evaluate potential effects of proposed pollution sources for violation of Class II PSD standards. (G)
3. Monitor air particulate matter at established collection sites. (G)
4. Use a variety of management tools, including prescribed fire and Wildland Fire Use, to help manage vegetation to reduce potential smoke impacts from uncharacteristic wildfire. (G)

**F. Monitoring**

Monitoring is focused on airborne particles associated with fire and non-point source pollutants at established monitoring station adjacent to the FC-RONRW.

**Indicator**

1. Suspended Particulates – 10 to 20 micrograms per cubic meter



## **V. Aviation**

### **A. Background**

The FC-RONRW has a long history of aviation use, including overflights, airstrip maintenance, and commercial and recreational access at existing airstrips.

Aircraft use is allowed by both the 1964 Wilderness Act and the 1980 Central Idaho Wilderness Act. Section 4 (d) 1 of the Wilderness act states “Within wilderness areas designated by this act the use of aircraft or motorboats, where these uses have already become established, may be permitted to continue...”. The CIWA Section 7 (a) (1) established “the landing of aircraft, where this use has become established prior to the date of enactment of this act shall be permitted to continue...”.

Public use landing strips or airstrips are defined as specific locations that were listed in the 1980 Federal Aviation Administration Airport/Facility Directory as designated public use airports/aircraft landings areas. Further, these airports were recognized in 1980 by the State of Idaho as operating public use airstrips and were listed in the State of Idaho Airport Facilities Directory. Seven of these airstrips are operated and maintained by the Forest Service and two are operated by the State of Idaho (Table 2.1). Four airstrips that were acquired by the Forest Service after establishment of the FC-RONRW are managed for “emergency use only”. In addition, there are currently 18 landing strips designated as private use facilities. Since 1993, the Forest Service has operated one of these designated private airstrips for public use. The State of Idaho operates two of these private airstrips for access to State-owned property, and public use is not allowed. The other 13 private use airstrips are operated and maintained by the landowners for access to private property, and are not available for general public use.

More than 5,500 aircraft landings occur within the area annually. The Chamberlain and Indian Creek airfields are two of the larger maintained landing areas and are the least demanding from the standpoint of backcountry flying skills needed for safe use. Consequently, both airfields are regularly utilized by private pilots for short- and long-term visits. The Indian Creek airfield is heavily used in connection with the popular floatboating activity on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. When water levels drop to approximately two feet, use of Indian Creek increases, as it is one of the few remaining launch areas available.

In contrast to the Chamberlain and Indian Creek airfields, several smaller airfields require higher degrees of mountain flying skills. These airfields should only be attempted by pilots familiar with canyon and short-field operation. (For details, consult the Idaho Airport Facilities Directory published by the Idaho Transportation Department.)

A few airstrips are very short, contain obstructions, are located on steep slopes, and/or have rough surfaces. These airstrips require Short Take Off and Landing (STOL) aircraft, conventional (tail-dragger) landing gear and the highest degree of piloting skill.

The early practice of marking and numbering helispots has been discontinued. Most fire lookouts maintain adjacent helispots, usually outlined by rocks, with a wind direction indicator.

**Table 2.1. Airstrips within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness**

<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Public Use</b>	<b>Private Use</b>	<b>Emergency Use</b>
National Forest	Bernard Cabin Creek Chamberlain Cold Meadows Indian Creek Mahoney Soldier Bar	Wilson Bar (open to public)	Dewey Moore Mile Hi Simonds Vines
<b>State</b>	Loon Creek - (Simplot)* Thomas Creek	Stonebraker Taylor Ranch	
<b>Private</b>		Allison Ranch Campbell's Ferry Dovel (Monumental Ranch) Flying B James Ranch Mackay Bar Morgan Ranch Pistol Creek Root Ranch Shepp Ranch Sulphur Creek Ranch Whitewater Ranch Yellowpine Bar Foster	

\* Loon Creek (Simplot) did not appear in the 1980 State Aircraft Directory, but is currently considered by the State as open to public use.

### ***Administrative Responsibility for Airstrips***

The Ranger Districts that have operation and maintenance responsibilities for the eight airstrips managed for public use, and the four airstrips managed for emergency use, are displayed in Table 2.2. These Ranger Districts are responsible for coordinating airstrip administration and management actions.

**Table 2.2. Ranger Districts with Airstrip Operation and Maintenance Responsibilities for Public and Emergency Use.**

Ranger District	Public Use Airstrip	Emergency Use Only
Krassel RD (Payette NF)	Chamberlain Cold Meadows Solider Bar Cabin Creek	Dewey Moore Mile Hi Simonds Vines
Middle Fork RD – North Fork RD (Salmon-Challis NF)	Indian Creek Mahoney Bernard	
Salmon River RD (Nez Perce NF)	Wilson Bar	

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Airstrips operated by the Forest Service for public use and access are routinely maintained to provide for safe aircraft operations, but are not enhanced over conditions typical of 1980. Pilots practice appropriate Leave No Trace ethics at the airstrips.

Aircraft fly as high and as quietly as practicable to reduce effects to other users and to wildlife. Aircraft landings are for wilderness-dependent activities, keeping take-offs and landings to a minimum.

### **C. Goals**

1. Opportunities are provided to access the area by aircraft, using airstrips that have been traditionally operated and maintained by the Forest Service for public access since 1980.
2. Visitors using the Forest Service-operated and maintained public airstrips practice Leave No Trace and recognize and respect the right of other users and take action to lessen their effects on other users and wildlife. Users understand the need for limits to protect the physical and social resource and allow opportunities for solitude.
3. Charter services that provide transportation services or make other commercial use of Forest Service-operated and maintained public airstrips cooperate in providing recreation opportunities and communicating a Leave No Trace use philosophy to the public.

4. Manage and maintain airstrip dimensions, conditions and function, to those existing in 1980 at the time of wilderness designation.
5. Campsites at airstrips will be managed for primitive recreation use opportunities appropriate within wilderness.
6. Where conflicts develop in management of the airstrips, decisions will favor the wilderness resource to the extent allowed by law.

#### **D. Objectives**

1. The seven (7) designated public use airstrips operated and maintained by the Forest Service will be managed for unrestricted public and commercial use until use levels and evaluations dictate a need to establish use limits.
2. The one (1) designated private use airstrip operated and maintained by the Forest Service (Wilson Bar), will be managed for unrestricted public and commercial use until use levels and evaluations dictate a need to establish use limits.
3. Four acquired and previously abandoned airstrips – Dewey Moore, Mile Hi, Simonds, and Vines – along Big Creek will be available for “emergency use only”. These locations will not be managed as public use landing areas.
4. Airstrips on two previously acquired private properties – Crofoot and Falconberry– will not be available for public use as landing strips and will not be maintained. Rehabilitation/reclamation will be pursued where needed to restore and naturalize these sites.
5. Annually the Forest Service and State of Idaho will coordinate and conduct scheduled inspections for all seven (7) designated public use airstrips operated and maintained by the Forest Service.
6. Annually the Forest Service and State of Idaho will coordinate and conduct scheduled inspections on the one (1) designated private use airstrip – Wilson Bar – operated and maintained by the Forest Service for public use.
7. Within 5 years, complete an evaluation to determine the operators and activities currently occurring on public use airstrips managed by the Forest Service. Results of the evaluation will be used to determine which commercial air charter services will be required to operate under Forest Service Special Use permit.
8. Within 5 years, complete an evaluation to assess the need for use limits at public use airstrips and establish trigger points for initiation of use limits or controls.
9. The Forest Service, in consultation with the State of Idaho and Federal Aviation Administration, will define an appropriate maintenance standard for the 4 emergency

use only airstrips along Big Creek, with the understanding that conditions will not be enhanced at these locations over what existed in 1980. An O&M Plan will be developed and implemented to reflect these emergency use standards.

10. Maintain a current listing for all public use airstrips in the Idaho Aviation System Plan by service level and designation.

### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Do not develop any additional aircraft landing areas or convert any newly acquired private airstrips to public use airstrip facilities. (S)

2. Airstrip Operations and Maintenance Plans (O&M) will be developed and implemented for the 8 airstrips managed by the FS for public use. These plans will reflect the Goal to maintain these facilities to a safe operating standard but not enhanced over conditions typical of 1980. The O&M Plan will define the airstrip vicinity, establish baseline design standards for landing strip dimensions and safety areas, and address the retention and maintenance of ancillary facilities provided to accommodate public use within that vicinity. (S)

3. Manage Dewey-Moore, Mile-Hi, Simonds, and Vines airstrips for “emergency use only”. The Forest Service will use only designated public use airstrips for non-emergency aircraft landings. An emergency is defined as “an unforeseen combination of circumstances that calls for immediate action and is life threatening in its severity or an unplanned event.” These emergency use landing areas will not be included on wilderness maps. (S)

4. Evaluate implementation of a landing fee system, with fees collected used to fund airstrip maintenance. (G)

5. Airstrip maintenance operations will adhere to the wilderness concept of using the “minimum tool.” Non-motorized methods will be used for recurring and routine maintenance, in conformance with general wilderness management policy and prohibitions against use of motorized equipment or types of mechanical transport. (S)

6. Any need for an exception to the general wilderness prohibition against the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport for airstrip maintenance will be based on a site-and-job specific minimum requirements evaluation using the Minimum Requirements Analysis for Airstrip Maintenance as guidance. The District Ranger will be responsible for conducting and documenting such a minimum requirement review and if a motorized equipment or mechanical transport exception appears warranted, provide a recommendation to the Forest Supervisor for review and with concurrence, forward the request to the Regional Forester for specific approval to use motorized equipment or mechanical transport for airstrip maintenance or repair. (Note: Region 1 Forest Supervisors are currently delegated the authority to approve motorized equipment or mechanical transport.) (S)

7. Ancillary facilities – such as toilets, fire rings, aircraft tie-downs, information boards or horse-handling facilities – provided to accommodate airstrip operations or recreation use activities in the vicinity of airstrips, will adhere to the wilderness management concept of “minimum requirements.” The Minimum Requirements Analysis for Facilities provides general guidance. For each airstrip, periodically review any facilities and maintain for retention or schedule removal, as dictated by this evaluation. Reflect such determinations for each airstrip in each O&M Plan. The Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, prior to implementation, will review O&M Plans. (S)
8. Airstrips, acquired through acquisition of private or state in-holdings will not be converted to public use after acquisition. Appropriate reclamation and rehabilitation actions will be undertaken after property transfer to naturalize the location. (S)
9. Restrictions may be imposed or modified at airstrips where site-by-site resource evaluations indicate a need. Existing restrictions include:
  - a. No floatplanes are allowed to land outside of approved airstrips. (S)
  - b. Overnight camping with stock at landing strips is limited to one night. (S)
  - c. Fire pans are required for campfires at airstrips within river corridors (Bernard, Indian Creek, Mahoney, Wilson Bar). Stoves may be required where firewood is not available. (S)
  - d. Aviators using airstrips in river corridors (Bernard, Indian Creek, Mahoney, Wilson Bar) must pack out human waste where a public toilet is not provided. (S)
14. Coordinate and cooperate with local County Sheriff, State of Idaho, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and National Transportation and Safety Board (NTSB) for such actions as search and rescue, removal of wreckage and emergency or temporary airstrip closures. (G)
15. Require all commercial air charter businesses using Forest Service managed airstrips in the wilderness to operate under a special use permit after monitoring indicates those operations where a permit is required. (S)
16. Provide for voluntary registration of visitors accessing the area by air or using the public airstrips as destination points. (G)
17. Stock will not be left unattended on airstrips, unless authorized. (S)

**F. Monitoring**

Conduct use sampling at selected airstrips as a basis for estimating airstrip operations and to track use trends.

**Indicators**

1. Total airstrip use levels including:
  - a. Number of aircraft landings by user type (Commercial, Private, Administrative)
  - b. Number of people per party
  - c. Types of use supported by aircraft
  - d. Length of stay
  - e. Number of aircraft at airstrip at any one time
  
2. Landing Strip Safety Inspection report ratings – Maintain fair or better rating

## **VI. Cultural Resources**

### **A. Background**

For thousands of years, prehistoric Indians occupied the area of the present day FC-RONRW. Archaeological evidence suggests that ancient peoples hunted and gathered in the area of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River for approximately 8,000 years. In historic times, two tribal groups have been recorded as primary users of the central Idaho mountains along the Salmon River and its tributaries: the Nez Perce and the Tukudika (a group of Northern Shoshoni, also referred to as the Sheepeaters).

Historic cultural resources include standing buildings and ruins of ranching, homesteading, mining, hunting, trapping operations, and early Forest Service operations. These buildings have associated trails and 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century human burials. Forest Service administrative guard stations, fire lookouts, bridges, landing strips, and trails are all part of the cultural fabric of the FC-RONRW.

The CIWA recognized the value of cultural resources found within the FC-RONRW. Specific direction was given for developing a cultural resources management plan. There have been disagreements with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) about the status of planning for cultural resources in the wilderness. A Programmatic Agreement (PA) has been reached with the SHPO, which will help direct how cultural resources are managed within the wilderness (the PA is available for review at the Salmon-Challis National Forest).

The areas within the FC-RONRW where cultural resources are most directly affected are on lands adjacent to Big Creek and the Middle Fork, Salmon and South Fork of the Salmon River corridors, due to use concentrations. Cultural resources may be cumulatively affected within the FC-RONRW and surrounding area.

To date, previous cultural resource surveys have identified approximately 597 prehistoric sites, 284 historic sites and about 22 sites that contain prehistoric and historic remains.

Prehistoric cultural resources include abandoned Indian villages, camps, rock shelters, caves, pictographs, vision quests sites, hunting blinds, traps, lithic procurement sources and workshops, human burials, and cambium peeled pine trees.

Historic cultural resources include standing buildings and ruins depicting the ranching and homesteading period along with more human burials and industrial mining. The USDA Forest Service administrative guard stations, fire lookouts, bridges, airfields, and trails are all part of the cultural history of the wilderness.



## **B. Desired Future Condition**

Heritage resources within the FC-RONRW are managed (i.e., inventoried, monitored, protected and preserved) consistent with law, regulation, and policy for the public benefit and knowledge while enhancing the wilderness experience. Special cultural resource values identified in the CIWA are recognized in decisions affecting the wilderness.

## **C. Goals**

1. Cultural resource values are protected and managed within the FC-RONRW to meet the requirements of the NHPA, Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA), Forest Land Resource Management Act (FLRMA), and the Central Idaho Wilderness Act (CIWA).
2. Recognize the heritage history of the area as a component of the wilderness resource.

## **D. Objectives**

1. Implement the Cultural Resources Programmatic Agreement with the Idaho State SHPO and Native American Tribes.
1. Provide for appropriate inventory, monitoring, protection, interpretation and additional research to locate, preserve, and/or enhance heritage resources.
2. Enforce laws and regulations to minimize vandalism, theft, and inadvertent damage to heritage resources.
3. Emphasize resolving problems in the areas where there are known or potential impacts and conflicts.
5. Annually coordinate heritage resource programs among managing Forests.
6. Inventory and evaluate 10 percent of the recorded heritage resource sites each year. Ongoing inventories should record all heritage resources discovered. Record historical ruins as part of the regular heritage resources inventory process, since site values other than “structural” may exist.
8. Continue to nominate sites (historic and prehistoric) determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places during the planning period.
9. Annually update O&M plans, including fire protection plans, for each property listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3. Properties Currently Listed on the National Register of Historic Places**

Property Name	Managing Unit
Cold Meadows Administrative Site	Krassel RD, Payette NF
Cabin Creek Ranch Historic District	Krassel RD, Payette NF
Artic Point Fire Lookout	Krassel RD, Payette NF
Chamberlain Administrative Site	Krassel RD, Payette NF

## E. Standards and Guidelines

### *General*

1. Follow the Cultural Resources Programmatic Agreement with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Native American Tribes that defines and clarifies coordination and consultation procedures and processes or any in-place agreements that will be employed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on historic properties as a result of management activities. (S)
2. Use interpretive monographs, off-site brochures, portal contacts, wilderness ranger contacts and other appropriate methods to educate and enhance public appreciation and protection of heritage resources and the wilderness experience. Make heritage resource training available to outfitters and guides. (G)
3. Consider approving scientific research if it contributes to wilderness management objectives for the identification, protection, preservation and public appreciation of heritage resources. (G)
4. Provide for cultural resource inventories in areas that have not been surveyed for cultural resources. (G)
5. Examine recorded but unevaluated historic sites to determine significance and interpretative potential. Priority should be given to the Salmon and Middle Fork of the Salmon Wild Rivers. (G)
6. Where recreational sites or other activities impact significant or unevaluated cultural resource sites, the following guidelines will apply: (G)

- a. Conduct surface collections and, where warranted, subsurface testing to determine significance and the range of impacts that are occurring. (See also 36 CFR 293.15c.)
  - b. If significant values are threatened, develop a protection or mitigation plan in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer.
7. Interpret historic sites and themes appropriate to their significance, condition, location, or other management need. (G)
8. Where volunteer programs are used for inventory and evaluation, the scheduling of work, report standards, and artifact collection will be carefully monitored and coordinated by qualified Forest Service heritage personnel. (G)
9. Implement site-specific management direction for sites listed below following cultural resource guidelines in FSM 2360 and the Programmatic Agreement (available at the Salmon-Challis National Forest). (G)
- a. Stabilization – Structures judged to be historically significant that have major or minor defects, stabilize to prevent further deterioration and subsequently move to maintenance category.

Stabilization
Stoddard LO Butts Point LO Fern Creek Cabin

- b. Restoration - Structures judged to be historically significant that have major defects and would be restored to Secretary's standards.

Restoration
Warm Springs Ranger Station

- c. Rehabilitation - Structures judged to be historically significant that have repairable defects, rehabilitate to Secretary's standards and subsequently maintain.

Rehabilitation
Joe Bump's Cabin + Sagebrush Lookout Smith Gulch Cabin

- d. Maintain - Historically significant structures are maintained to preserve heritage values or adapt for new use and maintain to preserve heritage resource values.

Maintain
Ruffneck Lookout
Pinyon Peak Lookout
Cold Meadows Administrative Site (listed on NRHP)
Chamberlain Administrative Site (listed on NRHP)
Swet Cabin (status uncertain)
Powerhouse Cabin
Powerhouse Mill
Cabin Creek Post Office and Blackie Wallace Cabin
Jim Moore Ranch
Rheo Wolfe Place

- e. Disposal - Structures judged not to be historically significant will be removed.

Dispose
Boulder Creek Cabin
Falconberry Ranch
Mid Cottonwood Point Lookout
Crofoot Ranch
Cottonwood Creek Cabin
Lantz Bar Visitors Center
Sunny Bar Camp
Sheep Creek Camp
White Goat Lookout (burned in 1989?)
Kitchen Creek Camp
Fern Creek Camp
Sawlog Gulch Cabin
Big Sheepeater Cabin
Proctor Creek Cabin
Rush Creek Point LO

- f. No Action – Allow the following historically significant structures to naturally deteriorate.

No Action – Deteriorate Naturally
Arctic Point Lookout (listed in NRHP)
Coyote Springs Phone Booth
Rock Rabbit Lookout
Conyer Cabin
Blondies Cabin

No Action – Deteriorate Naturally
Mule Creek Point Lookout
Falconberry Ranch Barn
Dillinger Meadow Cabin
Lower Mahan Mine Complex
Snowshoe Mine Homeowner site
Ramey Lookout
Slow Gulch Cabin
Biggs Ranch
Red Bluff Ranch
Catherine Lake Cabin
Barn Cabin
Beaver Creek Cabin
Rocky Point Lookout

- g. All remaining structures, judged not to be historically significant, and for which there is no administrative need, will be allowed to deteriorate naturally.
- h. Develop a fire protection plan for structures scheduled for stabilization, restoration, rehabilitation or maintenance. Include firefighter safety issues, special protection techniques to preserve historic values, and conformance with cultural resource direction.

### ***Middle Fork and Salmon River Management Zones***

1. Conduct intensive investigations, including test excavations and analysis of the identified heritage resources coincidental with campsites where a) the campsite is very popular and/or topographically constrained so that its closure is unacceptable, or b) the site appears to represent a pit house village or is evidence of a generally unrepresented time period. (S)
2. Where closure of a campsite is unacceptable but where the associated heritage resource is deemed significant, recover the associated heritage values through excavation and detailed description and analysis. (S)
3. Where closure of a campsite may be acceptable, and where the associated heritage resource is deemed significant, either:
  - a) discontinue use of the site, providing an alternative campsite in a location not coincidental with prehistoric or historic values, **or**
  - b) recover an adequate sample of the affected heritage information while maintaining the campsite. (S)

4. Where closure of a campsite may be acceptable, but where the associated heritage resources are of less significance, continue use of the campsite but monitor the heritage values occasionally to evaluate their stability within the following parameters: (G)
  - a. When management recommendations cannot be fully met, managers may adjust heritage resource priorities based on professional input and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer.
  - b. Where volunteer programs are used for inventory and evaluation, the scheduling of work, report standards, and artifact collection should be carefully monitored and coordinated by qualified Forest Service heritage resource personnel.
5. As a protective measure, all known pictographs and petroglyphs will be thoroughly documented. (S)
6. Prehistoric sites on the Middle Fork that should receive priority management attention to avoid cultural resource problems include: Cameron Creek, Hospital Bar, Survey Creek, Johnny Walker Camp, Camas Creek, Lightning Creek, Cliffside Camp, and Pebble Beach. (G)
7. Prehistoric sites on the Salmon River that should receive priority management attention to avoid cultural resource problems include: Corn Creek, Corey Bar, Bruin Creek, Big Mallard Camp, Indian Creek Bar, and Spindle Creek. (G)
8. Interpretation of historic and prehistoric sites along the Middle Fork of the Salmon Rivers will occur outside of wilderness. (S)
9. Limited interpretation of historic and prehistoric sites along the Salmon River may occur within the river corridor provided it maintains or enhances the values for which the river was designated. (S)

## **E. Monitoring**

Determine progress in inventorying and evaluating all known cultural resource sites.

### ***Indicator***

1. The percent of previously recorded cultural resource sites receiving annual site inventory and evaluation - implementation follows the programmatic agreement with SHPO.

## **VII. Fire Management**

### **A. Background**

Fire within the FC-RONRW has and continues to be the most conspicuous, frequent and dramatic change agent to the wilderness landscape.

The environmental assessment that discussed the proposed action of returning fire to its more natural role was completed and approved for use in 1985. The 1985 Fire Management Plan was updated in 1987, 1990, and 2001. This document provides the complimentary direction for the Wildland Fire Use Management Guidebook.

Since 1985 the FC-RONRW has experienced significant changes in landscape due to fire disturbance. Between 1985 and 2000 more than 1 million acres have burned from wildfire, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire. Many of the fires were in excess of 50,000 acres, and involved all of the fire group types found in the wilderness.

Nearly all of the acres burned since 1985 were under the confine or contain suppression strategy.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Landscapes exhibit vegetative conditions created by natural events such as fire.

### **C. Goals**

1. Lightning caused fires will be permitted to play, as nearly as possible, their natural ecological role within the FC-RONRW.
2. Risks and consequences of wildfire will be reduced to an acceptable level.

### **D. Objectives**

1. Firefighter and public safety is the first priority in every fire management activity.
2. Plan, implement, and maintain a sufficient detection program capable of supporting the fire management direction.
3. Use wildland and prescribed fire in a safe, carefully planned and cost-effective manner to benefit, protect, maintain and enhance wilderness resources; to reduce future suppression costs; and to the extent possible, restore natural ecological processes.

4. Safely implement the appropriate response and suppress unwanted wildland fires at minimum cost consistent with wilderness objectives.
5. Provide a smoke management program that reduces the impacts of residual smoke on air quality.

### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. The Wildland Fire Use Management Guidebook (available at the Salmon-Challis NF or on line at <http://fsweb.s-c.r4.fs.fed.us/wf/guidebook.htm>) provides direction for implementing Wildland Fire Use within the FC-RONR Wilderness. The Guidebook established three Fire Risk Zones that represent a relative measure of the threat to life, property, or the wilderness boundary depending on time of season and environmental conditions. (S)
2. All lightning caused fires will be evaluated as potential Wildland Fire Use candidates. (S)
3. A Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) will be initiated for all wildland fires. (S)
4. Suppression actions will be taken where lightning-caused fires pose serious threats to life and/or property within wilderness or to life, property, or natural resources outside of wilderness and person-caused fires. The appropriate management response will be timely, effective and efficient, providing for safety first. (S)
5. The appropriate management response and corresponding strategies will consider the impacts of that action on the wilderness resource. Minimum Impact Management Techniques will be implemented whenever suppression actions are taken. (S)
6. All fire management activities will be conducted in a manner compatible with overall wilderness management objectives. Preference will be given to methods and equipment that cause the least: (G)
  - a. Alteration of the wilderness landscape
  - b. Disturbance of the land surface
  - c. Disturbance to visitor solitude
  - d. Reduction of visibility during periods of visitor user
  - e. Adverse effect to other air quality related values
7. Fire camps, helispots and other temporary facilities or other temporary facilities or improvements will be located outside the wilderness boundary wherever feasible. Disturbed areas within wilderness will be restored to as natural an appearance as possible. (G)
8. Accomplish fire prevention in such a way as to minimize impacts on visitor's wilderness experience. (G)



9. Restrict fire prevention and signing and contacts to wilderness trailheads and portals, except where essential to wilderness preservation and resource protection. Reduce interior visitor contacts as much as practical. (G)
10. Continue operating fire lookouts in the wilderness, as needed. (G)
11. Supplement fire prevention efforts during high fire danger periods and in high use areas by increased involvement of Wilderness Rangers. (G)
12. Permit open fires, except when existing and expected fire danger justified implementation of fire closure orders. (G)
13. Coordinate proposed fire closures and restrictions wilderness-wide. (G)
14. Prescribed fire will be used to reduce unnatural buildups of fuels only if necessary to reduce the risks and consequence of wildfire to an acceptable level and only where the use of prescribed fire or other fuel treatment measures outside of wilderness is not sufficient to achieve fire management objectives within wilderness. (S)
15. Work with fire managers and line officers to develop a broad understanding of appropriate responses to fire in the wilderness. Discussion should include: (G)
  - a. The basis for fire use within the 1964 Wilderness Act and the 1980 Central Idaho Wilderness Act.
  - b. The role of Minimum Necessary Analysis as a principle process for addressing activities, including fire management, in wilderness.

## **F. Monitoring**

Follow the monitoring guidance in the Wildland Fire Use Management Guidebook.

### ***Indicators***

1. Amount and type of motorized use authorizations for each fire
2. Number and percent of acres of Wildland Fire Use
3. Number and percent of acres of wildfire
4. Number and percent of acres of prescribed fire

## **VIII. Fish and Wildlife Resources**

### **A. Background**

Wildlife habitat and fish habitat within the wilderness is essentially in a natural condition. Habitat quality is extremely variable and is generally quite productive, accommodating a wide diversity of wildlife and fish.

Mule deer, whitetail deer, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, black bear, mountain lion, and moose are commonly observed wilderness residents. Population trends for all eight species are stable or slowly increasing. Moose are the least numerous. Whitetail deer, while not abundant, are expanding their range and are found in Chamberlain Basin, along the main Salmon River; on the west side of the Middle Fork near Little Loon Creek near the mouth of Stoddard Creek and in the Horse Creek drainage.

Non-native species that were introduced into the area prior to designation as wilderness include: chukar partridge, introduced in 1955, and common along the main and Middle Fork of the Salmon River and in many tributary drainages; gray (Hungarian) partridge, introduced in cultivated areas but reported in the wilderness; and wild turkey, first introduced in the Salmon River Breaks in 1961.

Four federally listed threatened and endangered (T&E) species are known to utilize the wilderness: northern Rocky Mountain wolves, grizzly bears, bald eagles, and peregrine falcons.

The Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Team, in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, completed the Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Plan in 1987, calling for reintroduction of wolves to central Idaho. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Reintroduction of Gray Wolves to Yellowstone National Park and Central Idaho was completed in May of 1994, and the Record of Decision was published on August 10, 1994.

On January 14, 1995, four gray wolves from Canada were released into the FC-RONRW at the Corn Creek Campground on the main Salmon River. On January 20, 1995, eleven more wolves were released in the wilderness from the Indian Creek and Thomas Creek airstrips on the upper Middle Fork of the Salmon. In January 1996, twenty additional gray wolves were released into the same portion of the FC-RONRW. The wolves were fitted with radio-collars and have been periodically relocated or "tracked" since their release. Most of the released wolves have moved freely within the wilderness although some have traveled beyond the wilderness boundary to the north and south. Several wolf packs have become established from these releases and have established territories in the wilderness and are now considered residents of the FC-RONRW.

The FR-RONRW provides nationally critical habitat for salmon and steelhead fish species. Historic quality and quantity of anadromous fish habitat within the wilderness has been retained. Population numbers have experienced serious reductions since 1938, but with only minor exceptions, anadromous fish production problems are the result of activities outside the wilderness.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Forest Service and Idaho Department of Fish and Game ([Appendix I](#)) regarding fish stocking provides guidance on the stocking of lakes in the wilderness.

The Special Mining Management Zone contains important bighorn sheep habitat, which Congress identified as requiring special management considerations when mineral development occurs.

## **B. Desired Future Condition**

The FC-RONR Wilderness land, lakes, and streams provide a variety of consumptive (i.e., hunting and fishing) and non-consumptive (i.e., viewing, photography) recreation opportunities. Wilderness managers cooperate with fish and wildlife management agencies to emphasize native species and their habitats. Managers will favor fish and wildlife resources when they resolve or eliminate identified conflicts between recreational uses and fish and wildlife populations or habitats.

Natural forces primarily affect fish and wildlife resources, and management actions recognize the predominance of natural forces. Anadromous fish migration corridors on the rivers are unimpeded.

## **C. Goals**

1. The forces of nature primarily affect native species in the FC-RONR Wilderness, and management actions recognize the predominance of natural forces.
2. Biological and social functions of native animal populations are not noticeably impaired by human presence or activities. Natural processes and key habitat components such as birthing/rearing areas determine population structure and numbers; winter range and migration corridors are not impaired by human activities.
3. Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) plant and animal species and their habitats are protected as directed by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. State of Idaho Species of Special Concern receive protection and management consideration compatible with Department goals and objectives when consistent with wilderness objectives.
4. Fisheries programs emphasize natural fish spawning over fish stocking. Both resident and anadromous fish spawning and rearing habitat is protected.

## D. Objectives

1. The FC-RONR Wilderness serves as a refuge for native threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species. It protects existing remnant populations that inhabit the FC-RONR Wilderness and provides natural habitats for reintroduced native species. Wilderness managers evaluate effects of all human activities on fish and wildlife species to reduce or eliminate potential conflicts, restore populations and maintain quality habitats in a natural condition.
2. Biological opinions, watershed biological assessments and letters of concurrence from NOAA Fisheries and US Fish and Wildlife Service will be followed. Idaho Department of Fish and Game Species Management Plans and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Plans will be supported.
3. Recreation/wildlife conflicts will be evaluated and seasonal use restrictions will be initiated as needed to eliminate measurable problems.

## E. Standards and Guidelines

### *Fish*

1. Reintroduction or supplemental transplanting of native fish species will be permitted only when analysis shows that: (S)
  - a. TES species will not be adversely affected;
  - b. Populations of native species reduced or eliminated by human activity will be restored;
  - c. Reintroduction of native species is compatible with goals and objectives of this Wilderness Plan, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
  - d. Significant values of the FC-RONR Wilderness will not be impaired, such as impacts to other native aquatic species;
  - e. Stocking occurred prior to wilderness designation.
2. Provide for statutory protection for wilderness-dependent resident and anadromous fish. Forest Service management activities will contribute to the protection of the genetic integrity of wild and native steelhead trout, summer chinook, bull trout, and westslope cutthroat trout. (S)
3. Stocking of lakes is restricted to lakes stocked prior to wilderness designation. (S)
4. Stocking will be eliminated where potential conflicts may occur with native aquatic species or where agreement is reached between cooperating agencies on a management change. (S)
5. Aerial stocking of lakes is permitted only in lakes previously stocked by aircraft prior to wilderness designation. (S)

6. Fish stocking should normally be accomplished outside the heavy recreational use season. (G)
7. All new projects will comply with PACFISH and INFISH or their successor strategy. (S)
8. Clearing of debris, which impedes anadromous and west-slope cutthroat trout migration, may be permitted using non-motorized methods. (G)

**Wildlife**

1. Reintroduction or supplemental transplanting of native wildlife species will be permitted only when analysis shows that: (S)
  - a. TES species will not be adversely affected;
  - b. Populations of native species reduced or eliminated by human activity will be restored;
  - c. Reintroduction of historically native predatory species is compatible with goals and objectives of this Wilderness Plan, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and
  - d. Significant values of the FC-RONR Wilderness will not be impaired.
2. Control of problem animals will be permitted only on a case-by-case basis in coordination with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, APHIS-Wildlife Services and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and with Regional Forester approval. (S)
3. Habitat improvements will not be conducted except as an indirect effect of reverting human-altered ecosystems back to conditions that are more natural. (S)
4. Salting, supplemental minerals and nutrients, or supplemental feeding of wildlife is prohibited. (S)
5. Stocking or introduction of non-native species, such as chukar, turkey, or gray partridge, is prohibited. (S)

**F. Monitoring**

Habitat and population conditions and trends of both game and nongame fish and wildlife species inhabiting the wilderness will be monitored.

**Indicators**

1. Percent of forage utilization on selected transects within seasonally important wild ungulate habitats;
2. Ratio of males, females, and young in wild ungulate populations.



## **IX. Information and Education**

### **A. Background**

Information regarding the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and Middle Fork and Salmon River is available at Forest Service offices. Additional information is provided at trailheads and river launch points. Wilderness and River Rangers provide information and education to visitors. Visitor contacts at river launch points continue to be a primary educational opportunity. Such contacts are intended to inform the visitor about routes of travel, safety precautions, wilderness ethics, history, regulations and administrative activities.

A draft Information and education plan was created in 1993, but has never been completed or adopted. The Forests initiate and participate in a variety of wilderness education efforts each year with local schools, communities, and user groups.

A 1:100,000 scale visitors map of the FC-RONR Wilderness continues to be published and well received. Two map booklets that cover the Middle Fork and Salmon River corridors have recently been updated. These maps are very popular with the floating community and serve a valuable role in providing resource and camping information.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Information and education efforts are effective in helping visitors enjoy and protect wilderness and Wild River resources.

### **C. Goals**

1. Visitors are aware of special rules and the reason for those rules needed to protect wilderness and Wild River resources within the FC-RONR Wilderness.
2. Interpretive messages and education efforts are coordinated among all administrative units managing the FC-RONR Wilderness.

### **D. Objectives**

1. Develop information and education strategies to provide needed information to various users compatible with the preservation of the values for which the wilderness and wild and scenic rivers were designated to protect. Within five years complete an information and education plan for the FC-RONRW.
2. Use proactive approaches to teaching wilderness values and Leave No Trace wilderness ethics.

3. Continue and expand information and education efforts by Wilderness and River Rangers in the wilderness.
4. Continue information and education efforts at Boundary Creek, Indian Creek and Corn Creek.
5. Continue and improve efforts for all users, both float boaters and land based users, to apply and use appropriate Leave No Trace wilderness ethics for river and land based activities.
6. Continue the Noxious Weeds Education program with the Student Conservation Association, partners, and private landowners.

### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Emphasize the need for all visitors to the river corridors to use fire pans, pack out ashes, and pack out human waste. (G)
2. Emphasize protection of heritage resources within the wilderness in general and at certain named campsites specifically. (G)
3. Fall and spring visitors to the Salmon River cause a disproportionate amount of resource impacts. Focus on river etiquette and leave-no-trace practices for these visitors during spring and fall. (G)
4. Continue to provide wilderness visitors with Leave No Trace messages. (G)
5. Provide a rationale for why wilderness structures are appropriate to protect the wilderness resource, but not provided for visitor comfort or convenience. (G)
6. Encourage visitors to use established campsites rather than to create new campsites in order to minimize their effects. (G)
7. Encourage visitors to select established campsites that do not encroach on water or riparian areas. (G)
8. Make visitors aware that they should not camp on or impact cultural sites, to the extent that the sites are identified or recognizable. (G)
9. Develop trailhead educational displays regarding wilderness ethics. (G)
10. Develop wilderness education programs for specific user groups as well as for school programs. (G)



11. Develop displays that can be used at public events and meetings to help promote good wilderness ethics. (G)
12. Visitor contact and education efforts will emphasize personal portal contacts to improve visitor orientation and explain rules and regulations. Both on-site and off-site efforts will be used when appropriate. (G)
13. Educate users on the value of camping at sites already impacted by human activities. Minimize dispersal of groups to new areas that are not impacted by past use. (G)
14. Maintain public contact with Internet web pages, news releases, public meetings and an active fire information program. (G)
15. Programs such as FIREWISE and Living with Fire will be used to provide fire safety information to private inholdings. (G)
16. Maps and brochures will be used to inform the public on use problems, minimum impact camping techniques, and conditions of occupancy and use. (G)
17. Wilderness ethics will be emphasized to the public, outfitters, agencies, clubs, civic groups, and educational institutions to promote wise use of the wilderness. (G)

## **X. Land Ownership and Acquisition**

### **A. Background**

There are 43 parcels of non-federal land containing 6,329.22 acres remaining in the FC-RONRW. The privately owned parcels were patented as either homesteads or mining claims. While a few of the mining properties continue to be used for that purpose, virtually all the rest are now associated with some form of outdoor recreation use. Some degree of farm and ranch activity still occurs on many of these, but only in support of the recreational activity; e.g., grazing of pack and saddle stock, hay production for pack and saddle stock. Many of the private parcels are subdivided into some form of multiple-ownership.

Approximately 11 of the private properties are operated to a varying extent as resort/lodges, catering to the recreation/public and other wilderness and Wild River users. Most of these properties include substantial improvements and developments, including lodges, barns, cabins, cultivated lawns and fields, and airstrips. Similar facilities and services are located at two State-owned sites and one Forest Service site under Special Use permit.

The University of Idaho property, the Taylor Ranch, is used by the Wildlife Research Institute and has also been leased for outfitting and guiding use.

The Department of Fish and Game purchased the 11 parcels they now own in the 1940's for wildlife habitat. These were mostly abandoned homesteads. Most are leased to outfitters.

Seventeen parcels containing approximately 4,400 acres have been acquired by the Forest Service through purchase or exchange during the past 30 years.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act provides for purchase of scenic easements, by condemnation if necessary. At the time of enactment, thirteen parcels of private land were located either partially or totally within the 79 mile long Wild river corridor of the Salmon River. These tracts ranged in size from five to 120 acres. Scenic easements have been acquired on five parcels and fee title was acquired on one parcel. Additional acquisitions are being pursued on a willing seller basis. To date along the Middle Fork of the Salmon River, the scenic easement authority has been utilized only for a portion of the Pistol Creek Ranch.

The following are known locations where a trail right-of-way or easement is needed:

Bernard State Section	Bradley Parcel on S. Fk. Salmon	Cameron Ranch
Canyon Creek State Section	Flying B Ranch	Greyhound Mine
Hidden Valley Ranch	Mackay Bar	Mitchell Ranch
Monumental Ranch	Mormon Ranch	Pistol Creek Ranch
Romaine Ranch	Root Ranch	Simplot Ranch

Stonebraker Ranch  
White Creek State Section

Thomas Creek Airfield  
Venable Mine

Triple Creek Ranch

Approximately 802.4 acres of public domain (BLM) are included within the FC-RONR Wilderness located on the Krassel R.D.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Wilderness boundaries are free from trespass or encroachment. Available in-holdings are acquired to prevent future development or degradation of the wilderness resource.

### **C. Goals**

1. Acquire lands and interests in lands as necessary to restore and protect wilderness values.
2. Acquire non-Federal lands in the wilderness on a willing buyer-willing seller basis using all available acquisition methods.
3. Acquire rights-of-way for trail access, both within and to the wilderness, across State and private lands.

### **D. Objectives**

1. Develop an Inter-Agency Agreement with the Bureau of Land Management assigning administration of public domain lands to the USDA-Forest Service, pending a more permanent transfer of jurisdiction.
2. Cooperate with and assist County officials in developing zoning ordinances compatible with wilderness and Wild and Scenic River System objectives.

### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Evaluate and respond to offers from willing sellers and make periodic contacts to identify them. (G)
2. Where private landowners are unwilling to sell in fee, investigate willingness to sell partial interest (conservation easements) to reduce current or potential adverse development. (G)
3. Work with State agencies and private landowners to promote management practices that are in keeping with wilderness concepts on State lands. (G)

4. Remove improvements and restore natural/near natural conditions on all acquired lands except as provided in the Aviation and Cultural Resource sections. (S)
5. Reserved interest deeds and scenic and conservation easement provisions will include identification, protection, and interpretation of significant heritage resources. (G)
6. Use land exchange authorities rather than direct purchase, if possible. (G)
7. Acquire scenic easements on all private lands in the Salmon and Middle Fork of the Salmon Wild Rivers corridors that are not available in fee from willing sellers, using the following guidelines: (G)
  - a. Minimize further development of the property.
  - b. Permit new structures essential for continuance of existing land uses. To the extent possible, such structures should be located out of sight from the river and in harmony with surroundings.
  - c. Encourage alteration of existing improvements to cure adverse effects.
  - d. Permit no reflective roofs on new buildings; convert existing ones to fire resistant shingle, or earth-toned composition or metal.
8. Condemnation authority may be used, as needed, to acquire scenic easements on private lands in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. (G)

## ***XI. Land Uses – Withdrawals and Special Uses***

### **A. Background**

#### ***Withdrawals***

The Wilderness Act of 1964 established that effective January 1, 1984, a statutory withdrawal is applied to wilderness. The CIWA exempts the Special Mining Management Zone from that withdrawal as to its effect on exploration and development of cobalt and associated minerals. The CIWA prohibits dredge and placer mining in the Salmon and Middle Fork Wild and Scenic Rivers and in the tributaries of the Middle Fork Salmon River.

Other withdrawals may be established by various authorities. Within the FC-RONRW and the Wild Rivers, approximately 177,044 acres of withdrawals are presently established. These include Power Site Classifications, which have only limited withdrawal effect, and were established in the 1920's due to potential for hydropower development.

#### ***Special Uses***

The outfitting and guiding business is, with the exception of the limited amount of grazing and mining occurring, the only commercial enterprise in the wilderness.

The number of outfitter and guide permits available for the Middle Fork and Salmon Rivers is capped, at 30 and 28, respectively.

Approximately (6) road segments totaling (30) miles are now included within the wilderness. These are all mining access roads; most were constructed 30 to 50 years ago. Some, primarily the road down Big Creek, came into general public usage, but this has been controlled in recent years by closing the road to all but miners with permits to use the road for necessary mining access. User authorization, maintenance responsibility, and management direction have been uncertain.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Withdrawals provide for necessary public and administrative needs. All lands within the FC-RONR Wilderness are withdrawn from mineral entry except for those with valid existing rights as of January 1, 1984. Special use permit operations are the minimum necessary to provide valuable wilderness experiences to the public.

**C. Goals**

1. Withdraw from mineral entry any areas identified as necessary for public and administrative purposes.
2. Manage commercial and other special use permits that are authorized in wilderness in a manner that results in the least possible impact on the wilderness resource.

**D. Objectives**

1. Periodically evaluate administrative withdrawals to ensure the minimum required withdrawals are in place for public and administrative purposes.
2. Periodically evaluate existing water transmission improvements and terminate when no longer needed.

**E. Standards and Guidelines**

***Withdrawals***

1. Discontinue administrative withdrawals where statutory withdrawals exist. Remove metal withdrawal signs at these locations. (G)
2. Continue other existing withdrawals at sites where public and administrative values are identified. (G)
3. Permit existing domestic and power-generating water developments until no longer needed. (S)

***Land Status***

1. Recommend no designations of National Natural Landmarks. (S)

***Special Uses***

Refer to the XIV. Recreation- Land Based section for standards and guidelines that apply to land based outfitter and guides.

Refer to the XV. Recreation- Middle Fork of the Salmon River, and XVI. Recreation- Salmon River sections, respectively, for standards and guidelines that apply to river-based outfitter and guides.

1. Issue no new special use permits except for those activities that are determined appropriate in wilderness, such as: (S)

- a. Research
  - b. Cultural resource investigation
  - c. Essential mining access
  - d. Resource information gathering.
2. Issue no new special use permits for the following activities: (S)
- a. Contests or organized competitive events. (FSM 2323.11e)
  - b. Commercial filming
  - c. Soliciting
  - d. Hydroelectric power proposals, except in the Threemile and Jersey Creeks as provided by section 7(a)(4) of the CIWA.

***Interior Road Management – Road Access***

1. For approved mining or private land access roads, the following guidelines will apply: (G)
- a. Issue a Class D special use permit.
  - b. Require the posting of a reclamation bond to cover rehabilitation work after the end of the activity.
  - c. Require “best management practice” techniques, procedures, and standards designed to minimize water quality degradation and spread of noxious weeds.
  - d. Specify construction standards and mitigation requirements with follow-up monitoring and compliance inspections.
  - e. Access under the permit will be limited to actual need.
  - f. Where several users are involved, road use fees will be proportionately levied according to the amount of actual use.
  - g. Where several users use the same road, encourage the formation of a “road users association” and issue one permit to the association when practicable.
2. When signs are required for posting non-federal lands within the wilderness, they should conform to present landline practice and be discreetly placed. (G)
3. The standard metal wilderness boundary marker should be used only where administrative priorities warrant them. (S)

## **XII. Livestock Grazing**

### **A. Background**

Forage is used by wildlife, recreation livestock, sheep, and cattle. Part or all of 16 grazing allotments and nine Special Use Permit grazing areas are within the FC-RONR Wilderness. Approximately 1,015 cattle, 4,500 sheep and over 400 horses utilize forage amounting to approximately 4,655 animal-use-months (AUMS) of grazing annually. Total acreage of the allotments is approximately 528,000 acres, of which the grazed acreage is about 45,000 acres, or less than 2% of the wilderness. Land suitable for livestock grazing varies from less than 1 to 15 percent of each individual allotment.

Ten allotments include improvement plans containing approved structural and non-structural improvement projects. Existing range improvements include:

- a. Five miles of fence (Elk Creek C&H, Pistol Creek H, Mahoney Creek C&H, Cabin Creek C&H, Loon Creek C&H, and Eddie Creek C&H Allotments)
- b. Three water troughs, with approximately one mile of pipeline and spring developments (Blue Bunch S&C Allotment)
- c. Five hundred acres of wyethia control (Elk Creek C&H Allotment: 445 acres; Blue Bunch S&G Allotment: 55 acres)
- d. Twenty acres of seeded area (Blue Bunch S&G Allotment)
- e. Two constructed sheep bedgrounds ((Blue Bunch S&G Allotment)
- f. Seven study enclosures (Elk Creek C&H, Range Creek C&H, Mahoney Creek C&F, Cabin Creek C&H, Lower Salmon H Allotments, and Lower Cache Creek and Cove Creek).

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Utilization of forage will occur in a way that maintains natural processes of plant succession. Forage will remain plentiful for wildlife.

### **C. Goals**

1. Manage all grazed areas to keep vegetation and soil in a good to excellent condition, with special emphasis on high elevation areas, riparian zones, and the perpetuation of native species.



2. Manage all domestic livestock grazing to achieve and maintain upper mid-seral or higher condition and improving trend in all grazed areas, including uplands and riparian zones.

#### **D. Objectives**

1. Domestic livestock grazing, where established before designation of the wilderness, will be permitted to continue subject to such reasonable regulation as needed.

2. Domestic grazing will comply with Allotment Management Plans and annual operating instructions, incorporate range analysis, and be updated at least every 10 years.

3. Evaluate conditions and grazing capacities of high lakes, hot springs, and other high use sites.

4. Identify the need for and locations of “stock friendly” sites in and adjacent to the river corridors.

5. Annually complete range condition analysis on 10% of pastures assigned to outfitter assigned camps.

#### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

##### ***General Grazing***

1. Priorities for the use of available forage are: (S)

- a. Wildlife
- b. Domestic livestock under term grazing permits
- c. Forest Service administrative pack and saddle stock
- d. Recreational pack and saddle stock (includes both outfitter stock authorized by livestock use permits and recreational non-outfitter stock, which may not require a permit).

2. All supplemental livestock feed will be certified weed-free. (S)

3. No straw is allowed. (S)

4. Stock salting may be permitted if mixed with grain or in block form, if located to minimize trampling and soil disturbance, and outside riparian areas, according to allotment management plans, outfitter and guide operating plans or livestock use permits. (G)

5. Salt in block form must be secured off the ground in a waterproof container, located away from camps, trails, and live water, and removed when livestock are removed. (S)
6. Identify areas needing grazing closures or modification. Appropriate corrective action will be taken to minimize or eliminate conflicts with fish and wildlife, watershed or wilderness values. Grazing area closures or restrictions, when implemented, will be appropriately identified and administered to allow natural healing of impacted areas. (G)

### ***Domestic Livestock Grazing***

1. As authorized in the Allotment Management Plan and Annual Operating Instructions, the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment, or mechanical transport, may be permitted only where other practical alternatives are not available. (G)
2. Existing structural range improvements may be retained and maintained if needed for proper allotment management. (G)
3. Construction of new, or replacement of deteriorated grazing allotment improvements is permitted only if in accordance with the Allotment Management Plans. Non-structural improvements can be approved if they were part of management at the time the wilderness was established, and where their continuance is needed to maintain livestock grazing operations. Unneeded improvements will be phased out. Reconstruction of facilities requires the use of native materials that harmonizes with the wilderness character. (S)
4. Grazing standards are established in the Allotment Management Plans and Annual Operating Instructions. (G)

### ***Outfitter Guide Livestock Grazing***

1. Grazing of pack and saddle stock will be approved and authorized on a case-by-case basis considering season, forage availability, and needs of wildlife and other wilderness users. (G)
2. Forage utilization by pack and saddle stock will not exceed 30 percent. (S)

## **F. Monitoring**

Refer to Allotment Management Plans for monitoring requirements for Domestic Livestock.

Other livestock monitoring is to determine condition and trend of vegetation used by recreational livestock.

***Indicators***

1. Utilization rates
2. Stubble heights

### **XIII. Minerals**

#### **A. Background**

The discovery of gold on the Salmon River in the 1860's touched off the Salmon River gold rush. An estimated 20,000 people were attracted to the area during the next 30 to 40 years. Mining camps, roads, and other developments resulted in association with the major strike areas. Most of the areas of significant mining activity were excluded from the River of No Return Wilderness when Congress designated the wilderness boundary.

Mining districts within and contiguous to the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness have yielded more than \$95 million (value at time of production) worth of gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, tungsten, antimony, cobalt, nickel, and mercury ore. The Thunder Mountains Ramey Ridge, Seafoam, Pistol Creek Ridge, Big Creek, Parker Mountain, Camas/Yellowjacket, Loon Creek, and Dixie areas were the major mining locations.

Many of the streams within the wilderness experienced dredge and placer mining activity. During the 1870's and during subsequent periods of major economic depression, gravels along most of the Salmon River and its tributaries were worked for placer gold.

Congress, in recognition of the need to facilitate extraction of the Blackbird cobalt, specifically designated the probable mining area as a Special Mining Management Zone within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness; however, there are no current claims in this area.

As of November 8, 1995 (BLM records), only 25 mining claims remain within the wilderness. Twenty-three patented mining claims are present in the wilderness and associated Wild River corridors.

Cobalt exploration in the Special Mining Management Zone is not being accomplished as originally scheduled, primarily because of a slump in the price of cobalt. The potential cobalt ore body in this special area is a substantial part of claims dropped.

Currently, no large-scale mining operations are active within the wilderness, but five mines have been developed adjacent to the area, which involve significant amounts of land and resource impacts.

1. Stibnite Project (gold) near the west boundary
2. Thompson Creek Project (molybdenum) near the south boundary
3. Grouse Creek Project (gold), adjacent to the south boundary
4. Dewey-Gold Reef Venture (gold) in the Thunder Mountain area

5. Yellowjacket Mine (gold) north of Yellowjacket Creek, on the eastern side of the wilderness

## **B. Desired Future Condition**

Mineral exploration and development will not detract from the wilderness or impact resources in the FC-RONR Wilderness.

## **C. Goals**

1. Coordinate and cooperate with other federal and state agencies with authority and expertise in mineral activities.
2. Operations on valid claims are processed quickly and in a manner that protects the wilderness resource.
3. Hazardous materials from past and present operations do not pose an environmental threat to lands and waters either within or outside the FC-RONR Wilderness.
4. Management emphasis within the Special Mining Management Zone is on mining as the dominant use with reasonable measures taken to protect bighorn sheep habitat.

## **D. Objectives**

1. Survey all valid mineral claims and abandoned mines by the year 2010 for hazardous materials and safety hazards.
2. Monitor the number of mining locations with resource problems such as hazardous materials, erosion and garbage.

## **E. Standards and Guidelines**

### ***Wilderness wide***

1. Reasonable access is allowed to valid mineral claims established before December 31, 1983. Such access is only for essential and exclusive use for the valid mining operations. (S)
2. Reasonable access will be located to have the least lasting impact in wilderness values. To accomplish this, the use of motorized access by ground or air to claims shall be authorized only when proven essential. Road, trail, bridge, or aircraft landing area construction or improvements is limited to those clearly identified as essential to the operation. (S)

3. Whenever possible, inform wilderness visitors about mining operations that may affect their wilderness experience, to provide for safety and reduce the possibility of conflicts. (G)
4. Require a written Plan of Operation for all operations that involve nonconforming uses and/or are likely to involve significant disturbance of surface resources. (S)
5. Require detailed descriptions of proposed operations including proposed structures, improvements, access to claims, means of transportation, activity periods, reclamation activities, and schedules and measures to be taken to meet the requirements for environmental protection and compliance with State and Federal air and water quality standards. (S)
6. Use Forest Service Mineral Examiners to assess the proposed mineral development in determining: (G)
  - a. Status of the asserted rights of the claimant
  - b. That proposed methods of development are needed and reasonable and that the proposed operation is the next logical step in the orderly development of the mineral resources
  - c. Which alternative methods are possible and reasonable to minimize or mitigate impacts on surface resources
7. Enforce the prohibition on dredge and placer mining within the Middle Fork and its tributary streams in their entirety, and within the Wild segment of the Salmon River. (S)

### ***Special Mining Management Zone***

1. Administer prospecting, exploration and development, or mining of cobalt and associated minerals within the Special Mining Management Zone subject to laws and regulations that are generally applicable to National Forest System lands not designated as wilderness or other special management areas. (S)
2. Take all reasonable measures to insure that mineral operators avoid significant impairment of the overall habitat of bighorn sheep within, or adjacent to, the Zone. Permit only those impacts on bighorn sheep habitat that cannot be avoided without unreasonable restrictions on cobalt exploration and production. (G)
3. Restrict use of mining locations and associated access roads to mining, processing, or uses reasonably incident thereto, except that the Secretary may permit such access roads to be used by the State of Idaho to facilitate management of bighorn sheep in the designated area. (S)

4. Restrict claim locations to discoveries of cobalt. Development of minerals other than cobalt and associated minerals is restricted to claims valid as of January 1, 1984, and is subject to the direction applicable elsewhere in the wilderness. (S)

**F. Monitoring**

Track active and inactive mining claims to ensure protection of the wilderness resource.

**Indicators**

1. Number of active mining claims
2. Number of inactive mining claims

## **XIV. Recreation – Land Based**

### **A. Background**

The FC-RONRW is the largest wilderness area in the continental United States. Recreation occurs in nearly all areas within the wilderness. The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is a framework for stratifying and defining classes of outdoor recreation environments, activities, and experience opportunities. The settings, activities, and opportunities for obtaining experiences are arranged along a continuum or spectrum divided into six classes — Primitive, Semi-primitive Non-motorized, Semi-primitive Motorized, Roded Natural, Rural, and Urban. Four of these ROS classes have been identified within the FC-RONRW (Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4. Acres by ROS Class in the FC-RONRW**

<b>ROS Class</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Primitive	1,665,625
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized	415,213
Semi-Primitive Motorized	181,360
Roded Natural	103,678

The FC-RONRW provides many exceptional opportunities for wilderness-dependent activities. Hunting and fishing have been historic recreation uses of the area that continue to be popular. Many people seek the solitude afforded by the large expanse of this wilderness.

Approximately 30 outfitter and guide operations provide land-based hunting, fishing, and general recreation services within the wilderness.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

The FC-RONRW Wilderness provides a broad range of wilderness oriented recreation experiences, including outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, in a manner that protects and preserves the wilderness.

Management strives to minimize user conflicts. Visitors practice Leave No Trace skills in the wilderness.



### **C. Goals**

1. The FC-RONR Wilderness is one of the last intact wild places in the lower 48 states, and is therefore managed to provide outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation experiences, including the opportunity for solitude on its rivers and land. Solitude can be found anywhere within the wilderness at some time, but is not necessarily found in all places at all times.
2. One of the most important benefits to humans from wilderness is the opportunity to enjoy the solitude often found only in wilderness. Visitors understand the need for those limits to protect the physical and social resource and to allow opportunities for solitude.
3. The FC-RONR Wilderness is a place where visitors can escape the modernized, mechanized, populated society. It is a place visitors can use as a refuge from noise and pollution, a place where visitors can experience the wild and free forces of nature at work.
4. Outfitters and guides are full partners with the Forest Service in providing recreation opportunities to the public and in providing education and interpretation to their clients

### **D. Objectives**

1. Manage the Recreation Opportunity Setting (ROS) for visitor management as Primitive, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized and Semi-Primitive Motorized per the ROS inventory. Manage the ROS inventory acres in transition zones of Roaded-Natural Appearing as if they were Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized.
2. Maintain numbers and distribution of land-based outfitter and guides at approximately current levels. Continue to monitor and analyze public service needs and make appropriate adjustments.
3. Management emphasis on river tributaries of the Salmon River and the Middle Fork of the Salmon River is to provide opportunities for primitive wilderness non-boating recreation experiences. Opportunities for primitive wilderness whitewater boating recreation experiences will be provided for within physical and ecological carrying capacities in these areas.
4. Complete campsite condition surveys for all campsites with the FC-RONR Wilderness. Establish a schedule for long term monitoring of these campsites.

### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

#### ***General (Land-based Recreational and Outfitter and Guide Use)***

1. Visitor group size limit is 20 people and 20 head of stock. (S)

2. Visitor stay limit per campsite is 14 days. (S)
2. Require written approval for use of more than 20 head of pack and saddle stock. (S)
3. Require visitors to pack out all non-burnable litter and refuse material. (S)
4. Generally, do not provide public recreation facilities. Facilities may be provided to correct a continuing resource problem. Encourage use of temporary stock containment systems. (G)
5. All pack and saddle stock facilities will be located at least 200 feet from lakes and streams, where terrain permits. (S)
6. Discourage tying of stock to trees for more than 2 hours. (G)
7. Pack and saddle stock must be ridden or led, and not permitted to run loose on trails or travel routes (except in exceptional situations where it is required for safety). (S)
8. Only pack and saddle stock needed for each trip will be permitted. No colts, unbroken or crippled stock are permitted, except for short periods if the animal becomes crippled during the trip. (S)
9. Permit only light to moderate forage use by pack and saddle stock. (S)
10. When campsite condition surveys indicate a need for change in stock use policy, consider the following actions in sequence: (G)
  - a. Limit overnight camping to an appropriate number of nights for any one site.
  - b. Designate specific campsites for stock use.
  - c. Limit the number of stock allowed when camping overnight.
  - d. Permit no overnight grazing of pack and saddle stock.
  - e. Prohibit use of stock where warranted.
11. Physically control dogs in high use areas. (S)
12. All boaters are required to use portable toilets, and properly pack out and properly dispose of their human waste while boating on tributaries of the Middle Fork and Salmon Rivers. (S)
13. A seasonal closure to boating on Big Creek has been implemented to minimize the effects of boating on listed fish species. Big Creek is closed to float boating from

April 1 to May 31 and from August 1 to September 30. This closure is based on consultation between agency fisheries biologists representing the Payette National Forest and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

14. The Forest Service will require tributary use permits for noncommercial tributary floaters. These permits will allow boaters to exit from Big Creek onto the Middle Fork or from the South Fork Salmon River onto the Salmon River without an additional permit for the river. Floaters entering from Big Creek or from the South Fork must exit the Middle Fork or Salmon River corridor the same day they enter. Floaters on other tributaries will be required to have a valid Middle Fork or Salmon River permit to enter or camp on those rivers. Use of tributary permits will provide information and education to floaters and will be used to collect accurate data and monitor tributary use.
15. Outfitter services will not be permitted for boating-related activities except on the Middle Fork and Main Salmon Rivers. The Forest Service will not issue commercial float permits for the tributaries without additional analysis. If an outfitter proposes a commercial use of the tributaries, a site specific analysis, with appropriate public involvement, will be conducted before a decision is made on issuance of a special use permit.

### **Campsites**

1. No private group or individual will be permitted to occupy a campsite for more than 14 consecutive days. (S)
2. Encourage visitors to camp at established campsites, using existing fire rings, if a fire is needed. Encourage the use of low impact campfires, including the use of fire blankets and fire plans, using only down woody material in forested areas. (G)
3. Encourage the use of self-contained stoves. (G)
4. Require self-contained stoves at specified, designated sites when lack of fuel wood or resource conditions warrant. (S)
5. Consider site-specific assessments for all degraded camps (primarily Frissell Classes IV and V). The results of the individual assessments should lead to one of the following management options: (G)
  - a. Encourage visitors to stay at the existing degraded campsite;
  - b. Undertake rehabilitation/restoration actions on all or parts of the campsite; or
  - c. Close the site, either seasonally or yearlong for a specified time.

- d. Consider encouraging visitors to stay at existing degraded campsites if campsites are not causing adverse impacts to water quality, riparian areas, or TES species, contributing to the spread of noxious weeds, or located in a heavily-used portion of the wilderness or there are virtually no other options for camping in the area.
6. When campsite condition surveys indicate a need for change in visitor use policy, consider the following actions in sequence: (G)
- a. Make overused sites less appealing or accessible. Remove fire rings and other evidence of human use.
  - b. Post a restoration message at portals and an unobtrusive sign at the site. Suggest alternative camping locations on the portal notice. Convey in a positive way the rationale for the public to avoid certain degraded campsites undergoing restoration.
  - c. For specific campsites, set limits on party size, length of stay and equipment requirements, such as use of stoves rather than campfires.
  - d. Undertake site rehabilitation, such as scarification, seeding and planting.
  - e. Site-specific closures that involve informing the public, posting notices on portals and at administrative sites, and signing sites as closed to all camping until further notice.

### ***Land-based Outfitter & Guides***

1. Administer commercial and guide permits in coordination with the State of Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB) in accordance with the current MOU. (G)
2. Administer outfitter and guide permits in accordance with the Court-ordered Remedial Plan ([Appendix G](#)), dated March 15, 1994, and the FC-RONR Wilderness Outfitter and Guide Policy Implementation Guide (available at the Salmon-Challis National Forest). (S)
3. Base camps, or assigned sites, are camps located on sites designated and authorized for occupancy and use by a permit holder during the authorized period of occupancy. Permit holders are assessed a fee for use of assigned sites. Sites will be assigned and authorized by the District Ranger on an annual basis and documented in the Annual Itinerary and Operating Plan. Sites will be posted on site and at wilderness trailheads during period of authorized occupancy. Base camp standards are: (S)
  - a. Structures and improvements will be capable of being removed or dismantled when not in use during periods of authorized occupancy.

- b. Temporary structures and improvements must be dismantled when not in use during the authorized season. Temporary facilities may be erected up to 15 days before regular occupancy and must be removed no later than 10 days after season ending occupancy. Re-useable poles may be stored vertically and inconspicuously against trees outside the camp perimeter.
  - c. All camp facilities and improvements should be at least 200 feet from trails, streams, and lakes, where terrain permits. Consider relocating, if possible, to where terrain permits.
  - d. Camps will be relocated from overused degraded sites.
  - e. No permanent corrals, hitchracks, base logs, or permanent water collection systems, including spring boxes, will be authorized unless determined to be necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purposes of the Wilderness Act.
  - f. No caching of non-native materials or supplies is authorized.
  - g. No in-camp plumbing fixtures connected to water systems, underground piping, and permanent water delivery systems will be authorized.
  - h. Maximum group size is 20 people without prior approval.
4. Transfer camps are generally located near roads, road and trail junctions, or airfields. They should be located inconspicuously and allow adequate space for non-outfitted facilities and use. They are used primarily for holding pack stock and equipment and serve as jumpoff points to trails, but hunting, fishing, or other activities may be permitted from these camps. The site may provide for parking space, toilets, corral, hitchracks, and tent space when located outside of the wilderness. Standards for base camps will also apply to transfer camps located within the wilderness. (S)
5. Spike camps are unassigned campsites approved for use by the District Ranger for use by the permit holder and those served on a temporary basis in conjunction with permitted operations. Spike camps will meet the same standards as base camps except that: (S)
- a. Spike camps are not reserved, and are available for use on a first-come, first-serve basis for either outfitted or non-outfitted camping purposes.
  - b. Unless otherwise approved by the District Ranger, camps cannot be set up more than three days in advance of use, and are to be removed within three days after use. Occupancy shall not exceed 14 consecutive days, beginning with camp setup and ending with camp removal.
  - c. Temporary corrals or permanent hitchracks may be permitted with case-by-case approval of the District Ranger, based on resource protection needs

relative to the use of the site by the non-outfitted public. Electric fences may be approved.

6. Drop camps are undesignated campsites used by parties whose camp equipment and supplies are packed in and/or out by an outfitter. Drop camps may be assigned or unassigned, however, they are usually not reserved for exclusive occupancy. The location is generally chosen by the client. The outfitter may or may not furnish camp equipment and supplies. Equipment shall be left in place only during the period it is actually in use. The outfitter is responsible for cleanup of the drop camp campsite used by their clients. The site is considered reserved if the camp is used or in place more than 14 days. (S)

7. Itinerant or Progressive Travel trips are trips of parties that travel progressively through the wilderness for extended periods of time. Camps are normally used only one night. Sites are ordinarily not reserved, although they may be reserved if they are scheduled or reassigned for some of the larger groups or in areas or seasons of relatively heavy use to assure availability of camping space. Progressive travel permits may be issued for horse trips, backpacker trips, cross-country ski tours and boat trips. (G)

## F. Monitoring

Campsite conditions will be monitored primarily by using Frissell Condition Classes as modified for land, stock, and river campsite application as well as Modified – Cole Campsite Condition Surveys (Table 2.5).

### Indicators

1. Frissell Campsite Ratings
2. Modified – Cole Campsite Condition Surveys

**Table 2.5. Frissell Campsite Condition Standards as defined for the FC-RONR Wilderness**

Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V
Ground vegetation flattened but not permanently injured. Minimal physical change except for possibly a simple rock fireplace.	Ground vegetation worn away around fireplace or center of activity.	Ground vegetation lost on most of the site, but humus and litter still present in all but a few areas.	Bare mineral soil widespread. Tree roots exposed on the surface.	Soil erosion significant (>50% of the area). Trees reduced in vigor or dead.

Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V
<u>Land:</u> Site looks natural. No non-native plants. As much firewood as surrounding area. No worn social trails. No tree damage.	Site looks natural with only slight damage to plants. No non-native plants. Less firewood than surrounding area but still abundant. One worn social trail.	Site is less than 50% barren. Few non-native plants. Little tree damage. Little firewood compared to surrounding area. A few worn social trails.	Site is more than 50% barren. Moderate number of non-native plants. Large amount of tree damage. No firewood on site; surrounding area has less firewood than occurs naturally. Many social trails.	Extensive bare area. Non-native plants on most of the site. Extensive tree damage. No firewood on site or surrounding area. Extensive number of social trails and satellite areas.
<u>Stock:</u> Area <100 sq. ft. and often hidden. No tree trunks scarred or mutilated. No dished tree bases. No hay or artificial feed present.	Area >100, <200 sq. ft. Bare soil along hitch line. Minor (<20%) tree trunk scarring and occasional (<20%) dished tree bases. Some trace of feed (<20% of area).	Area >200, <400 sq. ft. Majority (>50%) of tree roots exposed but no circles of radical tree root exposure. Moderate (>20%, <50%) tree trunk scarring. Moderate amounts of manure and artificial feed present (>20%, <50% of area).	Area >400 sq. ft. Only islands of humus/duff. All tree roots exposed somewhat. Most tree trunks scarred. Large amounts of feed & manure (>50%, <80% of area).	Area >400 sq. ft. Bare mineral soil throughout. All tree roots exposed. Many trees dying. Feed & manure over 80% of area.
<u>River:</u> Site looks natural with little or no sign of pullout.	Well-defined pullout with little or no vegetation loss in other areas.	Obvious pullout area and vegetation loss. Organic layer present. No satellite areas. Slight damage to trees and brush on the site.	Multiple, well-worn pullouts and vegetation loss. Satellite sites and trails present.	Obvious bank erosion with several satellite areas and several trails. Extensive human damage to vegetation. No firewood on site or surrounding area.

## ***XV. Recreation - Middle Fork of the Salmon River***

### **A. Background**

In 1968, Congress established the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, with eight initial components. The Middle Fork of the Salmon was one of the original eight rivers designated in this System. The Middle Fork is classified as a Wild River and consists of a half-mile wide corridor running from the confluence of Marsh Creek and Bear Valley Creek to the confluence of the Middle Fork with the main Salmon River (106 miles length).

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River, depending on water flow levels, provides a relatively moderate to fast-paced whitewater floating experience requiring moderate to high skill levels.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River is managed to recognize its status as a premier river resource providing an array of river opportunities including world class whitewater floating. Outstanding opportunities for river-related primitive experiences are sustained, including solitude and challenge.

The Middle Fork retains its wilderness character with social interaction between groups continued at low to moderate levels. There are opportunities for small to moderate group sizes to enjoy longer stays within the corridor.

Outstanding cold water fishing (non-anadromous) opportunities exist, and conflicts with non-fishing float groups are minimal. Other river corridor uses do not materially conflict with whitewater float recreation activities.

### **C. Goals**

1. Visitors practice Leave No Trace and recognize and respect the rights of other users and take action to lessen their effects on other users and wildlife. Visitors understand the need for limits to protect the physical and social resource and allow opportunities for solitude.
2. Outfitters and guides are partners with the Forest Service in providing recreation opportunities to the public.
3. There are no increases in improvements and no reductions in access.



## D. Objectives

1. The Middle Fork of the Salmon will be managed to maintain its Outstanding Remarkable Values (ORVs). The ORVs for the Middle Fork are fish and wildlife, historic and cultural, recreational, scenic, water of high quality (including chemical, physical and biological components), and geologic. For a discussion on the ORVs for the Middle Fork Salmon River, see [Appendix E](#).
2. Management emphasis for the Middle Fork Management Zone is to protect and enhance wilderness resources while permitting some seasonal fluctuations above the Primitive ROS. Conflicts will be resolved in favor of the wilderness resource when possible.
3. Manage outfitter and guide use consistent with the Outfitter and Guide Handbook. Take action to resolve concerns with priority versus temporary use allocations.

## E. Standards and Guidelines

### *General*

1. Manage the ROS social setting (encounters) as Primitive, except allow standard for number of encounters to be exceeded as a managed inconsistency on a seasonal basis. Usually encounters with other groups will be less than 6 parties per day encountered on rivers and trails and less than 3 other parties visible at campsite. (S)
2. Limit signs to those essential for resource protection, not river user orientation or interpretation. (G)
3. No new through trail paralleling the river within the river corridor will be constructed. Existing trails may continue in their present location. (S)
4. Consider location, design, and material compatibility within the Wild River environment when reconstructing bridges and trails. (G)
5. No new structures will be permitted on National Forest System lands, except for safety or sanitation. (S)

### *Prohibitions and Requirements – General Special Orders and Regulations*

1. All human waste, unburnable litter and refuse material must be packed out. (S)
2. Require the use of portable toilets, packing out and properly disposing of human waste. Human waste must be removed from the river corridor. (S)
3. Require fire-pans for all visitors in the corridor. Ashes and other fire residue must be packed out. (S)

4. Landing of aircraft, or dropping or picking up any material, supplies or persons by means of an aircraft, including a helicopter, except at designated landing strips, is prohibited. (S)
5. Use of soap in rivers (below mean high water level) or in hot springs is prohibited. (S)
6. Public nudity is prohibited. (S)
7. Cutting standing trees (live or dead) for firewood or other purposes is prohibited, except for fire control and administrative purposes. (S)
8. Rattlesnake Cave is closed to overnight camping. (S)
9. Exceeding trip duration or maximum party size limits without prior written approval is prohibited. (S)
10. Unless approved by permit, and determined to be consistent with the Wilderness Act and necessary for administration of the wilderness, use of motorized equipment and mechanical transport is prohibited, except as allowed by law. (S)

***Float Boating – Restrictions and Policies – All***

1. Four use seasons are defined for the Middle Fork: (S)
  - a. Spring Season (March 1 – May 27): Float boating recreational activities with opportunity for a primitive recreation experience will be emphasized.
  - b. Lottery Control Season (May 28 – September 3): Float boating recreation activities with opportunities for a primitive or semi-primitive recreational experience will be emphasized.
  - c. Fall Season (September 4 – November 30): Emphasis is on float boating recreational activities with opportunities for a primitive recreational experience.
  - d. Winter Season (December 1 – February 29): Emphasis is on a primitive experience and non-boating recreation activity.
2. A permit is required for float boating year-round. (S)
3. Both commercial and non-commercial boaters can choose, under a variable trip length option, their party size with a corresponding length of stay that could vary between six and eight days (Table 2.6). (S)

Table 2.6. Variable Trip Length of Stay by Party Size

	Party Size	Length of Stay
<b>Non-commercial</b>	21-24	6 days
	11 – 20	7 days
	1 – 10	8 days
<b>Commercial</b>	21 – 30	6 days
	11 – 20	7 days
	1 – 10	8 days

4. A maximum of 7 launches per day is allowed in any season, except that the District Ranger may approve additional launches and exception from the length of stay limitation for qualified big horn sheep license holders in the State of Idaho big horn sheep controlled hunt lottery for hunting areas within the Middle Fork drainage. (S)

5. The commercial launch schedule for the prime lottery season and the pre-season is determined according to the current historical groupings of businesses and launch dates (Tables 2.7 and 2.8). No off-schedule training trips are permitted without written permission from the District Ranger. (S)

Table 2.7. Middle Fork Commercial Launch Dates

Outfitters	Launch Dates								
<b>Group 1</b>									
A.R.T.A.	6/24	7/2	7/10	7/18	7/26	8/3	8/11	8/19	8/27
MF River Co. dba Far & Away	6/24	7/2	7/10	7/18	7/26	8/3	8/11	8/19	8/27
Oars Dories	6/24	7/2	7/10	7/18	7/26	8/3	8/11	8/19	8/27
<b>Group 2</b>									
Wilderness, Inc.	6/25	7/3	7/11	7/19	7/27	8/4	8/12	8/20	8/28
Echo River Trips (#2)	6/25	7/3	7/11	7/19	7/27	8/4	8/12	8/20	8/28
Helfrich Rvr Outfitters	6/25	7/3	7/11	7/19	7/27	8/4	8/12	8/20	8/28
<b>Group 3</b>									
Adventure Sun Valley	6/26	7/4	7/12	7/20	7/28	8/5	8/13	8/21	8/29
Middle Fk River Tours	6/26	7/4	7/12	7/20	7/28	8/5	8/13	8/21	8/29
D. Helfrich Guide Srv			7/12	7/20	7/28	8/5	8/13	8/21	8/29
<b>Group 4</b>									
Bob Sevy	6/27	7/5	7/13	7/21	7/29	8/6	8/14	8/22	8/30
Schaefer's Guide Srv		7/5	7/13	7/21		8/6	8/14		

<b>Outfitters</b>	<b>Launch Dates</b>								
<i>Custom River Tours</i>		7/5				8/6	8/14		
<i>Canyons Inc</i>	6/27	7/5	7/13	7/21	7/29	8/6	8/14	8/22	8/30
<b>Group 5</b>									
<i>Action White Water Adv</i>	6/28	7/6	7/14	7/22	7/30	8/7	8/15	8/23	8/31
<i>River Odysseys West</i>	6/28	7/6	7/14	7/22	7/30	8/7	8/15	8/23	8/31
<i>Middle Fk Rpd Transit</i>	6/28	7/6	7/14	7/22	7/30	8/7	8/15	8/23	8/31
<b>Group 6</b>									
<i>Middle Fk Rvr Exped</i>	6/29	7/7	7/15	7/23	7/31	8/8	8/16	8/24	9/1
<i>Aggipah River Tours</i>		7/7	7/15	7/23	7/31	8/8	8/16	8/24	9/1
<i>Echo River Trips (#1)</i>	6/29	7/7	7/15	7/23	7/31	8/8	8/16	8/24	9/1
<b>Group 7</b>									
<i>Idaho Rvr Journeys</i>	6/30	7/8	7/16	7/24	8/1	8/9	8/17	8/25	9/2
<i>Mackay Wilderness River Trips</i>	6/30	7/8	7/16	7/24	8/1	8/9	8/17	8/25	9/2
<i>Middle Fk Wilderness Outfitters</i>	6/30	7/8	7/16	7/24	8/1	8/9	8/17	8/25	
<i>Hughes Rvr Expeditions</i>	6/30	7/8	7/16	7/24	8/1	8/9	8/17	8/25	9/2
<b>Group 8</b>									
<i>Rocky Mtn River Tours</i>	7/1	7/9	7/17	7/25	8/2	8/10	8/18	8/26	9/3
<i>Mtn Travel Sobek</i>	7/1	7/9	7/17	7/25	8/2	8/10	8/18		
<i>Solitude Rvr Trips</i>	7/1	7/9	7/17	7/25	8/2	8/10	8/18		
<i>Idaho Wilderness</i>			7/17	7/25	8/2	8/10	8/18	8/26	
<i>Snake Rvr Area Council, Boy Scouts of America</i>	6/28	7/5	7/12	7/19	7/26	8/2			<b>2004</b>
	Six (6) consecutive Monday launches starting last Monday in June.								

Table 2.8. Middle Fork Pre-Season Launch Schedule (Temporary Use)

Outfitters	Launch Dates		
<b>Group 1</b>			
A.R.T.A.	5/28	6/6	6/15
MF River Co. dba Far & Away	5/28	6/6	6/15
Oars Dories	5/28	6/6	6/15
<b>Group 2</b>			
Wilderness, Inc.	5/29	6/7	6/16
Echo River Trips (#2)	5/29	6/7	6/16
Helfrich River Outfitters	5/29	6/7	6/16
<b>Group 3</b>			
Adventure Sun Valley River Co.	5/30	6/8	6/17
Middle Fork River Tours	5/30	6/8	6/17
Dean Helfrich Guide Service	5/30	6/8	6/17
<b>Group 4</b>			
Bob Sevy	5/31	6/9	6/18
Schaefer's Guide Service	5/31	6/9	6/18
Custom River Tours	5/31	6/9	6/18
<b>Group 5</b>			
Canyons Inc	6/1	6/10	6/19
Action White Water Adventures	6/1	6/10	6/19
River Odysseys West (ROW)	6/1	6/10	6/19
<b>Group 6</b>			
Middle Fork Rapid Transit	6/2	6/11	6/20
Middle Fork River Expeditions	6/2	6/11	6/20
Aggipah River Tours	6/2	6/11	6/20
<b>Group 7</b>			
Echo River Trips (#1)	6/3	6/12	6/21
Idaho River Journeys	6/3	6/12	6/21
Mackay Wilderness River Trips	6/3	6/12	6/21
<b>Group 8</b>			
Middle Fork Wilderness Outfitters	6/4	6/13	6/22
Hughes River Expeditions	6/4	6/13	6/22
Rocky Mtn River Tours	6/4	6/13	6/22
<b>Group 9</b>			
Mountain Travel Sobek	6/5	6/14	6/23
Solitude River Trips	6/5	6/14	6/23
Idaho Wilderness	6/5	6/14	6/23

6. During the lottery control season, a 21-day cancellation notification is required. (S)
7. All cancelled launches during the lottery control season will be available for reassigning to either additional commercial or non-commercial launches on a first come first served basis. (S)
8. All commercial cancelled launches outside the lottery control season will be reassigned to non-commercial groups. (S)
9. Failure to show up for a confirmed launch without giving notice 21 days before a scheduled launch will result in disqualifying the permit holder from participation in the control season lottery for the following three years. (S)
10. Outside the lottery control season, launch permits are available on a first come, first serve basis for either commercial or non-commercial boaters, with a maximum of 7 launches total per day. (S)
11. Multiple day trips within a launch are not allowed. Within a single launch, the party must travel progressively downstream to their final destination. (S)
12. A permitted group may not split up at any time during the trip. (S)
13. Passenger exchange will be allowed within the confines of a single launch that travels progressively downstream to a final destination. (S)
14. No multiple-day trips that reuse one or more sections of the river during a given launch period, and where crafts do not progressively travel downriver, are allowed. (S)
15. Commercial float activity on the Middle Fork will be limited to a maximum of 28 companies, including institutional permits, such as the Boy Scouts. (S)
16. No more than 25 percent of available launch dates are allowed to be controlled by a single outfitter. (S)
17. Generally authorize deadhead trips when the river gauge at Middle Fork Lodge reads below 2 feet or over 6 feet. The following conditions must be met: (G)
  - a. Requested in writing in advance and approved by the District Ranger.
  - b. A licensed guide must conduct any commercial deadhead trips; no paying passengers or trainee guides are allowed.
  - c. Must be conducted in one day.
  - d. No stops at hot springs or cultural sites are allowed.
  - e. Must depart Boundary Creek launch before 9:00 a.m.

18. Use river patrols as needed during the prime lottery season, with emphasis primarily on cleanup and maintenance rather than visitor contact. During other times of the year, use river patrols for both cleanup, maintenance, and visitor contact. (G)

19. In general, calculate the number of priority authorized launches at time of permit re-issuance or transfer, based on the average of the highest two years during the previous five years. Priority use may be reduced if use is less than 70 percent of that authorized for each of three consecutive years during the 5 year time period. (G)

### ***Campsite Management***

1. Campsites are unobtrusive and dispersed. Campsite activity, experiences, and campsite resource conditions do not exhibit a downward trend. Degraded campsite conditions will be addressed using the following sequence of efforts: (G)

- a. Educate visitors to change behavior or to encourage protection of certain resource attributes at a campsite.
- b. Decrease use in the spring and fall to allow for natural green-up and recovery.
- c. Restore and block certain areas of a campsite with native material barriers.
- d. Designate kitchen areas, tent sites and social trails.
- e. Provide appropriate structures when needed to protect the wilderness resource.
- f. Close campsites (seasonally first, year-round as needed).

2. No more than 45 percent of river campsites will be in Frissell Condition Class IV and no more than 7 percent will be in Condition Class V. (S)

3. Improve degraded campsites in Frissell Condition Classes IV and V. Focus management on campsite conditions and measurable adverse effects to resources. (G)

4. Close campsites as needed to provide for public health and safety or to protect resources. (G)

5. River campsites are designated and assigned. No camping is allowed in undesignated areas. (S)

6. All float launches will be assigned campsites for the duration of their trips during the lottery control season. Assignments may be made during other high use time periods during other seasons of the year. (S)

7. No more than one overnight camp below Big Creek will be assigned per launch during the lottery control season. (S)
8. No layovers (more than one night of camping during same trip at the same camp) at hot springs or popular camps are allowed during the lottery control season. (S)
9. Reduce maximum trip length, do not reissue cancelled permits or take other management actions if there is a high likelihood of camp capacities being exceeded. (G)
10. Overnight river visitors will be directed to campsites appropriate to their party size to protect campsite conditions and reduce visitor conflicts. Assign small groups to small camps and large groups to large camps as needed. (S)
11. Two or more groups may camp together as long as the total number of people at the site does not exceed the designated capacity for the site. (G)
12. There are currently two assigned outfitter camps on the Middle Fork (Trail Flat Camp and Dome Camp). No additional outfitter assigned camps (base camps, transfer camps, drop camps) will be permitted in river corridors. (S)
13. The Middle Fork Campsite Heritage Management Plan and Middle Fork Campsite Restoration Plan will guide the management of campsites where cultural resource sites are present. This plan specifies protective measures to be implemented using least restrictive and intrusive measures first and proceeding to more intrusive and restrictive measures to protect significant archaeological sites that are impacted by human use. (This plan available at the Salmon-Challis National Forest.) (G)
14. Promote minimum impact camping techniques at portals and in visitor information. Update the information from time to time through visitor contacts, depending on the condition of the resources. (G)

## **F. Monitoring**

Campsite conditions will be monitored primarily by using Frissell Condition Classes as modified for river campsite application (see Table 2.5 in the XIV. Recreation- Land Based section). Modified – Cole Campsite Condition Surveys may also be performed to provide more specific information.

### **Indicators**

1. Frissell Campsite Ratings
2. Modified – Cole Campsite Condition Surveys



## **XVI. Recreation – Salmon River**

### **A. Background**

The Central Idaho Wilderness Act of 1980, in addition to establishing the River of No Return Wilderness (renamed the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness in 1984), amended the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to include the 79 mile section of the Salmon River from Corn Creek Campground to Long Tom Bar as a Wild River. The Wild segment of the Salmon River is located in Central Idaho and originates at Corn Creek Campground, 46 miles west of North Fork, Idaho. It flows 79 miles west to Long Tom Bar, which is 28 miles east of Riggins, Idaho. The upper section passes through the FC-RONR Wilderness. The lower section forms the southern boundary of the Gospel-Hump Wilderness.

The Wild River segment contains about 23,566 acres, with 13 separate private land parcels containing 678 acres. Approximately 5.1 miles (3%) of the Wild River shoreline is in private ownership. The remaining 97% is National Forest. The portion south of the river is entirely within the FC-RONRW, except for a small portion at Mackay Bar. On the north side of the river, the parts from Wheat Creek to Big Mallard Creek and from Little Mallard Creek to Mackay Bar are within the FC-RONRW. This is about 53.4 miles containing about 19,702 acres. The stretch west from the Shepp Ranch to Wind River is within the Gospel-Hump Wilderness. This stretch is about 15 miles and contains approximately 1,929 acres.

Even though the Salmon River is within the FC-RONRW, the Wild section of river was to be administered differently. In order to recognize and maintain existing motorized jetboat use and other nonconforming uses along the river corridor, Congress provided that the less restrictive management direction of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would prevail in the Salmon River corridor, rather than the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

Both float and powerboats have historically used the Wild section of the river. From a regional perspective, during low water flows, this river is not as technically difficult to float as the Middle Fork of the Salmon or the Selway Rivers, but still offers outstanding trips because of good water, length of trip, scenery, and historic and geologic interest. Most powerboat use is associated with access to private lands, commercial outfitting, hunting and fishing.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

The Salmon River is managed to recognize its status as a premier river resource providing an array of river opportunities including world class whitewater floating. Historical use of spring and fall fisheries is sustained to the extent possible as a unique

heritage of the Salmon River resource. Outstanding opportunities for river related primitive experiences are sustained, including solitude and challenge. Recreation opportunities for activities within these areas are provided and managed as allowed under CIWA and compatible with the wilderness.

Jet boat power boating in a primitive setting is recognized as a unique experience on the Salmon River.

### **C. Goals**

1. Manage the Salmon River to provide a wide variety of river recreation experiences within physical and ecological carrying capacities, while providing opportunities for powerboat use at not less than the estimated 1978 level.
2. Maintain private land ingress and egress using jet boats at approximately current levels.
3. Visitors practice Leave No Trace and recognize and respect the rights of other users and take action to lessen their effects on other users and wildlife. Visitors understand the need for limits to protect the physical and social resource and allow opportunities for solitude.
4. Outfitters and guides are partners with the Forest Service in providing recreation opportunities to the public.
5. There are no increases in improvements and no reductions in access.

### **D. Objectives**

1. The Salmon River will be managed to maintain its Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs). The ORVs for the Salmon River are fish and wildlife, historical and cultural, recreational, scenic, and water of high quality (includes chemical, physical and biological components). For a discussion on the ORVs for the Salmon River, see [Appendix F](#).
2. Emphasize float boating opportunities during the summer season; emphasize power boating, fishing, and hunting during the spring, fall, and winter seasons. If conflicts arise between use and the resource, conflicts will be resolved in favor of use until resource thresholds are reached.
3. Monitor private land powerboat access to evaluate whether it affects other uses within the Management Zone.
4. Expand information services at Vinegar Creek and Spring Bar to emphasize powerboat use safety and minimum impact camping techniques.

5. After five years evaluate the effects of increasing private jetboat use levels on other users and the overall recreation experience. Make adjustments as needed to maintain the ROS setting.
6. Manage outfitter and guide use consistent with the Outfitter and Guide Handbook. Take action to resolve concerns with priority versus temporary use allocations.
7. Implement a yearlong road closure between Mackay Bar Campground and the old Painter Bar homestead.

## **E. Standards and Guidelines**

### ***General (Commercial and Non-Commercial)***

1. Manage the ROS social setting (encounters) as Semi-Primitive Motorized. Number of encounters with other groups will have low to moderate contact frequency. (S)
2. No through trail paralleling the river within the river corridor will be constructed. Existing trails may continue in their present location. (S)
3. Limit signs to those essential for resource protection, not river user orientation or interpretation. (G)
4. Consider location, design, and material compatibility within the Wild River environment when reconstructing bridges and trails. (G)
5. The river will be managed as a main access route to both the FC-RONR and Gospel Hump Wildernesses. (G)
6. Manage the Cache Creek and Corn Creek boating facilities primarily as a Wild River access point. If conflicts in use occur between Salmon River Recreation River activities, and Wild River ingress/egress activities, the conflicts will be resolved to favor Wild River access use. (S)
7. Emphasize visitor contact and education to inform the public of appropriate wilderness use behaviors, rules, and regulations. Use both on-site and off-site efforts when appropriate. Educate users to prevent over-use at all known points of interest. Use personal portal contacts to improve visitor orientation and explain rules and regulations. Develop maps and brochures to inform the public on use problems, minimum impact camping techniques, and conditions of occupancy and use. Emphasize Leave No Trace practices to the public and outfitters to promote wilderness appropriate use behaviors. (G)
8. No new structures will be permitted on National Forest System lands, except for safety and sanitation. (S)

9. Chainsaw use within the Salmon River Wild corridor will be authorized by permit only. Permitted use will be very restricted during the control season. (S)

***Prohibitions and Requirements – General Special Orders and Regulations***

1. All human waste, unburnable litter and refuse material must be packed out. (S)
2. Require the use of portable toilets, packing out and properly disposing of human waste. Human waste must be removed from the river corridor. (S)
3. Require fire-pans for all visitors in the corridor. Ashes and other fire residue must be packed out. (S)
4. Landing of aircraft, or dropping or picking up any material, supplies or persons by means of an aircraft, including a helicopter, except at designated landing strips, is prohibited. (S)
5. Use of soap in rivers (below mean high water level) or in hot springs is prohibited. (S)
6. Public nudity is prohibited. (S)
7. Cutting standing trees (live or dead) for firewood or other purposes is prohibited, except for fire control and administrative purposes. (S)
8. Exceeding trip duration or maximum party size limits without prior written approval is prohibited. (S)
9. Jet skis, airboats, motorized surfboards, wind surfboards, hovercraft, winged watercraft, amphibious craft, mini-submarines, powerboats under 8 feet in length and/or designed to carry a maximum of 2 passengers, and motorized watercraft that must be straddled when ridden by the operator and/or passenger, are prohibited. (S)
10. Unless approved by permit and determined to be consistent with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and necessary for administration of the area, use of motorized equipment and mechanical transport is prohibited, except as allowed by law. (S)
11. The Painter Bar road is closed to motorized vehicles. (S)

***Float Boating Regulations (Commercial and Non-Commercial)***

1. Two use seasons are defined for the Salmon River Management Zone. If conflicts arise between motor and float visitors, arbitration and resolution would generally favor the visitor with seasonal emphasis. (S)

- a. Control Season (June 20 – September 7): During the summer season, opportunities for float boating activities will be emphasized.
  - b. Non-Control Season (September 8 – June 19): During these seasons (fall, winter, spring) opportunities for power boating, fishing, and hunting recreation activities will be emphasized.
2. It is prohibited year-round to enter or be upon the Salmon Wild and Scenic River with any powerboat or flotation craft without a permit. (S)
  3. During the control season, both commercial and non-commercial float boaters can choose, under the variable trip length option, their party size with a corresponding length of stay (Table 2.9). Exceptions may be considered by the District Ranger during the control season when group size is fewer than 20 people and campsite availability is not an issue, when longer trips are needed to perform work as authorized by volunteer agreements or for commercial outfitters where their operation is primarily wilderness education based.

**Table 2.9. Variable Trip Length of Stay Based on Party Size during the Control Season**

Control Season	Party Size	Length of Stay
Commercial and Non-commercial float boaters	21 – 30	6 days
	11 – 20	7 days
	1 – 10	8 days

3. There are 8 launches daily during the control season. Generally, during the control season, launches are split equally between commercial and non-commercial parties. (S)
4. Launches are unlimited during the non-control season. (S)
5. During the non-control season the maximum group size for both commercial and non-commercial float boaters is 30 and the maximum length of stay is 10 days. (S)
6. Where roads are open to public use within roaded sections of the corridor at Mackay Bar and Whitewater, the length of stay will be consistent with limits applied outside the River Management Zone. (S)
7. A permitted group may not split up at any time during the trip. (S)
8. No multiple day trips that reuse one or more sections of the river during a given launch period, and where craft do not progressively travel down the river, are allowed. (S)

9. No day floating is permitted. (S)
10. No conversion of float boat launch permits to multiple single day launch permits will be allowed with or without jet-back assistance. (S)
11. Passenger exchange is allowed within the confines of a single launch that travels progressively downstream to a final destination. (S)
12. A maximum of 2 kicker motors are allowed per float boat party. No float boat travel upriver is allowed with kicker motors except as needed for landing, rescue, or safety. Motors cannot exceed 10 horsepower. (S)
13. Float boat use of kicker motors will be monitored. If increasing conflicts with non-motorized float boats or other motorized boating occurs, float boats with kicker motors will be considered powerboats and will be regulated according to powerboat management direction. (S)
14. Sand stakes are required. (S)
15. Routine river patrols will be used as needed during the control season, with emphasis primarily on cleanup and maintenance rather than visitor contact. At other times of the year, river patrols will be used for cleanup, maintenance and visitor contact. (G)
16. Cancellations must be accomplished at least 21 days before the scheduled launch. (S)
17. All cancelled launches during the lottery control season will be available for reassigning to either additional commercial or non-commercial launches on a first come first serve basis. (S)

***Non-Commercial Float Boating Permits***

1. During the control season, launch dates will be assigned by lottery. The lottery may be adjusted annually as needed. (S)
2. During the non-control season, permits are issued on a first-come, first-serve basis. Permits are unlimited and may be self-issued. (S)
3. Any control season unassigned or unconfirmed non-commercial launches existing after the lottery will be issued on a first-come, first-serve basis to non-commercial floaters who do not hold a permit for that season. (G)

**Commercial Float Boating Permits**

1. No additional outfitter float permits above the present number of 30 will be issued. (S)
2. No single outfitter will be permitted to control more than 25 percent of the total number of launches per season. (S)
3. Should a launch pool be established as a result of allocation changes, the pooled launches are only available for outfitters who experienced reductions. For the pooled launches, outfitters must apply for available launches by May 1. If more than one outfitter applies for the same date(s), the following criteria will be considered: (G)
  - a. Past record of permit performance and compliance
  - b. Knowledge of the area
  - c. Balanced operations
  - d. Economic viability
  - e. Potential to add diversity and stability to the local community economies
  - f. Diverse range of services/opportunities provided for the public
  - g. Ability to carry out the activity, including financial capability, certifications, training, safety, knowledge, etc.
4. Outfitters who provide services only to private, restricted, institutional or semi-public, or whose performance ratings are less than acceptable, are not eligible for assignment of priority use. (G)
5. In general, calculate the number of priority authorized launches at time of permit re-issuance or transfer, based on the average of the highest two years during the previous five years. Priority use may be reduced if use is less than 70 percent of that authorized for each of the three consecutive years during the 5 year time period. (G)

**Power Boating Regulations (Commercial and Non-Commercial)**

1. A permit is required for power boating year-round. (S)
2. Year-round party size is limited to a maximum of 30 people. (S)
3. Forest Service and cooperating agencies may use powerboats as follows: (G)
  - a. For fire prevention patrols during very high and extreme fire conditions.
  - b. Primarily before and after the summer season.
  - c. For transportation or to meet law enforcement needs.
  - d. For administrative trips where time is limited.

- e. For support of noxious weed treatment crews.
4. Coordinate any proposed powerboat use by all adjacent Forest Service units with the Salmon River or North Fork Ranger Districts. (G)

### ***Non-commercial Power Boating Permits***

1. During the control season, non-commercial recreational powerboats are limited to no more than 6 boats on the river at one time, with a maximum 7 days length of stay. (S)
2. During the control season, each non-commercial powerboat permit authorizes one powerboat for either overnight use or for single-day use in the river corridor. (S)
3. Any powerboat use of a day constitutes full use of the day. The day after one permitted boat leaves the river corridor another permitted boat can launch in its place. (S)
4. No more than 3 powerboats may travel together in the same group during the control season. Aggregate group size may not exceed 30 people. Note: Group is defined as any combination of powerboats traveling and/or camping together. (S)
5. During the control season, non-commercial use is allocated using a reservation system. Reservation dates and length of stay will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations will be accepted from June 1 until the end of the control season. During the non-control season, permits may be self-issued. (G)
6. When demand for available boat use exceeds the system capacity during a significant portion of a control season, a lottery system will be implemented. If a lottery season is implemented for any season, application process and procedures will be similar to the float boat permit lottery system. (G)
7. Outside the control season, there is no limit on the number of powerboat permits issued at one time or on the number of powerboats within the Salmon River corridor. Group size is limited to 30 people, with no more than 3 boats traveling as a group. Length of stay is limited to 10 days. (S)

### ***Commercial Power Boating Permits***

1. Special use permits for commercial powerboats will identify number of boats permitted, activities authorized and the contingent facilities/activities related. Year-round permitted activities for commercial powerboats during the control season and outside the control season are displayed in Tables 2.10 and 2.11. (S)



**Table 2.10. Authorized Commercial Powerboat Activities by Operator and Number of Boats- Control Season\***

Operator	Contract Activities, other than jet back	Hunting Camp Access	Jet Back Activity	Private Land Access	Lodge/Resort Access (owner - operator)	Sight-seeing Fishing	Total boats permitted in control season
Salmon River Lodge	3	1	3	-	-	3	3
White Water West	2	-	-	-	2	2	2
Mike Richie Outfitters	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Jack Smith dba Arctic Creek Outfitters	1	-	1	-	1	1	1
Salmon River Tours	2	-	2	X	2	2	2
White Water Expeditions	2	-	1	X	2	2	2
Stub Creek Outfitters	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Mackay Bar Corp.	2	-	-	X	2	2	2
Shepp Ranch	2	1	-	X	2	2	2
Red Woods Outfitters	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Exodus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
River <sup>1</sup> Adventures	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Within Control Season Totals</b>	15	3	7	5	12	14	18

<sup>1</sup> River Adventures has a permit for 1 jet boat below Salmon Falls during the control period.

X = Private land access allowed during the control season.

\* Control season is from June 20<sup>th</sup> to September 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Table 2.11. Authorized Commercial Powerboat Activities by Operator and Number of Boats- Outside the Control Season\***

Operator	Contract Activities, other than jet back	Hunting Camp Access	Jet Back Activity	Private Land Access	Lodge/Resort Access (owner - operator)	Sight-seeing Fishing	Total boats permitted outside the control season
Salmon River Lodge	3	1	3	-	-	3	3
White Water West	2	-	2	-	2	2	2
Mike Richie Outfitters	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Jack Smith dba Arctic Creek Outfitters	2	-	2	-	2	2	2
Salmon River Tours	3	-	2	X	2	3	3
White Water Expeditions	2	-	1	X	2	2	2
Stub Creek Outfitters	-	-	-		1	1	1
Mackay Bar Corp.	2	-	-	X	2	2	2
Shepp Ranch	2	1	-	X	2	2	2
Red Woods Outfitters	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Exodus <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
River <sup>2</sup> Adventures	2	-	-	-	-	1	2
<b>Outside Control Season Totals</b>	19	3	11	5	14	21	22

<sup>1</sup> Exodus is permitted for 1 jet boat to be used for commercial purposes outside the control season only.

<sup>2</sup> River Adventures has a permit for 2 jet boats below Salmon Falls outside the control period.

X = Private land access allowed outside the control season.

\* Outside the control season is from September 8th to June 19<sup>th</sup>.

2. There is no limit on the number of commercial powerboat trips allowed per day. (S)
3. No additional commercial powerboat permits will be approved. (S)
4. Special use permits for commercial powerboats associated with other permitted activities or facilities on the river will be considered for transfer only when transferred as part of the other permitted activities or facilities. (S)

5. Jet-backs are considered retrieving any floating party and/or equipment from Vinegar Creek or locations within the river corridor and then returning to Corn Creek boat launch. Jet-backs will be one-way, in an upriver direction. (S)

### **Private Land Access**

1. Private property landowners who are eligible for powerboat access under the 1987 Policy Guidelines will be provided a private land access powerboat permit. The sole purpose of these permits is to allow access to private land ([Appendix K](#)). (S)

2. If powerboat use for private land access grows toward the maximum possible (70), other uses such as commercial powerboat operations, non-commercial powerboat use and float boat launches may be reduced to meet Semi-Primitive Motorized ROS objectives. (S)

### **Campsite Management**

1. Campsites are unobtrusive and dispersed. Campsite activity, experiences, and campsite resource conditions do not exhibit a downward trend. Degraded campsite conditions will be addressed using the following sequence of efforts: (G)

- a. Educate visitors to change behavior or to encourage protection of certain resource attributes at a campsite.
- b. Decrease use in the spring and fall to allow for natural green-up and recovery.
- c. Restore and block certain areas of a campsite with native material barriers.
- d. Designate kitchen areas, tent sites, and social trails.
- e. Provide appropriate structures when needed to protect the wilderness resource.
- f. Close campsites (seasonally first, year-round as needed).

2. If peak season use exceeds physical campsite capacities, management actions will be developed to cap additional use. (G)

3. No more than 30 percent of river campsites will be in Frissell Condition Class IV, and no more than one percent will be in Condition Class V (see Table 2.5 in the XIV. Recreation – Land Based section). (S)

4. Improve degraded campsites in Frissell Condition Classes IV and V. Focus management on campsite conditions and measurable adverse effects to resources. (G)

5. River corridor campsites are managed primarily for boating activities. Conflicts regarding campsite use will be resolved to favor boating activities. (G)
6. Campsite overnight use within the river corridor is on a first-come, first-serve basis, except during the control season. During the control season, a portion of the camps are available for reservation on the day the permit is issued. (S)
7. No layovers (more than one night of camping during same trip at the same camp) at hot springs or popular reserved camps are allowed during the lottery control season. (S)
8. Reduce maximum trip length, do not reissue cancelled permits or take other management actions if there is a high likelihood of camp capacities being exceeded. (G)
9. Overnight river visitors will be directed to campsites appropriate to their party size to protect campsite conditions and reduce visitor conflicts. At reserved sites, assign small groups to small camps and large groups to large camps as needed. (S)
10. Two or more groups may camp together as long as the total number of people at the site does not exceed the designated capacity for the site. (G)
11. Overnight use of campsites by commercial powerboat permit holders is not allowed except as provided for by special use permit. (S)
12. There are currently three assigned outfitter camps on the Salmon River (Stub Creek, Smith Gulch, and Artic Creek). No additional outfitter assigned camps will be permitted. (S)
13. Overnight camping on the south side of the Salmon River within a 250-yard radius of Barth Hot Springs is prohibited. (S)
14. Promote minimum impact camping techniques at portals and in visitor information. Update the information from time to time through visitor contacts, depending on the condition of the resources. (G)

## **F. Monitoring**

Use levels will be monitored for commercial and non-commercial float boating and jet boating activities in order to validate use allocation and resource impact levels.

**Indicators**

1. Number of launches by type
2. People per party
3. PAOT levels
4. Encounter levels between different user groups
5. Number of non-commercial power boats at one time
6. Outfitter and Guide percent of allocation used – launches used
7. Number of Kicker Motors used
8. Campsite condition surveys using Frissell and Modified – Cole Methods

## **XVII. Research**

### **A. Background**

The Wilderness Act recognizes that scientific values in wilderness and the gathering of information regarding their use and enjoyment is an appropriate activity in wilderness. Scientific study of the wilderness is also a purpose articulated in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act ([Appendix B](#)).

The FC-RONR Wilderness' vast array of diverse ecosystems, topography, geology, fire history, wildlife populations, and cultural history provides an excellent tapestry for study and observation in a near-natural environment. There has been considerable research activity in the past; more is expected in the future.

The University of Idaho maintains a wilderness research center on the 65-acre Taylor Ranch in lower Big Creek. The University uses this facility for a wide range of wilderness-related research.

The CIWA specifically provides that management shall encourage scientific research into man's past use of the wilderness and the Salmon River corridor (Section 8(a)(3)(A)).

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Wilderness-dependent research will continue following the intent of the Wilderness Act. The wilderness resource will continue to be shaped by natural forces and processes, while providing an opportunity to further the state of our knowledge of ecosystems and social aspects of wilderness management.

### **C. Goals**

1. Wilderness and its ecosystems will continue to be valuable as benchmarks. The benchmarks provide a basis where managers and scientists can better understand and compare natural processes and systems.

### **D. Objectives**

1. Provide for and encourage scientific study that:
  - a. Depends on the wilderness setting or upon natural systems not readily found outside wilderness.

- b. Seeks to explain or understand ecosystems found in wilderness or resolve wilderness management problems to provide managers with knowledge needed to better manage wild lands.
- c. Is conducted in a non-obtrusive manner consistent with preserving the wilderness character and minimizes conflicts between wilderness users and researchers.

## **E. Standards and Guidelines**

### ***General***

1. Research projects that benefit the protection objectives of the FC-RONR Wilderness will be given highest priority. (S)
2. Research projects not dependent on wilderness will be directed to alternative areas outside the wilderness. (S)
3. Research methods that temporarily infringe on the wilderness resource should be limited or restricted, with the adverse effect(s) mitigated to the extent possible. (G)
4. All proposed research structures will be analyzed through the Minimum Requirements Analysis process. If approved, these research structures shall be situated and constructed to be as unobtrusive as possible. (S)
5. Data collected for management purposes, such as use figures and resource inventories, should be made available to scientists for research purposes. (G)
6. The use of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft for research purposes outside of public airstrips will be analyzed through the Minimum Requirements Analysis process. (S)
7. Aircraft use, including helicopters, outside of the public airstrips should be considered only when other methods are not possible and not appropriate for the research objectives. If aircraft use is approved, time of day, season of year, elevation, route of flight, and location of landings will be considered to minimize impacts. (G)
8. Research projects must be approved by the Forest Supervisor and authorized by special use permit. (S)

### ***Research Proposals***

1. Proposed research projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the managing unit as to the project's desirability, priority, and compatibility. Project proposals that extend across administrative boundaries will be jointly reviewed with a coordinated response. (S)

2. Research projects on wildlife and fish resources, recreational use, human carrying capacities, cultural resources, and methodologies for monitoring ecological and sociological carrying capacity, will be permitted in the Wild River corridor. (S)
3. Written research proposals should be submitted to the Forest Service at least 6 months before anticipated fieldwork. (G)

### ***Specimen Collection***

1. No personal flora or fauna collection is permitted. Collections are for scientific or educational purposes only, dedicated to public benefit, and may not be used for personal or commercial profit. (S)
2. All collections for scientific purposes must be approved. (S)
3. No archaeological or vertebrate paleontological materials may be collected. Upon location of any historical or archaeological remains, fieldwork will cease and the site shall be reported immediately. No disturbance of such a site is permitted. (S)

### ***Marking Samples and Locations***

1. Measuring and recording methods must be sensitive to the generally undisturbed character of the area and leave as few signs of disturbance as possible. Field measurements in the FC-RONR Wilderness will follow the guidelines in the Forest Inventory and Assessment and Wilderness Program MOA, namely:
  - a. The practice of painting or scribing trees will not be used. Instead, marked nailed tags will be used.
  - b. Marking tags/nails may be used minimally, if painted an approved color, and faced away from obvious trails and roads.
  - c. Tags/nails may only be used at the base of the tree. Markers may not protrude from the ground more than one inch.
  - d. Flagging may not be attached to the marker.
  - e. Any flagging used to facilitate entry and exit from the plot area will be removed upon completion of the plot measurements.
  - f. Boring or drilling will be done on representative non-tally trees and only when absolutely necessary to estimate site, age, or growth.
  - g. Destructive sampling will not be done.



**Site Condition**

1. All refuse associated with field operations will be removed from the site and returned to the condition in which it was found, except as authorized by the project work plan. (S)
2. Soil disturbance is prohibited, except as specifically authorized in the project work plan. (S)
3. Temporary markers, such as flagging, may not remain in place for more than one week when study teams are not present on a site. (S)
4. Paint, or similar semi-permanent markers, may not be applied to rocks, plants, or other natural surfaces. (S)

**F. Monitoring**

No monitoring identified

## **XVIII. Research Natural Areas**

### **A. Background**

Four Research Natural Areas (RNAs) have been established within the FC-RONRW. These areas exhibit unique features or representative habitat types that are beneficial for scientific study as a baseline of natural conditions. The areas include:

- a. Dry Gulch-Forge Creek RNA (3,200 acres)
- b. Frog Meadows RNA (330 acres)
- c. Gunbarrel RNA (1,600 acres)
- d. Soldier Lakes RNA (175 acres)

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

Research Natural Areas provide a window to observe natural conditions and processes at work free from the influences of man. As one of the purposes described in the Wilderness Act of 1964, research is acknowledged specifically in the establishment of RNAs in wilderness. These areas have been established where representative ecosystems can be studied and where natural processes are unimpeded.

### **C. Goal**

1. Maintain the natural conditions and processes associated with the aquatic and terrestrial features (flora, fauna, and geological features) in as close to undisturbed condition as possible, without direct human impacts.
2. Partnerships with National Forests and university researchers are forged to further scientific inquiry in these areas and ecosystems.
2. Reduce and prevent un-natural influences upon native flora and fauna, to the extent practicable.

### **D. Objectives**

1. Conduct biological surveys in each RNA every 5 years to ensure that conditions remain undisturbed except by natural processes. Update and revise research natural plans as needed based on findings.

### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Limit recreational and other uses as needed to protect the scientific values of designated and proposed RNAs. (S)

2. Permit no occupancy, including outfitter assigned camps under special use permit. (S)
3. Maintain existing trails and encourage pass through use rather than overnight occupancy. (G)
4. Construct no new trails in RNAs; short re-routes of existing trails shall be allowed to better protect wilderness and scientific values. (S)
5. Manage individual RNAs according to site specific direction developed for each area. (S)

**F. Monitoring**

Presence of non-indigenous species in RNAs.

***Indicator***

1. Non-indigenous species of plants and animals.

## **XIX. SOIL AND WATER RESOURCES**

### **A. Background**

#### ***Soils***

Soils over much of the area have developed from granitic parent materials and include the quartz monzonites of the Idaho Batholith, the closely related gneissic rocks bordering the Batholith, and the true granitics of a younger geologic age. Volcanic rocks and tuffs cap rather extensive areas in the west-central portion of the wilderness. Portions of the Big Creek area are classed broadly as quartzitic, the least represented geologic group in the wilderness.

#### ***Water***

Water quality in the wilderness is good. An estimated 2,500,000 acre feet of water is contributed to the Columbia River System each year. Chemical analysis of the waters show most are rated as soft and highly susceptible to degradation. This adds emphasis on the need to protect the lakes and streams of the area from contamination and to maintain the natural ability to support aquatic species.

#### ***Water Rights***

In 1993, the Snake River Basin Adjudication process began for waters flowing into the Snake River. The Forest Service filed claims for Federal Reserved Rights to instream flows for the Main and Middle Fork Salmon Wild and Scenic Rivers. These Federal Reserved Rights claims were for all unappropriated flows as of the date that the Wild and Scenic Rivers were established (July 23, 1980 for the Salmon; October 2, 1968 for the Middle Fork Salmon). A number of parties, including the State of Idaho and the Cities of Salmon and Challis, objected to the Forest Service claims. On October 27, 2000, the Idaho Supreme Court affirmed a lower court decision that the Forest Service is entitled to a Federal Water right, but that it is for the minimum quantity of water needed to fulfill the purposes of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The Forest Service amended its water rights claims in February of 2002. Claim amounts are those quantities that the Forest Service believes are needed to protect the outstanding and remarkable values of the rivers.

On May 23, 2001, the District Court ordered the Forest Service and objecting parties into mediation. Mediation is ongoing; a settlement agreement has not been completed as of December 2002.

On November 4, 2002, the District Court issued a litigation scheduling order. Trial was scheduled for August 2004 if the parties had not achieved a settlement.

## **B. Desired Future Condition**

The conditions of the soil and water resource within the wilderness continue to be affected by natural processes. Erosion processes continue to change the landscape naturally. Unnatural or human caused effects on soil and water do not occur.

## **C. Goals**

1. Natural forces shape the soil and water resource while allowing for permitted and existing water developments to continue.
2. Soils around lakes, rivers, creeks, meadows, and bogs are maintained in a natural condition. Management action is taken to reduce or eliminate degradation of soil resources, such as soil erosion on trails and compaction from human-caused activities.
3. Maintain water of outstanding high quality and ecological significance that surpasses criteria for primary contact recreation, cold-water biota, and salmonid spawning.

## **D. Objectives**

1. Management of permitted uses strives to eliminate the effects upon the wilderness resource as much as possible. Recognizing existing water rights and uses, managers work with permit holders to protect wilderness quality.
2. Periodically evaluate existing water transmission improvements and remove when no longer needed. Bring all known or discovered water transmission improvements under permit.
3. Continue the water quality monitoring program on the Salmon River and Middle Fork of the Salmon River, and expand to other stream and lakes to establish baseline data for existing and potential heavy use areas.
4. Collect water samples at selected high mountain lake locations on a five-year rotating schedule.
5. Quantify instream flows necessary for National Forest purposes to identify federal water right needs.
6. Initiate studies to determine natural sedimentation rates in Monumental Creek and other streams that have the potential for impact from human activity.

## **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Artificial rehabilitation of undesirable conditions will be considered only when caused by human activities, and when evaluation of the problem shows natural healing

processes are clearly inadequate. The Chief of the Forest Service approval is required. (S)

2. Minimize soil and water impacts from fire suppression activities by using Minimum Impact Suppression Techniques (MIST) or similar approaches. Accomplish rehabilitation of impacts concurrent with fire control or Burned Area Evaluation and Restoration (BAER) activities. (G)
3. Motorized equipment and mechanical transport will not be permitted for maintenance of water developments unless they are determined to be the minimum tool by site-specific analysis and approved by the Regional Forester. (S)
4. As allowed by the CIWA, permit construction and maintenance of a small hydroelectric generator, domestic water facilities, and related facilities only in Jersey Creek and Three Mile Creek. Provide for adequate minimum stream flows to meet National Forest purposes. (S)
5. Restrict uses, as needed, to maintain or improve existing water quality levels. (G)
6. Allow natural soil erosion to continue unless an imminent and definite hazard to life and property or a serious depreciation of important environmental qualities outside the wilderness will result. (G)
7. No snow courses or permanent stream gauges will be permitted. (S)

#### **F. Monitoring**

No monitoring identified.

## XX. TRAILS

### A. Background

There are approximately 2,405 miles of trail in the FC-RONR Wilderness. Currently, there are 296 trails in the wilderness with a trail density of approximately one mile of trail for every 914 acres. A list of all system trails and the corresponding trail class can be found in the Transportation Plan

One National Recreation Trail is partially located in the wilderness. The Knapp Lake-Loon Creek Trail (036) is 15 miles in length with 12 miles of it in the wilderness. Minor management implications are associated with such trails; however, no special direction is required.

Several of the existing trails in the wilderness follow or partially follow routes of local, regional, or national historic interest. These historic routes are the Southern Nez Perce Trail (also referred to as the Reverend Samuel Parker Trail), the Three Blaze Trail, the Thunder Mountain Trail, and the Sheepeater Indian Campaign Trail. While none of these trails have yet been evaluated for historic significance, their potential remains. From a wilderness management stance, historic trails would have minimal impacts on the wilderness resource.

Currently, there are 66 trailheads, which provide access to the FC-RONR Wilderness through 97 trails. Thirty-three, or five percent of them are undeveloped, which means parking and toilet facilities are usually provided; however, in some cases, only parking is available. The remaining 32 trailheads have varying amounts of development ranging from full service facilities where fees are charged, to lightly developed sites where camping facilities are sometimes accompanied by stock loading facilities or other facilities.

There are 114 bridges in or adjacent to the FC-RONR Wilderness. They vary in length from 7.5 feet to 348 feet, and in width from 3 feet to 8 feet; all are single span. The construction materials range from native logs to cable suspension with steel towers, and include treated timber, steel truss, and concrete, log, and rock-gabion abutments. Most were built (or rebuilt) within the past 30 years.

The oldest (and longest) bridge, the Stoddard pack-bridge, was originally built in 1937 and has received some restoration work over the past 25 years. All bridges are to be inspected at least once every 3-6 years by a qualified bridge inspector. Appropriate maintenance, replacement, or removal has generally been accomplished within acceptable minimum technical standards.

To meet the management objectives assigned to the trail classes, maintenance levels have been developed. The maintenance levels for the FC-RONRW trail system are found in [Appendix J](#).

## **B. Desired Future Condition**

The trail system provides the public with access to the wilderness without detracting from the wilderness experience or adversely affecting the physical resources.

## **C. Goals**

1. Manage the trail system and its components to provide access to the wilderness for a spectrum of user groups and experience levels.

## **D. Objectives**

1. Interior roads providing no bona fide access shall be closed and rehabilitated, where practicable, or restored and managed as a trail.
2. Trails designated as Mainline trails have a Level 3 management objective. Level 3 is defined as: resource protection, protection of the investment, and the safety of the user. Trails are maintained for the efficient use of stock. Traffic is medium to heavy.
3. Trails designated as Secondary trails have a Level 2 management objective. Level 2 is defined as: resource protection, preservation of the trail investment, user safety, and to perpetuate and use the pathway in its present location. Work is not deferred to the point of creating a backlog of reconstruction work. The trail is maintained for foot and intermittent horse travel. Volume of traffic is medium to heavy.
4. Trails designated as Way trails have a Level 1 management objective. Level 1 is defined as: resource protection and to inform the user of the trail condition. Level 1 applies to primitive experience level trails, trails that need reconstruction or relocation to alleviate a safety or resource problem, and short-term trails left to revert naturally or obliterate back to the resource land base. The trail is maintained to foot travel standards and stock use is not excluded. Traffic is light.
5. Evaluate all trails not part of the approved trail system for either inclusion in the system or for appropriate rehabilitation actions.
6. Continue to pursue the acquisition of easements and Rights of Way for public trail access across State and private lands.
7. Coordinate with Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation on Statewide non-motorized trail plans.
8. Adopt the existing trail access to and from the Soldier Bar landing strip as part of the trail system. Identify the trail designation and maintenance level.



### E. Standards and Guidelines

1. Perform Level 3 maintenance on all Mainline system trails to the extent practicable. (S)
2. Perform Level 2 maintenance on all Secondary system trails to the extent practicable. (S)
3. Perform Level 1 maintenance on all Way system trails to the extent practicable. (S)
4. No additional National Recreation trails will be designated. (S)
5. Screen and block access to unused abandoned trails when possible. (G)
6. Clearing will be held to the minimum needed for expected use. (G)
7. Locate borrow areas out of view of trails. (G)
8. Use native non-treated materials for drainage structures. (G)
9. Remove metal culverts as they wear out. Replace with natural material. (G)
10. Rock cairns or standard blazes will be used sparingly when trail is otherwise indistinguishable. Paint and/or flagging will not be used. (S)
11. Construct no new trails in Research Natural Areas. (S)
12. Identify trails used primarily by outfitters and discontinue Forest Service maintenance. Develop cooperative agreements with outfitters to maintain these trails. (G)
13. If unable to acquire the appropriate level access across non-federal lands pursue the establishment of an alternative route. (G)
14. Retain all existing areas over 10,000 acres without Forest Service-maintained trails in their current condition. No new trails, facilities or designated sites will be established in these areas. (S)
15. Trail location or relocation guidelines are: (G)
  - a. Locate to avoid campsites.
  - b. Locate to take advantage of vistas and scenic areas.
  - c. Locate to stay a minimum of 200 feet from lakes and meadows, terrain permitting.

- d. Avoid straight alignment.
  - e. Avoid grades over 10 percent
  - f. Avoid tread width in excess of 24 inches.
  - g. Locate where primitive means of maintenance would most often be assured.
16. Construct trail berm only where necessary to control drainage. (S)
17. Corduroy puncheons will be used only where trail relocation is impractical. (G)
18. Where user conflict, congestion, or resource degradation warrants it, consider designating single-purpose trails. (G)
19. Evaluate, define, and interpret (off-site) cultural values of trails with historic trail potential when managing these trails. They include: (G)
- a. South Nez Perce Trail (Parker Trail)
  - b. Three Blaze Trail
  - c. Thunder Mountain Trail
  - d. Sheepeater Campaign Trail
20. Trailhead information boards should be installed at all trailheads (including landing strips) to emphasize: (G)
- a. Wilderness laws, regulations and policy.
  - b. Management requirements such as low-impact camping, fire restrictions, hazards, permit requirements, etc.
  - c. General information such as natural and heritage histories.
  - d. Provide space or separate signboards for Idaho Department of Fish and Game information.
  - e. Signboards should be outside of proclaimed boundaries except at landing strips.
  - f. Information on Noxious Weeds identification and prevention.

## **F. Monitoring**

Collect information on the status and extent of the trail system.

**Indicators**

1. Percent of trails inventoried annually
2. Percent of system trails identified by condition survey to have resource problems
3. Trail miles cleared annually

## **XXI. Vegetation Resources**

### **A. Background**

The rugged terrain, short growing seasons, low to moderately productive soils, moisture shortage periods, and wide temperature variations that are typical of most of the wilderness results in relatively low vegetation production and limited livestock grazing potential.

There are no federally designated Threatened and Endangered (T&E) plant species known to exist in the wilderness. The following species, candidates for T & E designation, are probably residents of the area:

- a. *Penstemon lemhiensis*
- b. *Douglasia idoensis*
- c. *Calamagrotis tweedyi*

Vegetation within most of the wilderness is essentially in a natural condition, except where fire has been repeatedly suppressed. Recent wildfires of the last 10 years have changed the vegetation composition dramatically.

Four areas of unique vegetation have been identified:

- a. Grand fir-western yew, located between Magpie and Artic Creeks.
- b. Sublapine larch, located in the Salmon, Stripe, Thirteen, and Waugh Mountain areas.
- c. Three-hundred-year-old lodgepole pine, located in the head of Wilson Creek.
- d. Whitebark pine, located in the Bear Valley Mountain-Mountain Meadows area.

Timber use has been limited to material for construction of miner's cabins and improvements, private land improvements, Forest Service administrative sites, tent frames and poles, fences, and firewood. Most areas have a plentiful supply of poles and firewood. Concentrated use areas around high mountain lakes and near main rivers have limited supplies of poles and firewood. Continued use will result in impacts on both the aesthetic values and snag-dependent wildlife species.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

The amount, distribution, and characteristics of life-stage habitats are present to maintain or reach viable populations of native species. Habitat conditions generally contribute to survival and recovery, and prevent listing on Region 1 and Region 4 Sensitive Species Lists. Populations of non-native plants are reduced or eradicated in occupied and potential rare plant habitat. Desired habitat conditions are maintained or degraded habitats restored to promote pollinator success and survival. Human

activities are at levels that maintain desired conditions and dynamics during key life stages of rare plants. The public understands the importance of maintaining rare and culturally important plant species.

### **C. Goals**

1. Provide habitat capable of:
  - a. Supporting viable populations of native plant species within the FC-RONRW, and,
  - b. Supporting plant biodiversity to meet social needs, biological diversity, and ecological and functional integrity.
2. Emphasize conservation and recovery of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, and other species at risk.
3. Maintain or restore unique habitats.

### **D. Objectives**

1. Inventory and protect unique vegetation areas to maintain their special values and prevent human-caused changes in natural processes.
2. Protect Threatened or Endangered plant species if found to be present in the wilderness.
3. Protect riparian area vegetation to maintain fish and wildlife habitat and species diversity.
4. Seed only species indigenous or naturalized to the area. Use broadcast seeding methods. Approve seeding only for areas where human activities have caused the loss or threatened the existence of indigenous plant species, and areas where human activities responsible for the deterioration no longer exist and that natural revegetation is insufficient and/or ineffective. (S)
5. Seeding projects will first consider the use of seed sources collected from or near the project area. (S)
6. Provide for the gathering of plants for Native American Indian traditional or cultural uses, as stipulated in statutes, treaties, and agreements with the U.S. Government.

### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Native or naturalized plant species are required for any authorized seedings. (S)

2. Monitor use in unique vegetation sites and take appropriate protection action to permit natural ecological succession. (G)
3. For management activities that include application of insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, or rodenticides, degrading effects on sensitive plant species will be mitigated. (S)

**F. Monitoring**

No monitoring identified.

## **XVII. WEED MANAGEMENT (Noxious Weeds/Invasive Species)**

### **A. Background**

Idaho-listed noxious weeds known to occur within the FC-RONRW at this time include rush skeletonweed, spotted knapweed, Scotch thistle, Canada thistle, Dalmatian toadflax, dyers' woad, and field bindweed. Noxious weeds known to be a threat in close proximity to the wilderness include yellow starthistle, leafy spurge, and diffuse knapweed.

Other exotic weeds are known to be highly aggressive, and are able to invade native habitats and displace native vegetation. These species pose a threat to the natural biotic processes of the wilderness. Sulfur cinquefoil is an exotic weed well-established in many parts of the FC-RONRW, which is highly invasive and poses an ecological threat to the wilderness resources.

Other exotic weeds of concern within the FC-RONRW have varying degrees of invasive tendencies and include goat weed, oxeye daisy, houndstongue, common tansy, perennial peavine, berteroa, bull thistle, and common mullein. Collectively, the weeds of concern to managers within the FC-RONRW, including Idaho listed noxious weeds and other invasive weed species, are termed "noxious/invasive weeds."

The majority of the identified infestations occur along the major river habitats within the Middle Fork and Salmon River corridors.

### **B. Desired Future Condition**

A desired component of the wilderness is the existence and preservation of thriving native ecosystems. Healthy, functioning plant communities provide the foundation upon which ecological values are based. Intact native plant communities support healthy watersheds, productive soils, and native wildlife communities, including threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. The expansion of exotic invasive weeds (noxious weeds) no longer pose a threat to the integrity of native plant communities.

### **C. Goals**

1. Wilderness management promotes native plant and animal species over exotic and/or introduced species. Managers cooperate with other agencies, private landowners and the general public to manage these exotic species.
2. Introduced non-native vegetation such as timothy, cheat grass, orchard grass, and fruit trees represent a small portion of the landscape, and are not expanding. Existing noxious weeds such as rush skeletonweed and spotted knapweed, and other highly

aggressive weeds, such as common tansy, sulphur cinquefoil, and goat weed occur at low levels and are being suppressed.

3. Restore known populations of Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate and Sensitive (TEPCS) plant species, where these populations have been impacted by human influence.

#### **D. Objectives**

1. Implement all aspects of integrated weed management and emphasize prevention and education practices.

2. Effectively manage noxious weeds by collaborating Forest Service weed management with other agencies, landowners, and interested parties through the continuation of an organized Cooperative Weed Management Area.

3. Complete the FC-RONR Wilderness FEIS and ROD on Noxious Weed Management.

4. Work with all user groups on practices that prevent the establishment of noxious weeds in the wilderness.

5. Work with adjacent counties, Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs), and State agencies to improve efficiency and effectiveness of Integrated Weed Management in and adjacent to the FC-RONR Wilderness.

6. Work with Forest Service specialists to implement Best Management Practices for preventing the spread of noxious weeds.

7. Work with all user groups on how they can contribute to prevention, inventory, and treatment of noxious weeds within the FC-RONR Wilderness.

#### **E. Standards and Guidelines**

1. Provide noxious/invasive weed management and prevention awareness to Wilderness Resource Managers, and implement direction and guidelines contained within R-4 Best Management Practices for Weed Prevention and Management, and R-1 Manual Direction, Supplement No. R1 2000-2001-1, May 14, 2001. (G)

2. Provide noxious/invasive weed prevention and identification orientation to river floaters at Boundary Creek, Indian Creek, and Corn Creek. (G)

3. Provide noxious/invasive weed prevention messages to all private power-boaters as part of the information received with their required jetboat permit. (G)



4. Provide noxious/invasive weed prevention messages to wilderness users at high-use trailheads. (G)
5. Solicit input from Idaho Aviation Association and Back Country Horsemen on the Draft Prevention Plan. Ask their assistance in development of prevention methods to retard the spread of noxious/invasive weeds associated with aircraft and stock use in the wilderness. (G)
6. Maintain one or more FC-RONRW noxious/invasive weed display(s) for use in educational presentations, public gatherings, and front office information/visitor orientation. Weed display(s) will include weed identification, potential impacts, components of Integrated Weed Management Strategy, and success stories. (G)
7. The following strategy provides a framework from which to prioritize treatments: (G)
  - a. Eradicate new populations of aggressive noxious/invasive weed species.
  - b. Control established aggressive noxious/invasive weed species.
  - c. Contain established aggressive species, when the size of infestation has exceeded effective control objectives.
  - d. Eradicate new populations of less aggressive species such as Canada thistle.
  - e. Control less aggressive species.
  - f. Contain less aggressive species.
8. No significant expansion of known weed infestations. (S)
9. The collection of noxious/invasive weed inventory information will be conducted in a consistent manner across the FC-RONRW. (S)
10. Noxious/invasive weed management will incorporate the concept of using the “minimum tool.” If a minimum tool analysis favors the use of mechanical transport or motorized equipment, review and approval by the Forest Supervisor (Nez Perce or Bitterroot National Forest) or R4 Regional Forester (Salmon-Challis and Payette National Forest) will be needed before final project selection. (S)
11. Ground disturbances resulting from noxious/invasive weed treatment activities will be evaluated for potential restoration. All seeding projects will be restricted to the use of certified noxious weed-free native seed. Seed originating from local native stock will be favored. (S)
12. Only herbicides approved for use adjacent to water bodies will be used within a 50-foot streamside buffer or other riparian areas. (S)

13. When appropriately labeled herbicides are to be applied within a 50-foot riparian buffer, only hand spraying will be allowed. (S)
14. Herbicide will be applied within riparian buffers only when wind speeds are less than 5 miles per hour. (S)
15. Coordinate aquatic, terrestrial and watershed restoration, management-ignited fire and integrated pest management with a Forest Botanist to minimize impact to threatened, proposed, or Sensitive plant species, actual or potential habitat, or pollinators. (G)

## **F. Monitoring**

Monitor known invasive species sites and inventory for new sites in order to determine trends in vegetation change.

### ***Indicators***

1. Location and acres of noxious weed/invasive species
2. Observation of areas previously treated to determine effective treatment of target weeds and protection of non-target vegetation and resources.
3. Expansion or reduction in area and density of noxious/invasive weeds.