



# Interagency Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits and Designated Camping within the Snake River Planning Area and Teton River Canyon Draft Environmental Assessment



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Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Palisades Ranger District  
In Cooperation with the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Changes in land use, fueled by population growth and increasing recreational use require the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and United States Forest Service (FS), in coordination with the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB), to address capacity and visitor use issues in the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon. The Snake River Planning Area covers approximately 119 miles and includes the South Fork of the Snake River (South Fork) from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River (Henrys Fork), the Henrys Fork from the confluence to St. Anthony, and the main stem of the Snake River (Main Snake) from the confluence south to Market Lake Canal below Lewisville Knolls. The Teton River Canyon covers approximately 49 miles from the Harrop Bridge/Highway 33 to the confluence with the Henrys Fork (Figure 1).

#### *Snake River Planning Area*

The Snake River Planning Area is characterized by three sections; the upper section of the South Fork near Palisades Dam, a mountain valley; the middle section on the South Fork, a rugged canyon; and the lower section (including the Main Snake and Henrys Fork), a wide river with a broad, open flood plain. Unique geologic features, wildlife, rare plants, and cottonwood gallery forest make the planning area an important ecological area. Because of these unique qualities, the South Fork is designated by the BLM as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). The South Fork from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork is considered eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. These designations require the BLM and FS to manage the area to protect important resource values while allowing for public use and enjoyment.

The majestic Snake River is the lifeblood of the Eastern Idaho region. Besides providing irrigation for millions of acres of agricultural land, the river is also an international draw for recreational opportunities, which provides an inflow of cash to local economies. The river is also a haven for dozens of bird, fish and big game species, in part because one of the largest cottonwood gallery forests in the western United States is part of the planning area.

Special designations, unique qualities, and different types of activity areas (e.g., trail systems, day-use areas, camping areas, wildlife management areas, and vegetation management areas) exist in the planning area. All of these resources must be considered in the agencies' analysis.

#### *Snake River Activity/Operations Plan (2008)/Visitor Capacity Study (Laniga and Watt, 2010a, 2010b)*

Management direction for the Snake River Planning Area is identified in the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision (USDI-BLM, 2008; USDA-FS, 2008). The general direction to prepare the original 1991 Snake River Activity/Operations Plan (USDI-BLM, 1991) was included in two separate agency land use plans: the BLM Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan, 1985 (Medicine Lodge RMP) prepared for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area (USDI-BLM, 1985); and the FS Targhee National Forest Revised Forest Plan (Targhee National Forest RFP), 1997 (USDA-FS, 1997). During scoping (2005-2008) for the Snake River

Activity/Operations Plan Revision, additional issues were brought forward related to capacity and visitor use. The Snake River Activity/Operations Plan provides specific guidance to conduct a Visitor Capacity Study, p. 59.

Conduct study for planning area, addressing motorized and non-motorized boat activity and recommending options to minimize recreation conflicts. Study findings adopted administratively by BLM and FS. Based on a visitor capacity study, the number of commercial permits issued may be adjusted. Until the study is completed, the eight commercial fishing outfitters will be maintained and additional applications for commercial permits (those commercial activities that do not require an IOGLB license) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Commercial fishing outfitter stipulations may change to address conflicts.

The BLM and FS worked cooperatively with the University of Idaho (UI) to collect social data concerning capacity and visitor use on the South Fork of the Snake River (South Fork). The UI collected information about capacity related to four main areas: 1) facilities (e.g., boat access sites); 2) camping (primarily designated); 3) boats on the river (related to visitor satisfaction and thresholds); and 4) permits (e.g., outfitter and special recreation). The University collected information through focus groups during spring/summer 2009; a visitor use survey during summer 2009 (one weekend), and an online survey during fall 2009. This information gathered by the UI is collectively referred to as the Visitor Capacity Study (Lanina and Watt 2010b; Lanina and Watt 2012.)

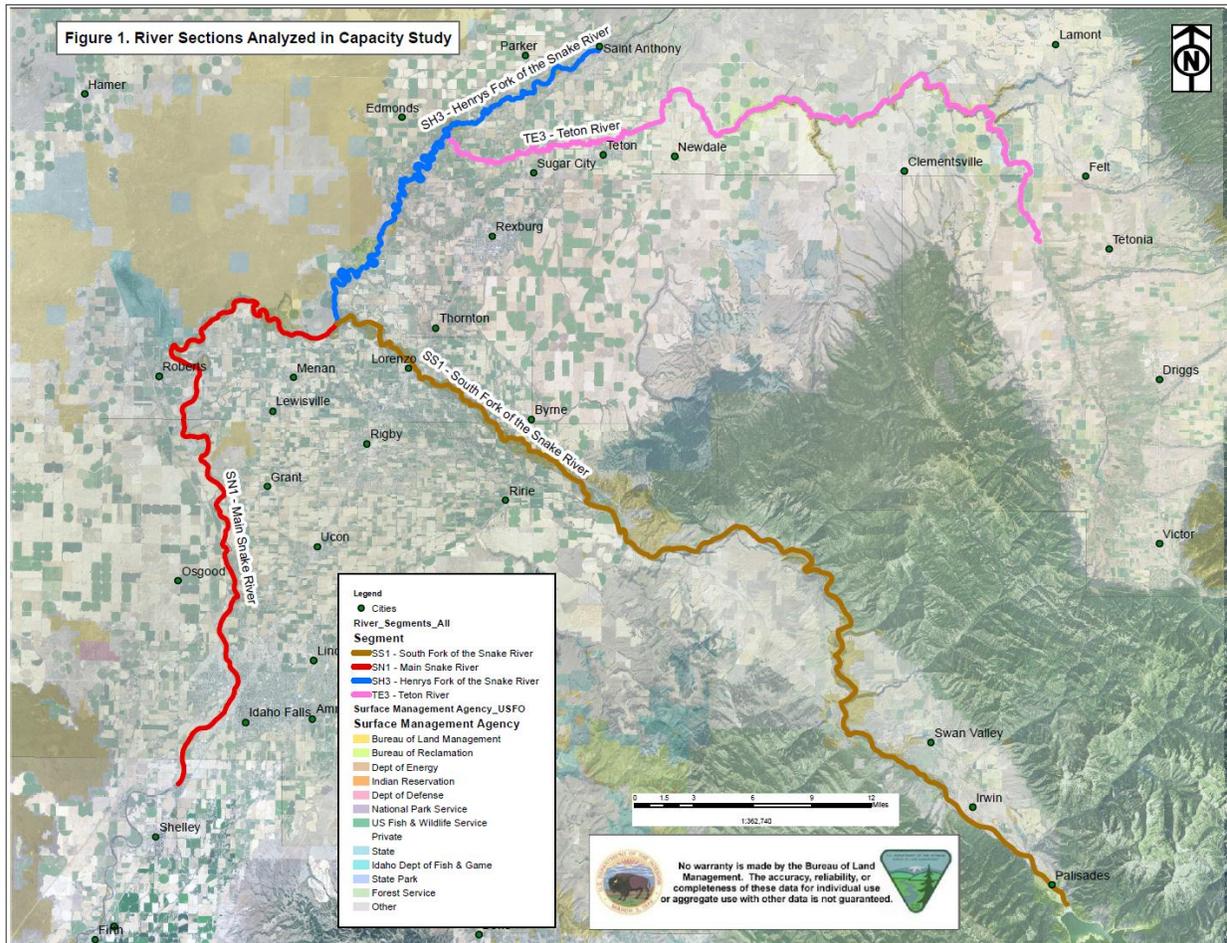
The University of Idaho solicited focus group participants and online survey respondents from four databases: 1) the 2008 visitor contact database developed through completed contact forms with boat ramp hosts, river technicians, and/or the UI/BLM summer intern on the South Fork (total: 439); 2) the BLM's interested publics mailing list (total: 694); 3) the 2008 South Fork season pass holders mailing list (total: 832); and 4) recreation group database compiled by UI/BLM intern (total: 50).

The information compiled from the Visitor Capacity Study helped formulate the range of alternatives for this environmental assessment.

#### *Teton River Canyon*

The Teton River Canyon consists of intermingled BLM-managed lands and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) managed lands. The Teton River is a tributary of the Henrys Fork of the Snake River. It covers approximately 49 miles, starting at Harrop Bridge/Highway 33, entering into a steep canyon section in the eastern Snake River Plain and eventually flowing into the Henrys Fork near the community of Rexburg. This river contains a unique history with the Teton Flood and the former Teton Dam. It provides recreation opportunities such as fishing and floating. It is also eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Although the Teton River Canyon is surrounded by agriculture, it provides an excellent fishery and supports habitat for several wildlife species.

**Figure 1.** River corridors analyzed under this environmental assessment.



## 1.2 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

### *Purpose of the Proposed Action*

The purpose of the proposed action is to address capacity and visitor use issues identified in the Snake River Activity/ Operations Plan Revision (USDI-BLM, 2008; USDA-FS 2008) and the subsequent Visitor Capacity Study (e.g., focus group meetings and on-line survey 2009) conducted with the public in cooperation with the University of Idaho.

The proposed action and alternatives developed in this environmental assessment (EA) would analyze the environmental effects of capacity and visitor use issues on public land administered by the BLM Upper Snake Field Office (USFO), and national forest land, administered by the Palisades Ranger District, Caribou-Targhee National Forest. The range of alternatives in this document were developed from the range of perspectives identified in the Visitor Capacity Study, permitted/licensed commercial outfitters, Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board and interdisciplinary team members.

### *Need for the Proposed Action*

Changes in recreation use, resource conflicts, changes in Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) regulations, new species listings under the Threatened and Endangered Species Act (ESA), and population growth/urban interface triggered the need for the BLM and FS to revise the 1991 Snake River Activity/Operations Plan in 2008. Through the scoping process related to the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision (USDI-BLM, 2008; USDA-FS 2008), it was determined that additional issues existed that would not be addressed in the revision. At the time, the BLM and FS did not have enough information to address the following issues related to capacity and visitor use: (Summary of the issue is identified first, then a summary of the Visitor Capacity Study comments related to the issue is provided to help display the range of perspectives of the public).

1. Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits – The Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB) licenses outfitters within the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon. The BLM and FS federally permit outfitters within the Snake River Planning Area. The BLM (in conjunction with the BOR) federally permits outfitters operating in the Teton River Canyon. Specific state rules apply to licensed outfitters and specific federal permit stipulations also apply to these outfitters. Some inconsistencies exist between the state rules and federal permit stipulations; these need to be rectified. For example, IOGLB licenses 11 outfitters on the South Fork of the Snake River, whereas, the BLM and FS federally permit eight outfitters.

To achieve better management of the outfitter and guide program while improving the service that outfitters provide to the public, the BLM, FS, and IOGLB agree that it is to their mutual benefit and interest to work cooperatively to license, permit, and administer outfitter and guide operations on Federal lands within the State of Idaho. A need exists to regulate outfitter activities to reduce public conflict, limit outfitter use to delineated sections of the river, provide consistency in outfitter regulations between multiple

agencies, clarify types of boats permitted for outfitter use on the river, and provide outfitter opportunities in relation to resource availability.

Summary of comments identified in the Visitor Capacity Study (Laninga and Watt, 2010b):

Several respondents feel that the number of licensed and permitted outfitters is adequate; very few want to see additional outfitters permitted on the river. However, a few respondents provided some interesting suggestions for increasing the number of permits. One suggested leaving the fishing outfitter permits at the current level, but adding up to five outfitter permits for scenic/wildlife floats. Another idea is to cut the number of boats for each outfitter and increase the number of outfitters. A final suggestion is to issue a new permit to an established guide service but limit the size of the permit (e.g., only allow four boats/day).

Some respondents stated that outfitters/guides are generally courteous; many more said that they have had negative encounters with guides. A few respondents discussed questionable/illegal activities by guides/outfitters (e.g., having more than the allotted number of boats per section, running motors when they do not have a permit to do so). A few respondents suggest that outfitter fees should be increased because they have a large impact on the resource. In the general comments section, suggestions range from removing commercial guiding from the South Fork, to informing the public about the amount of money the BLM/FS get from guides, to requiring outfitters/guides to have clear signage on their boats.

Several respondents had suggestions related to outfitters and guides, which include reducing their numbers, limiting when they can guide (e.g., only on weekends, only on weekdays), and enforcing permits, and monitoring illegal outfitters/guides.

2. Other Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits - The demand for increased commercial use is likely to come from existing commercial fishing outfitters, as well as from other companies wanting to offer different recreation opportunities (e.g., scenic float, ropes courses, photography). The agencies anticipate an increase in demand for commercial permits from groups such as non-profit groups, outdoor schools, colleges and universities, and other organizations. The BLM and FS consider commercial use as recreation use of the public lands and related waters for business or financial gain. These different commercial use requests may range from one or two trips per summer by non-profit commercial groups to companies that might want to offer daily trips such as scenic floats.

The BLM and FS also anticipate requests for permits for competitive use (e.g., organized, sanctioned, or structured use, event, or activity in which two or more contestants compete), vending (e.g., a type of commercial use defined as a temporary, short-term, nonexclusive, revocable authorization to sell goods or services), and organized group activity or event use (e.g., structured, ordered, consolidated, or scheduled outdoor recreation activities or events that are neither commercial nor competitive).

A need exists for the federal agencies to develop parameters to address the increase in recreation use within the planning area by addressing peak season use, the potential for commercial and competitive activities, vending opportunities, events and organized groups.

Summary of comments in Visitor Capacity Study (Laniga and Watt, 2010b):

A number of respondents suggested that special recreation permits should not be allowed during specific times (e.g., not during peak fishing season, only on the weekends), or to specific locations (e.g., not below Byington (due to river hazards), or in the canyon), and that their size should be reasonable (not larger than 50 people). Others would like to see all competitive and/or commercial uses banned from the South Fork altogether.

Suggestions for the number of permits issued annually ranged from zero to unlimited, as long as fees are collected. Several participants are concerned about the lack of safety/skill of some recreational groups. Others feel there is a need to educate recreational users (e.g., stay in the middle of the river, stay away from fishermen, do not go past Byington due to river hazards). Finally, a few commented that they would like to see a few group campsites established.

3. Visitor Use – Many of the issues identified in this document are related to visitor use within the Snake River Planning Area. About 250,000 people visit the Snake River Planning Area each year from all over the world. The Jackson One Fly Competition is held each year on the South Fork, taking advantage of a world-class blue ribbon trout fishery. A need exists for the federal agencies to develop parameters to address the increase in recreation use within the planning area by addressing level of access provided during peak season, and determine whether to implement a daily individual permit for boating.

Summary of comments in Visitor Capacity Study (Laniga and Watt, 2010b):

While one person states that the congestion has never gotten so bad that they have gone somewhere else, several respondents in the focus groups and on the website stated that they have changed their pattern of recreation in a number of different ways to deal with congestion. Some people have changed locations, either going to different access sites, using unimproved sites, or going to a different river all together (e.g., Teton). Others have changed the time that they go. For example, many have switched from weekend to week day fishing; others now go earlier in the day, or avoid the summer season, preferring to fish earlier or later in the season. Others have switched from drift to motorized boat to avoid congestion.

People provided a number of reasons why they visit the South Fork and the experiences they expect to have when recreating on or near the river. Many focus group and website survey respondents mentioned the South Fork's incredible environmental resources ranging from its natural setting and scenery to the abundant wildlife, and of course, the amazing fishery. People also enjoy coming to the South Fork for the social interactions they have, whether it's to share the place with friends and family, or to teach others new skills (e.g., fishing, respect for the natural world). People think the area is not nearly as busy as other places; this is due in part to the size of the river system, which can absorb

many visitors before it begins to feel congested. Many people enjoy the South Fork because it is accessible and/or within a short distance for them. The river system also provides people with a number of activity options aside from fishing including photography, overnight camping, hiking, cross-country skiing, and hunting.

Other suggestions for minimizing conflicts include developing a reservation system for camping, especially for the busy season; developing some geographic limitations (e.g., drift boats only in some sections, motor boats in other sections); increasing boater registration fees to help with monitoring/enforcing rules to reduce conflicts. Many people feel that education would help to minimize conflicts (e.g., general river etiquette). Respondents suggested increasing law enforcement and/or the number and duties of site hosts. Other suggestions include putting in shooting ranges to reduce plinking and potential shooting/fishing conflicts.

The following additional comments are from focus group participants. The number of boats on the South Fork continues to increase. In terms of types of boats, the majority tend to be drift boats, although there are more boats with small motors being used, as well as an increasing number of large jet boats and jet skis. Participants said they have seen upwards of seven boats up/down river at times, and upwards of 15 up/downriver specifically in the canyon during the busy season. The lower river receives the lowest amount of use overall. Participants suggested that the lower river be signed to alert potential users to its difficulty and potential hazards (e.g., irrigation canals, channel braiding). Some participants observed that the South Fork is a large river with the ability to absorb many different users and boat types.

4. Camping – The 2008 Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision restricts camping to designated sites (first come, first serve) between Conant Boat Access and Byington Boat Access with the ability to designate additional sites within the rest of the planning area as needed. Increased river use could have an additional impact on the designated camp sites and the ability to accommodate all visitors. With high recreation use July 1 through Labor Day, there is potential for campers to not find a designated site. A need exists to address the increase in demand for designated camping between Conant and Byington Boat Accesses and whether to implement a reservation permit system to provide adequate opportunities for river users and protect resources.

Summary of comments in Visitor Capacity Study (Laniga and Watt, 2010b):

Many participants stated that the current method of first come, first served self-registration is working well. However a number of participants feel that if there are additional campsites designated, there will likely be a need to institute some type of allocation system. Ideas ranged from a mixed system of 50% reservation, 50% first come, first served, to having a reservation system for the peak season (June-Sept). Several respondents mentioned the value of having an online reservation system, although a few did not like this option. Other suggestions for site allocation relate to identifying specific camp sites by boat type (jet/drift) and making some accessible/available to drive-in camping. Participants also had comments related to the distribution of campsites for outfitters versus the general public. Outfitters like the idea

of having designated sites for the general public; some in the general public think outfitter camps have a larger impact on the resource than smaller campsites because of the semi-permanent infrastructure at the sites. Many outfitters are getting out of the camping business; the majority of their clientele do not want to camp.

Many study participants would be agreeable to paying for campsites (ranging from \$5 to \$10/site); although there are some who feel that charging anything would be discriminatory to lower-income visitors. A few respondents felt that if campsites are designated, there should be more education about campsite rules. Others are concerned that if there is an increase in designated sites, that people will expect more development (e.g., portable toilets, permanent fire rings). A number of people also brought up the issue of law enforcement, stating that there is a need for it, especially during the peak season, to ensure that rules are followed (e.g., fire pans, personal waste disposal equipment).

As a result of jurisdictional limitations, one issue that the BLM and FS determined not to address in this environmental assessment is conflicts between motorized and non-motorized boat use. There were numerous comments in the Visitor Capacity Study related to this topic that can be utilized in the future to help address the issue.

Issues and concerns generated during the 2008 Snake River Activity/Operations Plan scoping process and subsequent Visitor Capacity Study illustrate the intense competition that exists for use of the resources and the serious conflicts that management must solve or address. This is especially true for recreation. Since the population of the counties is expected to increase, it would also be expected that demand for recreation use in the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon would continue to grow. More detailed management direction needs to be developed for the issues identified above.

### **1.3 Location and Setting**

#### *Snake River Planning Area*

The Snake River Planning Area is located in Bonneville, Jefferson, Madison, and Fremont counties of Southeast Idaho. There are approximately 119 miles of river in the Snake River Planning Area. The Snake River Planning Area is characterized by three sections: the South Fork from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork, the Henrys Fork from the confluence with the South Fork north to St. Anthony, and the Main Snake from the confluence south to Market Lake Canal below Lewisville Knolls. Within the planning area, BLM manages approximately 22,000 acres, the FS manages about 5,600 acres, and the BOR and Army Corps of Engineers manage about 1,000 acres. There are about 800 acres managed by the State of Idaho and 20,500 acres of intermingled private land in the planning area.

The region surrounding the Snake River Planning Area has a variety of populated areas, ranging from Idaho Falls with a population of approximately 50,000, to small towns and uninhabited forest and range lands. Many farms and ranches are located along the Snake River, and their presence is a major land use.

### *Teton River Canyon*

The Teton River Canyon is located in Teton, Fremont, and Madison counties of Southeast Idaho. There are approximately 49 miles of river from Harrop Bridge/Highway 33 to the confluence with the Henrys Fork. Within the Teton River Canyon, the BLM manages approximately 3,496 acres and the BOR manages approximately 5,804 acres. The Teton Dam Site is located approximately 3 miles northeast of Newdale, Idaho.

The surrounding landscape includes private lands, used primarily for agricultural, rangeland, and rural residences. Public access to the river canyon is limited due to few areas of accessibility, resulting in low levels of recreational use. The Teton River passes nearby small communities, such as Newdale, Teton, and Sugar City, until it joins the Henrys Fork near the city of Rexburg with a population of approximately 26,000.

### ***Landscape Character***

#### *Snake River Planning Area*

The landscape character is comprised of rugged mountains, precipitous cliffs, park-like islands in the river channel, cottonwood and willow riparian communities, Douglas-fir, aspen, and juniper/sagebrush vegetation. The river has sculpted and influenced the surrounding landscape for many years, and this continues today.

#### *Teton River Canyon*

The Teton River Canyon landscape character is influenced by the Rocky Mountains, open flood plains, and precipitous cliffs beneath open benches, cottonwood and willow riparian communities, Douglas-fir, aspen, and juniper/sagebrush vegetation. The middle to lower portion was heavily influenced by the Teton Dam failure in 1976 and is still evident today through heavy silt deposits and multiple landslides.

### ***Special Designations***

#### *Snake River Planning Area*

The corridor is designated as a BLM Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), and a National Important Bird Area. It contains four Research Natural Areas (RNA), 39 Wilderness Study Area islands, a National Natural Landmark, a National Recreation Trail, and is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. See Glossary for definitions.

#### Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Two of the designations, related to the natural conditions of the areas, were established in the Medicine Lodge RMP: North Menan Butte and the Snake River ACECs.

An ACEC is an area on BLM-managed lands where special management is required for protection or to prevent irreplaceable damage to important historical, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or natural systems or processes, or to protect life and provide safety from hazards.

ACEC management objectives to protect the important wildlife, scenic and recreation values of the river are as follows from the Medicine Lodge RMP (USDI-BLM, 1985):

- Maintain and perpetuate the cottonwood-riparian ecosystem.
- Initiate a lands program to block up public land ownership and identify boundaries.
- Monitor use to determine trends and effects on resource values.
- Maintain recreation opportunities and uses at a level that is compatible with preserving other resource values.
- Maintain the river's scenic values, particularly in the South Fork Canyon (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access (Heise area)).
- Develop specific activity plans for managing the recreation, wildlife and scenic values along the river system. Coordinate all plans with other land and resource-managing agencies and private landowners.

#### Research Natural Areas (RNA)

The Medicine Lodge RMP designated four RNAs in the Snake River Planning Area. They are:

1. North Menan Butte RNA 340 acres
2. Reid Canal RNA 30 acres
3. Pine Creek RNA 5 acres
4. Squaw Creek RNA 35 acres

Use of these areas is limited to research, study, observation, monitoring and educational activities that are non-destructive and non-manipulative. All four RNAs maintain a relatively unmodified natural condition.

RNAs must be protected from activities which directly or indirectly modify ecological processes. The criterion for management of RNAs is the protection from inappropriate encroachment on the following existing conditions: geologic conditions for North Menan Butte's designation, and vegetative (riparian) conditions for the Reid Canal Island, Pine Creek Island and Squaw Creek Island designations.

#### Wild and Scenic Rivers

The South Fork, from Palisades Reservoir to the confluence with the Henrys Fork (approximately 61 miles) meets the eligibility criteria for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. A tentative classification of a river found to be eligible is based on the condition of the river and the adjacent lands as they exist at the time of the eligibility study. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act specifies and defines three classification categories for eligible rivers: wild, scenic and recreational. These categories are defined as follows:

- (1) *Wild River Areas* — Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.
- (2) *Scenic River Areas* — Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.

(3) *Recreational River Areas* — Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible, by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.”

Determining a tentative classification also establishes a guideline for management until either a suitability determination or designation is reached.

Three segments of the South Fork were determined to meet eligibility criteria and are divided up as follows:

Segment.1: Palisades Reservoir to Conant Valley Power line.

*Classification:* Recreational

Segment 2: Conant Valley Power line to Riley Diversion

*Classification:* Scenic

Segment 3: Riley Diversion to Henry’s Fork and South Fork Confluence.

*Classification:* Recreational

Both the BLM’s Medicine Lodge RMP and Targhee National Forest RFP stipulate that the river and associated land areas be managed to maintain their potential for designation until the suitability evaluation is completed and determined whether the river is suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Within the forest plan, the South Fork is within management areas 2.9.1 South Fork Eligible Scenic River and 2.9.2 South Fork Eligible Recreation River. The suitability evaluation for rivers and streams within the USFO boundaries (including the planning area) would be completed in the BLM’s USFO RMP revision and the Targhee National Forest RFP. Therefore this EA does not address this subject.

#### Wilderness Study Areas

The 39 wilderness study area islands on the South Fork were recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation in the Medicine Lodge Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement. They would be managed under BLM Manual 6330 – Management of Wilderness Study Areas, until Congress makes a final decision.

#### *Teton River Canyon*

#### Wild and Scenic Rivers

A BLM and BOR inventory has identified the Teton River Canyon and its tributaries (Badger Creek, Bitch Creek and Canyon Creek) as eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Four segments of the Teton River and its tributaries were determined to meet eligibility criteria and are divided up as follows:

Segment.1: Felt Power Plant to Bitch Creek

*Classification:* Scenic

Segment 2: Bitch Creek to Spring Hollow  
*Classification:* Scenic

Segment 3: Spring Hollow to Canyon Creek  
*Classification:* Scenic

Segment 4: Canyon Creek to Teton Dam site  
*Classification:* Recreational

Badger Creek  
*Classification:* Scenic

Bitch Creek  
*Classification:* Scenic

Canyon Creek  
*Classification:* Scenic

BLM's Policy (Manual 6400 - Wild and Scenic Rivers) stipulate that the river and associated land areas be managed to maintain their potential for designation until the suitability evaluation is completed and determined whether the river is suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The BOR did not find the Teton River Canyon suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System due to the congressional authorization for the reconstruction of the Teton Dam and a state designation considering the area a reserved reservoir site (USDI-BOR 2006, p. 38).

#### **1.4 Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plans**

The Medicine Lodge RMP (USDI-BLM 1985) and Targhee National Forest RFP (USDA-FA 1997) provide guidance for the management of natural resources on public and forest lands. The alternatives have been determined to be in conformance with the terms and conditions of the applicable BLM Land Use Plan as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. and the applicable RFP as required by 16 USC 1604 (i).

#### **1.5 Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, and Local Plans**

The alternatives are in accordance with Title II of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 as amended (43 U.S.C. 1712), and the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868 (15 Stat.673).

The Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision (USDI-BLM 2008; USDA-FS 2008) provides guidance for the management of activities and natural resources on public and forest lands. The alternatives in this document have been determined to be in conformance with the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision.

## 1.6 Management Constraints and Assumptions

Constraining factors which by law, policy, regulation or circumstance, influence management of the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon include the following:

1. The South Fork from Palisades Reservoir to the confluence with the Henrys Fork (approximately 61 miles) is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The Teton River Canyon (and its tributaries) is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. BLM and FS policy for eligible rivers is to manage their free-flowing condition, water quality, tentative classification and any outstandingly remarkable values to assure a decision on suitability can be made for eligible rivers.
2. Through a Memorandum of Understanding with BOR, the BLM manages Special Recreation Permits (SRP's) in the Teton River Canyon.
3. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) would be consulted prior to implementing projects that may affect habitat for threatened and endangered species. If a "may affect" situation is determined through the agencies' biological assessment (BA) process, formal consultation with the USFWS would be initiated as per Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Management actions would consider the objectives and recommended management actions in the Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan and a Bald Eagle Management Plan for the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.
4. Special Recreation Permits (SRP) and Special Use Permits (SUP) would not be authorized within known populations of Ute ladies'-tresses orchid habitat August 1 through Labor Day.
5. Human activities would not be allowed within 400 meters of occupied Bald Eagle nests from February 1 to July 31 in accordance with the Greater Yellowstone Bald Eagle Management Plan (1996).
6. This EA would be consistent with State of Idaho (Department of Water Resources, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Health and Welfare, and Department of Lands) laws and regulations, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. This EA would be consistent with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's plans to reduce pollutant loading (primarily sediment) through the total maximum daily load (TMDL) process.
7. Private land holdings in the management area are not included in this EA.
8. Executive Orders 11990 and 11988 would be followed. Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, states that agencies would take action to minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands. Agencies would also work to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands. Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, states that agencies shall take action to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains.

9. The State of Idaho has jurisdiction of lands below the ordinary mean high water mark.
10. The BLM and FS have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB). This MOU provides procedures and guidance for coordination and cooperation among the federal agencies and IOGLB on issues involving the administration and operation of outfitters and guides on FS-managed land and BLM-managed public land within the State of Idaho. The objective of the MOU is to establish an administrative framework for the purpose of coordinating respective permit and license procedures between the FS, BLM, and the IOGLB.

The BLM and FS have the responsibility to provide a variety of public recreation opportunities on federal lands in the State of Idaho. The BLM and FS permit commercial outfitters and guides to assist them in providing opportunities to visitors who choose to recreate with an outfitter. The IOGLB provides state licenses to commercial outfitters and guides in the State of Idaho.

To achieve better management of the outfitter and guide program while improving the service that outfitters provide to the public, the BLM, FS, and IOGLB agree that it is to their mutual benefit and interest to work cooperatively to license, permit, and administer outfitter and guide operations on federal lands within the State of Idaho. The federal agencies work to be consistent with IOGLB and vice versa. Changes to allocation of licensed outfitters must be coordinated with the IOGLB.

Based upon the constraints outlined in the previous section and other considerations, the following assumptions were made to guide the development of the EA:

1. The BLM and FS have no direct control over stream flow (e.g., reservoir releases) which may greatly affect the recreation experience, level of visitor use, and fish and wildlife habitat from season to season. The BLM and FS may only advise agencies responsible for stream flow.
2. Management actions recommended here would not affect existing water rights.
3. Boating safety laws and their enforcement are the primary responsibility of the State of Idaho and respective county. The BLM and FS would work cooperatively with the State and respective county on matters related to boating safety.
4. Management of motorized and non-motorized boat use on the water-ways is the primary responsibility of the State of Idaho and respective county. Motorized and non-motorized boat use are not addressed in this environmental assessment as a result of jurisdictional restrictions. There were numerous comments in the Visitor Capacity Study related to this topic that can be utilized in the future to help address the issue.

The framework used for development of this EA consisted of three levels:

1. An interdisciplinary team comprised of BLM, FS, and IOGLB personnel to provide technical expertise.
2. Input from the general public and interested groups, organizations, and agencies.
3. Management from the FS and BLM to make the final decisions.

## **1.7 Issues and Concerns**

During scoping (2005-2008) for the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, issues were brought forward related to capacity and visitor use. These issues were derived through mail outs and media coverage. Comments were received from a variety of public interests including recreational groups, landowners along the river, conservation groups, wildlife advocates, general public, and state and other federal agencies. These initial identified issues helped formulate what the BLM and FS obtained comments for in the Visitor Capacity Study. The Visitor Capacity Study covered the following four topics:

- Visitor use at boat access sites
- Visitor use on the river
- Visitor use at campsites
- Outfitter use and special recreation permits

After reviewing the range of perspectives in the Visitor Capacity Study, the BLM and FS determined the issues for this environmental assessment. With each of these current issues come questions that the agencies must answer, with the assistance of the public. Four issues were developed through the scoping process (e.g., Visitor Capacity Study) and input of the interdisciplinary team of BLM and FS specialists. They are as follows:

### Issue No. 1 – Management of Commercial Outfitter Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits

Concerns – Agencies need to manage commercial outfitters to an acceptable use within the planning area:

1. Clarify river sections (fishing only).
2. Clarify river use (fishing only)
3. Clarify state licenses vs. federal permits (fishing only).
4. Clarify types of boats (fishing only).
5. Waterfowl hunting.
6. Big game hunting

### Issue No. 2 – Management of Special Recreation Permits (SRP)/Special Use Permits (SUP)

Concerns – Agencies need to plan for future growth and public opportunities for recreation in the planning area (non-outfitted use):

1. Clarify commercial SRPs/SUPs
2. Clarify competitive SRPs/SUPs
3. Clarify organized group SRPs/SUPs

4. Clarify vending SRPs/SUPs.

#### Issue No. 3 – Management of Visitor Use

Concern – Agencies need to consider increasing recreation demands:

1. Determine whether to implement special area SRPs/SUPs (daily individual use, Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access) for boating.

#### Issue No. 4 – Management of Designated Camping

Concerns – Agencies need to provide adequate, well-maintained camping opportunities:

1. Determine whether to implement a reservation permit system for designated camping from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access.

## **CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES**

Four alternatives were developed as a result of the issues and concerns identified by the public during the revision of the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan (2008) and Visitor Capacity Study. The range of alternatives were developed from the range of perspectives identified by the public in the Visitor Capacity Study, permitted/licensed commercial outfitters, the IOGLB, and interdisciplinary team members. These alternatives consist of three action alternatives and the no action alternative. The no action alternative is hereafter referred to as the existing management situation. Chapter 2 describes the four alternatives to be analyzed fully in this EA; a preferred alternative is not identified.

Alternative A is a continuation of existing management and includes direction provided by the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision and State of Idaho Statutes related to Outfitters and Guides. The three action alternatives were developed to present a range of management options. Each alternative is intended to minimize adverse impacts on cultural and natural resources while providing for compatible resource use opportunities consistent with current law, regulation, and policy.

The discussion of the four analyzed alternatives has two parts. One part is a narrative description of each alternative. This description discusses in detail the specifics of each alternative. The second part is a comparison between alternatives that summarizes the major differences or similarities among the alternatives.

The narrative section of each alternative is related to the identified issues and concerns. The applicable management requirements are included under each specific use or resource.

### **2.1 General Description of Each Alternative**

#### **2.1.1 Alternative A – Existing Management Situation (No Action Alternative)**

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) mandates consideration of a No Action Alternative. This Alternative provides a basis for comparing the impacts of the other alternatives. This Alternative involves continuing the management activities that already occur in the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon and is based on reasonably

foreseeable actions, available inventory data, existing planning decisions and policies, and existing land use allocations and programs. These activities are now governed by the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan (2008) and State of Idaho Statutes related to Outfitters and Guides established by the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB 2014). Alternative A would maintain present uses by continuing present management direction and activities.

Current Idaho State Statutes identify rules for Outfitters and Guides operating in the Snake River Planning area and the Teton River Canyon. The BLM and FS coordinate with the IOGLB regarding the enforcement of these rules. State rules recognize river sections, number of boats per outfitter, number of state permits versus number of federal permits, types of boats utilized by outfitters and guides, and limited waterfowl and big game hunting opportunities.

Current management direction does not exist for management of SRPs/SUPs related to other types of uses (e.g., commercial uses other than outfitters and guides, competitive use, organized group activity or event use, vending). Management direction does not exist for daily individual recreation use.

Self-issue permits are required for first come/first served camping at designated sites between Conant Boat Access and Byington Boat Access on the South Fork.

### **2.1.2 Alternative B**

This alternative would intensively manage the natural resources by limiting recreational uses to maximize protections for riparian-wetland resources, cultural resources, wildlife habitat, and threatened and endangered species habitat. Alternative B would allow the greatest extent of natural and cultural resource protection within the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon, while still allowing resource uses.

A reduction in SRPs/SUPs and number of boats related to Outfitters and Guides would be implemented under this alternative to protect natural resource values or to accelerate improvement in their condition and limit social interactions. SRPs/SUPs would not be allowed for other types of commercial use, competitive use, and vending. SRPs/SUPs would be required for organized group activities or event use under this alternative.

A Special Area SRP/SUP (Daily Individual Use) would also be required if an established threshold (refer to SRP-1.3.1) is met over a three consecutive year period. If the threshold is met, a public process would be convened to consider the details of a special area daily permit system for boat launches in the canyon reach (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access) to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork.

A reservation permit system for camping would be implemented in the canyon reach (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access) to maintain a high quality experience and limit resource and recreation conflicts. Group size limits and allocation of campsites would be required.

### **2.1.3 Alternative C**

Alternative C would emphasize multiple resource use in the planning area by protecting sensitive resources and applying the most current information to allow the BLM and FS to set priorities for flexible, proactive management of public and forest lands.

The number of SRPs/SUPs and boats related to Outfitters and Guides would be the same as Alternative A, but clarification would be identified for river sections and types of boats. An additional federal permit for waterfowl hunting would be identified. Limits on other types of commercial use, competitive use, and vending SRPs/SUPs would be established. SRPs/SUPs would be required for organized group activities or event use under this alternative.

A Special Area SRP/SUP (Daily Individual Use) would also be required if an established threshold is met on weekends over a three consecutive year period. If the threshold is met, a public process would be convened to consider the details of a special area daily permit system for boat launches in the canyon reach (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access) to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork.

If an established threshold is met on weekends over a three consecutive year period, a reservation permit system for camping would be implemented in the canyon reach (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access) to maintain a high quality experience and limit resource and recreation conflicts. Group size limits and allocation of campsites would be required.

### **2.1.4 Alternative D**

Alternative D would allow the greatest extent of resource use within the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon, while maintaining the basic protection needed to sustain resources. Alternative D places an emphasis on maximum appropriate human use/influence and the widest array of recreation opportunities. Under this alternative, constraints on opportunities for recreation for the protection of sensitive resources would be the least restrictive possible within the limits defined by law, regulation, and BLM and FS policy. Potential impacts to sensitive resource values would be mitigated on a case-by-case basis.

The number of SRPs/SUPs and boats related to Outfitters and Guides would be higher than Alternative A. Clarification would be identified for river sections and types of boats. An additional federal permit for waterfowl hunting would be identified. Limits on other types of commercial use, competitive use, and vending SRPs/SUPs would be established. SRPs/SUPs would not be required for organized group activities or event use under this alternative.

A Special Area SRP/SUP (Daily Individual Use) would not be required on the South Fork under this alternative.

Self-issue permits would be required for first come/first served camping at designated sites between Conant Boat Access and Byington Boat Access on the South Fork.

### **2.3 Comparison of Alternatives between Issues – Alternative Summary**

The BLM and FS have four issues to address in this environmental assessment; a short table highlights each alternative's differences for each issue component.

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**2.3.1 Issue No. 1 – Management of Commercial Outfitter Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits**

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <b>Goal SRP 1.</b>  |   |  |   |
| <b>Objective SRP-1.1. Manage for desired recreation outcomes by emphasizing and enhancing a range of recreational opportunities and experiences related to special recreation permits/special use permits for commercial SRPs/SUPs. (Figure 1)</b>  |   |  |   |
| <b>Commercial Boating Operations by Outfitters - SS1: South Fork</b>  |   |  |   |
| <b>Clarify River Sections (Fishing only)</b>  |   |  |   |
| <p><b>SRP-1.1.1.</b> Designate SS1 as Snake River - South Fork (Palisades Dam to confluence with Henrys Fork).<br/>All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 2):</p> <p>a) Palisades Dam to the Swan Valley Bridge;</p> <p>b) Swan Valley Bridge to Black Canyon. Exception: Not more than eight boats would be permitted in Section (b) on the same day, provided that no more than four of said boats are in this Section after 11:00 a.m. due to overnight use at designated outfitter camps;</p> <p>c) Black Canyon to Poplar (Kelly Canyon); and</p> <p>d) Poplar (Kelly Canyon) to the confluence with Henrys Fork of</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.1.</b> Designate SS1 as Snake River - South Fork (Palisades Dam to Menan Boat Access on the Snake River below the confluence with the Henrys Fork). All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 3):</p> <p>a) Palisades Dam Boat Access to the Conant Boat Access;</p> <p>b) Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access ;<br/>Exception: Not more than eight boats would be permitted in Section (b) on the same day, provided that no more than four of said boats are in this Section after 11:00 a.m. due to overnight use at designated outfitter camps;</p> <p>c) Fullmer Boat Access to Byington Boat Access;</p> <p>d) Byington Boat Access to Lorenzo Boat Access.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.1.</b> Designate SS1 as Snake River - South Fork (Palisades Dam to Menan Boat Access on the Snake River below the confluence with the Henrys Fork). All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 3):</p> <p>a) Palisades Dam to the Conant Boat Access;</p> <p>b) Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access; Exception: Not more than eight boats would be permitted in Section (b) on the same day, provided that no more than four of said boats are in this Section after 11:00 a.m. due to overnight use at designated outfitter camps;</p> <p>c) Fullmer Boat Access to Byington Boat Access;</p> <p>d) Byington Boat Access to Lorenzo Boat Access.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.1.</b> Designate SS1 as Snake River - South Fork (Palisades Dam to Menan Boat Access on the Snake River below the confluence with the Henrys Fork). All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 3):</p> <p>a) Palisades Dam to the Conant Boat Access;</p> <p>b) Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access; Exception: Not more than twelve boats would be permitted in Section (b) on the same day, provided that no more than four of said boats would be out of Section (b) by 11:00 a.m. due to overnight use at designated outfitter camps. Not more than four of said boats would be able to launch at Conant Boat Access before 9:00 a.m. to allow for downstream steerage from Conant</p> |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <p>the Snake River.</p> <p>Fishing may not be conducted below the confluence.</p>   | <p>e) Lorenzo Boat Access to Menan Boat Access.</p> <p>Fishing may not be conducted below the confluence.</p>  | <p>e) Lorenzo Boat Access to Menan Boat Access.</p>   | <p>Boat Access to enter Section (c), fishing may not be conducted as part of this downstream steorage (this exception allows for guides to bypass the shuttle to Fullmer Boat Access).</p> <p>c) Fullmer Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access; Exception: Not more than eight boats would be permitted in Section (c) on the same day, provided that not more than four of said boats would be able to enter Section (c) after 3:00 p.m. to allow for downstream steorage from Fullmer Boat Access (these boats are exiting Section (b)), fishing may not be conducted as part of this downstream steorage (this exception allows for guides to bypass the shuttle to Fullmer Boat Access).</p> <p>d) Byington Boat Access to the Lorenzo Boat Access;</p> <p>e) Lorenzo Boat Access to the Menan Boat Access.</p> |
| <b><i>Clarify River Use (Fishing only)</i></b>  |  |   |   |
| <p><b>SRP-1.1.2.</b> No more than four boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time in each river section identified in SRP-1.1.1.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.2.</b> No more than three boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time in each river section identified in SRP-1.1.1.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.2.</b> No more than four boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time in each river section identified in SRP-1.1.1.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.2.</b> No more than four boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time in each river section identified in SRP-1.1.1.</p>   |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
|   |  |   | <p>A one-time per year exception after July 15 may be granted from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access that would allow two (2) additional boats per section to accommodate large client groups. During this one-time exception, if the two additional boats do not accommodate the large client group, additional boats must come from slots allocated to other outfitters. The maximum daily boat limit for SS1 (identified in SRP-1.1.3) may not be exceeded. This would require written concurrence from the BLM/FS and the IOGLB Executive Director.</p> |
| <p><b>SRP-1.1.3.</b> No outfitter may have more than 12 boats on the SS1 in any one day. Further, the lower boundary of Section (a) (Palisades Dam to Swan Valley Bridge) shall overlay Section (b) to the Conant takeout (Swan Valley Bridge to Black Canyon), and Section (b) shall overlay Section (c) to the Cottonwood (Fullmer) Boat Access.</p> <p>Supply boats (float or power)</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.3.</b> No outfitter may have more than eight boats on the SS1 in any one day.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day.</p> <p>One supply boat (float or power) which does not carry clients are exempt from these restrictions.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.3.</b> No outfitter may have more than 12 boats on the SS1 in any one day.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day.</p> <p>One supply boat (float or power) which does not carry clients are exempt from these restrictions.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.3.</b> No outfitter may have more than 16 boats on the SS1 in any one day.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day.</p> <p>One supply boat (float or power) which does not carry clients are exempt from these restrictions.</p>  |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
| which do not carry clients are exempt from these restrictions.   | During periods of preparing overnight camps for the season (e.g., setting up tents and portable toilet facilities, boating in grills and other cooking supplies in May/June) and removing the same items listed above from overnight camps; multiple supply boats may be used. | During periods of preparing overnight camps for the season (e.g., setting up tents and portable toilet facilities, boating in grills and other cooking supplies in May/June) and removing the same items listed above from overnight camps; multiple supply boats may be used.                      | During periods of preparing overnight camps for the season (e.g., setting up tents and portable toilet facilities, boating in grills and other cooking supplies in May/June) and removing the same items listed above from overnight camps; multiple supply boats may be used. |
| <b>SRP-1.1.4.</b> Do not limit commercial outfitter trips on Saturday and Sunday during July and August.   |  | <b>SRP-1.1.4</b> In July and August there would be no commercial trips on sections (a), (b), and (c) (Palisades Dam to Byington Boat Access) on Saturday and Sunday. In sections (d) and (e) (Byington to Menan) no outfitter may have more than eight boats in any one day on Saturday and Sunday. | <b>SRP-1.1.4.</b> Do not limit commercial outfitter trips on Saturday and Sunday during July and August.   |
| <b>Clarify State Licenses Vs. Federal Permits (Fishing only)</b>   |  |   |  |
| <b>SRP-1.1.5.</b> Maintain eight federal permits (four BLM; four FS) and 11 IOGLB licenses. This would include three outfitters holding more than one license, but who are unable to exercise the additional license opportunity due to federal permit limits. | <b>SRP-1.1.5.</b> Issue four federal permits (BLM/FS combined) and recommend that IOGLB reduce the state license numbers from 11 to four to be consistent with the number of federal permits.  | <b>SRP-1.1.5.</b> Issue eight federal permits (BLM/FS combined) and recommend that IOGLB reduce the state license numbers from 11 to eight to be consistent with the number of federal permits.   | <b>SRP-1.1.5.</b> Issue 11 federal permits (BLM/FS combined) to be consistent with the 11 current IOGLB licenses.  |
| <b>SRP-1.1.6.</b> Federal Permits and IOGLB licenses are for the entire SS1 segment; a section of SS1 (refer to sections identified in SRP-1.1.1) cannot be separated from SS1 for the purposes of selling a portion of an outfitter's business.               |  |   |  |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
| <b><i>Clarify Types of Boats (Fishing only)</i></b>  |   |   |  |
| <p><b>SRP-1.1.7.</b> Of the eight federal permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB), three would continue to be for float boat only; two would continue to be for power boats only; three would continue to be a combination of float and power boats.</p>   | <p><b>SRP-1.1.7.</b> Issue the four federal permits (and their four corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats only.</p> <p>Do not allow the use of motors.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.7.</b> Issue the eight federal permits (and their eight corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats only.</p> <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only within the entire SS1 reach. Downstream steerage would not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.7.</b> Issue the 11 federal permits (and their 11 corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats.</p> <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only within the entire SS1 reach. Downstream steerage would not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day.</p> |
| <b><i>Waterfowl Hunting</i></b>  |   |   |  |
| <p><b>SRP-1.1.8.</b> Maintain one IOGLB license and one federal permit (FS only).</p> <p>No more than two boats/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time.</p> <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage would not include holding or upstream</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.8.</b> Do not issue federal permits, and recommend that IOGLB no longer issue license.</p>  | <p><b>SRP-1.1.8.</b> (SS1) Snake River - South Fork (Palisades Dam to Wolf Flats Boat Access [Figure 4]). Issue two federal permits (one operating area, one permit that covers BLM-managed lands and one permit that covers FS-managed lands), and recommend that IOGLB maintain one license for waterfowl hunting.</p> <p>No more than two boats/per day</p>  | <p><b>SRP-1.1.8.</b> (SS1) Snake River - South Fork (Palisades Dam to Wolf Flats Boat Access [Figure 4]). Issue two federal permits (one operating area, one permit that covers BLM-managed lands and one permit that covers FS-managed lands), and recommend that IOGLB maintain one license for waterfowl hunting.</p> <p>No more than four boats/per day</p>  |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |                      |   |   |
|--|----------------------|---|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <p>travel of watercraft with a motor.</p> <p>Boating opportunities are limited to providing waterfowl hunting during waterfowl hunting season as defined by Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG) Regulations. Fishing may not be provided or conducted unless the outfitter is licensed/permitted as identified in SRP-1.1.5</p> |                      | <p>may be used by an outfitter at any one time.</p> <p>Issue the two federal permits (and their one corresponding license from IOGLB) for float or power boat.</p> <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage would not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.</p> <p>Boating opportunities are limited to providing waterfowl hunting during waterfowl hunting season as defined by IDFG Regulations. Fishing may not be provided or conducted unless the outfitter is licensed/permitted as identified in SRP-1.1.5.</p> | <p>may be used by an outfitter at any one time.</p> <p>Issue the two federal permits (and their one corresponding license from IOGLB) for float or power boat.</p> <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage would not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.</p> <p>Boating opportunities are limited to providing waterfowl hunting during waterfowl hunting season as defined by IDFG Regulations. Fishing may not be provided or conducted unless the outfitter is licensed/permitted as identified in SRP-1.1.5.</p> |
| <b><i>Big Game Hunting</i></b>   |                      |   |   |
| <p><b>SRP-1.1.9.</b> Do not issue federal permits and recommend that IOGLB not issue state licenses.</p>   |                      |   | <p><b>SRP-1.1.9.</b> (SS1) Snake River - South Fork (Byington Boat Access to Menan Boat Access). Issue two federal permits for big game hunting access only and recommend that IOGLB issue two licenses.</p>  |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b> |                      |                      |   |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management<br/>Situation)</b>                             | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
|  |                      |                      | <p>For each license/permit issued, no more than two boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time on each of the following river sections (Figure 5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Byington Boat Access to the Lorenzo Boat Access;</li> <li>b) Lorenzo Boat Access to the Menan Boat Access.</li> </ul> <p>Issue the two federal permits (and their two corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float or power boat.</p> <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage would not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.</p> <p>Note: The license and permit opportunities would be available through a prospectus process. The state license would be considered for federal lands only.</p> |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |   |  |                      |
|--|---|--|----------------------|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b> |
| <b>Commercial Boating Operations by Outfitters – SN1: Main Snake</b>   |   |  |                      |
| <i>Clarify River Sections (Fishing only)</i>   |   |  |                      |
| <b>SRP-1.1.10.</b> Designate SN1 as Confluence of South Fork and Henrys Fork to Gem State Power Plant in Idaho Falls (Figure 6).   | <b>SRP-1.1.10.</b> Designate SN1 as Menan Boat Access to Gem State Power Plant, Idaho Falls. All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 7):<br>a) Menan Boat Access to Mike Walker Boat Access (includes BLM managed lands) ;<br>b) Mike Walker Boat Access to Gem State Power Plant (includes non-federal lands)                            |  |                      |
| <i>Clarify River Use (Fishing only)</i>  |   |  |                      |
| <b>SRP-1.1.11.</b> Do not set limits on the number of boats per section/per day.   | <b>SRP-1.1.11.</b> For each license/permit issued, no more than four boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time in each of the river sections identified in SRP-1.1.10.  |  |                      |
| <i>Clarify State Licenses Vs. Federal Permits (Fishing only)</i>   |   |  |                      |
| <b>SRP-1.1.12.</b> Maintain six IOGLB licenses. Three outfitters each hold two (Float/Power) of the six licenses. No federal permits exist and prohibit fishing outfitters from operating in SN1 (Henrys Fork Confluence downstream to Mike Walker). | <b>SRP-1.1.12.</b> Issue three federal permits, and recommend that IOGLB reduce the state license numbers from six to three.  |  |                      |
| <b>SRP-1.1.13.</b> Federal Permits and IOGLB licenses are for the entire SN1 segment; a section of SN1 (refer to sections identified in SRP-1.1.10) cannot be separated from SN1 for the purposes of selling a portion of an outfitter’s business.   |   |  |                      |
| <i>Clarify Types of Boats (Fishing only)</i>   |   |  |                      |
| <b>SRP-1.1.14.</b> Maintain the six IOGLB licenses as a combination of three float and three power boats. These outfitters would only be allowed to operate on segments adjoining private lands downstream of Mike Walker.                           | <b>SRP-1.1.14.</b> Issue the three federal permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats only.<br><br>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage does not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.<br><br>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning | <b>SRP-1.1.14.</b> Issue the three federal permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for a combination of power or float boats.<br><br>Float boats may use motors (5HP |                      |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b> |   |                      |  |
|--|---|----------------------|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>                                 | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
|  | number of boats per section/per day.  |                      | or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage does not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor. Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day.  |
| <b><i>Big Game Hunting</i></b>   |   |                      |  |
|  | <p><b>SRP-1.1.15.</b> Do not issue federal permits and recommend that IOGLB not issue state licenses.</p> |                      | <p><b>SRP-1.1.15.</b> Issue two federal permits and recommend that IOGLB issue two state licenses (Menan Boat Access to Gem State Power Plant).</p> <p>For each license/permit issued, no more than two boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time on each of the following river sections (Figure 8):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Menan Boat Access to Mike Walker Boat Access;</li> <li>b) Mike Walker Boat Access to Gem State Power Plant.</li> </ul> <p>Issue the two federal permits (and their two corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float or power boat.</p> |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>                       |  |                      |  |
|--|--|----------------------|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
|  |  |                      | <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage would not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.</p> <p>Note: The license and permit opportunities would be available through a prospectus process. The state license would be considered for federal lands only.</p>  |
| <b>Commercial Boating Operations by Outfitters – SH3: Henrys Fork</b>  |  |                      |  |
| <i>Clarify River Sections (Fishing only)</i>   |  |                      |  |
| <p><b>SRP-1.1.16.</b> Designate SH3 as Henrys Fork (St. Anthony to confluence with South Fork [Figure 9]).</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.16.</b> Designate SH3 as Henrys Fork (St. Anthony to Menan Boat Access). All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 10):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) St. Anthony to Red Road Bridge Boat Access (i.e., Parker/Salem/Fort Henry)</li> <li>b) Red Road Bridge Boat Access to Menan Boat Access</li> </ul> |                      | <p><b>SRP-1.1.16.</b> Designate SH3 as Henrys Fork (St. Anthony to Menan Boat Access). All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 11):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) St. Anthony to Red Road Bridge Boat Access (i.e., Parker/Salem /Fort Henry)</li> <li>b) Red Road Bridge Boat Access to Warm Slough Boat Access</li> <li>c) Warm Slough Boat Access to Menan Boat Access</li> </ul> |

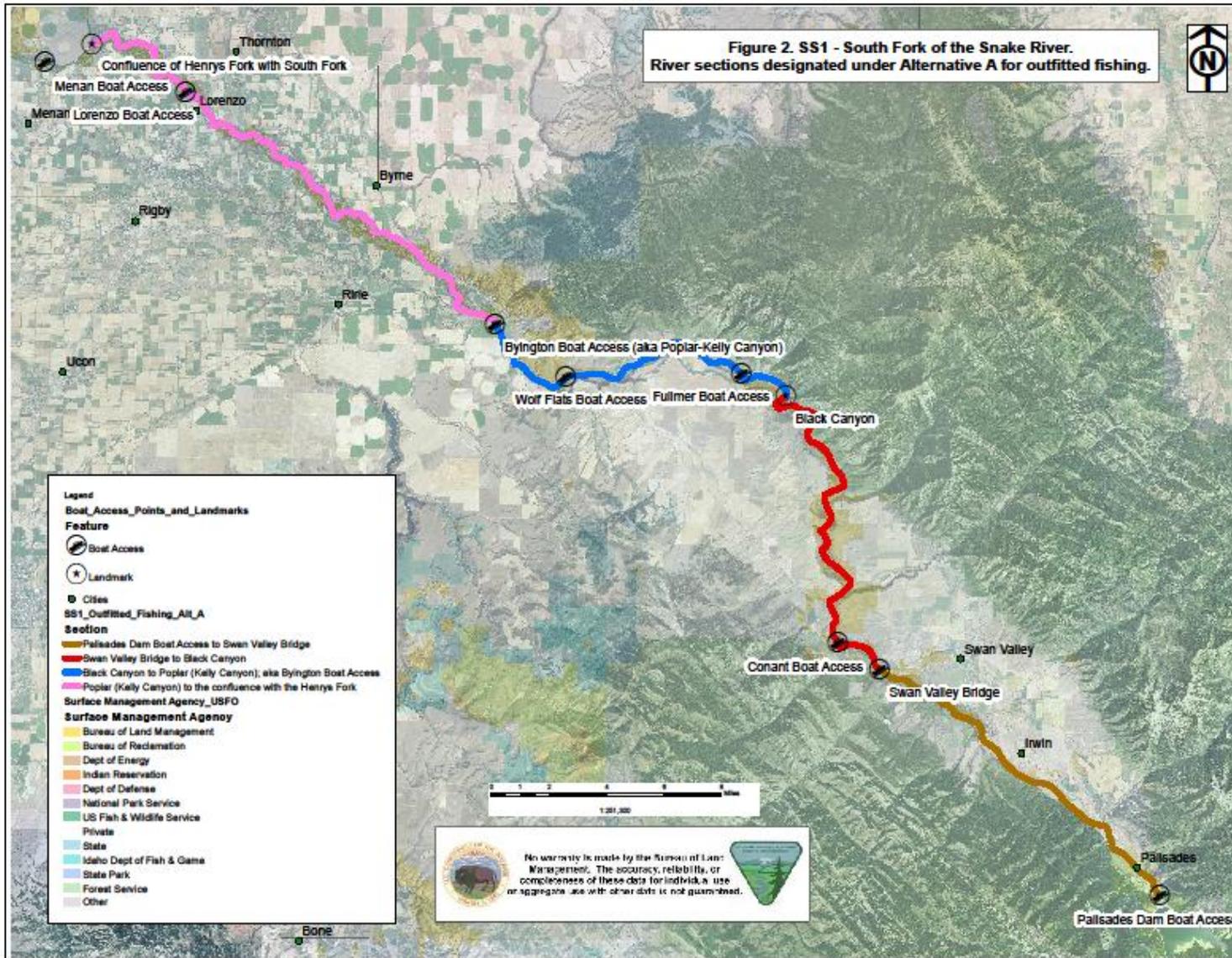
| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <i>Clarify River Use (Fishing only)</i>   |   |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.17.</b> Each outfitter may use at any one time, a maximum of three boats for fishing and five boats for other boating activities. IOGLB may approve adjustments of these boat limitations to accommodate canoeing or kayaking activities that are part of an outfitter's operating plan. | <p><b>SRP-1.1.17.</b> For each license/permit issued, no more than three boats for fishing may be used by an outfitter at any one time in each of the river sections identified in SRP-1.1.16</p> <p>When permitted by the BLM and with the notification to and concurrence of the IOGLB Executive Director, each outfitter may be allowed adjustments to the maximum boat limits in order to accommodate non fishing boating activities (e.g., canoeing, paddle boards, and kayaks) and hazardous excursions that are part of an outfitter's operating plan. These adjustments must be reviewed and approved annually.</p> |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.18.</b> No outfitter may have more than eight boats on the SH3 in any one day.   | <b>SRP-1.1.18.</b> No outfitter may have more than six boats on the SH3 in any one day.   | <b>SRP-1.1.18.</b> No outfitter may have more than nine boats on the SH3 in any one day.  |   |
| <i>Clarify State Licenses Vs. Federal Permits (Fishing only)</i>  |   |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.19.</b> Maintain four federal permits and four IOGLB licenses.   | <b>SRP-1.1.19.</b> Issue two federal permits and recommend that IOGLB reduce the state license numbers from four to two to be consistent with the number of federal permits.  | <b>SRP-1.1.19.</b> Maintain four federal permits and four IOGLB licenses.   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.20.</b> Federal Permits and IOGLB licenses are for the entire SH3 segment; a section of SH3 (refer to sections identified in SRP-1.1.16) cannot be separated from SH3 for the purposes of selling a portion of an outfitter's business.  |   |   |   |
| <i>Clarify Types of Boats (Fishing only)</i>  |   |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.21.</b> Maintain the four IOGLB licenses for float boats only.   | <p><b>SRP-1.1.21.</b> Issue the two federal permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats only. Do not allow the use of motors.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning</p>  | <p><b>SRP-1.1.21.</b> Issue the four federal permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats only. Do not allow the use of motors.</p> <p>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.1.21.</b> Issue the four federal permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boat only.</p> <p>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only. Downstream steerage would</p> |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>                  |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
|   | number of boats per section/per day.  | number of boats per section/per day.   | not include holding or upstream travel of watercraft with a motor.<br><br>Outfitters must adhere to license and permit regulations concerning number of boats per section/per day. |
| <b>Commercial Boating Operations by Outfitters – TE3: Teton River Canyon</b>                              |   |  |  |
| <i>Clarify River Sections (Fishing only)</i>  |   |  |  |
| <b>SRP-1.1.22.</b> Designate TE3 as Harrop Bridge Boat Access to confluence with Snake River (Figure 12). | <b>SRP-1.1.22.</b> Designate TE3 as Harrop Bridge to confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River. All licenses/permits would recognize the following river sections (Figure 13): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Harrop Bridge Boat Access to Felt Dam Boat Access.</li> <li>b) Felt Dam Boat Access to Spring Hollow Boat Access.</li> <li>c) Spring Hollow Boat Access to Teton Dam Site Boat Access.</li> <li>d) Teton Dam Site Boat Access to Hog Hollow Bridge Boat Access.</li> <li>e) Hog Hollow Bridge Boat Access to Teton Highway.</li> <li>f) Teton Highway to confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River. Note: No boat access exists at the confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River. Outfitters would utilize Hibbard Bridge or Warm Slough Access on SH3. No fishing on SH3.</li> </ul> |  |  |
| <i>Clarify River Use (Fishing only)</i>   |   |  |  |
| <b>SRP-1.1.23.</b> Do not set limits on the number of boats per section/per day.                          | <b>SRP-1.1.23.</b> No more than two boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time on the following river sections: a), b), c), d), e) and f).   | <b>SRP-1.1.23.</b> No more than two boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time on the following river sections: a), b), d), e) and (f). |  |

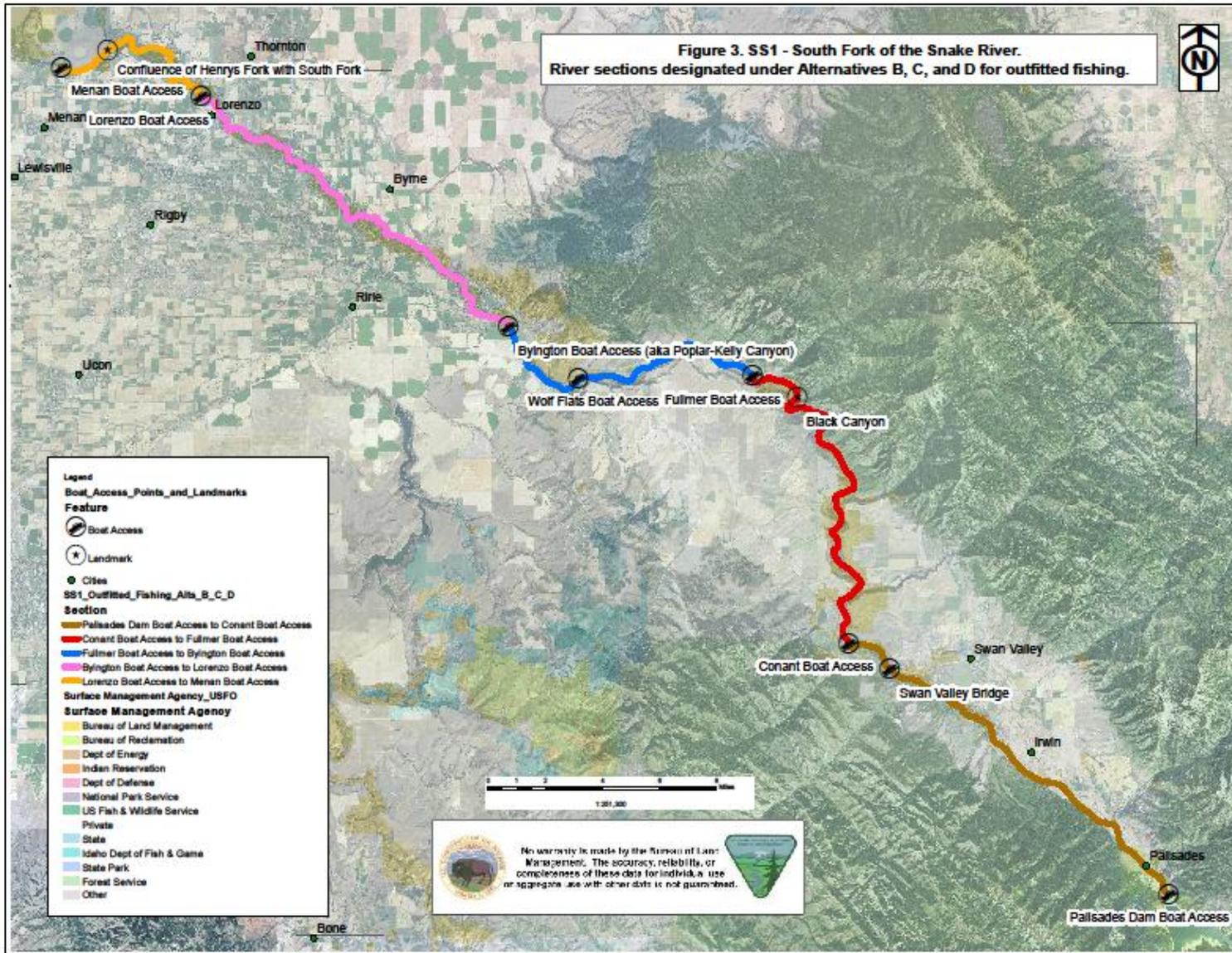
| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
|  |   |  | No more than four boats per section/per day may be used by an outfitter at any one time on river section c). Two boats from same outfitter must be spaced at three hour intervals.  |
| <b>SRP-1.1.24.</b> Do not set limits on the total number of boats on TE3 in any one day.   | <b>SRP-1.1.24.</b> No outfitter may have more than eight boats on the TE3 in any one day.   | <b>SRP-1.1.24.</b> No outfitter may have more than 10 boats on the TE3 in any one day. | <b>SRP-1.1.24.</b> No outfitter may have more than 12 boats on the TE3 in any one day.  |
| <b><i>Clarify State Licenses Vs. Federal Permits (Fishing only)</i></b>  |   |  |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.25.</b> Issue five federal permits (BLM only) and recommend that IOGLB maintain five state licenses. .  | <b>SRP-1.1.25.</b> Issue four federal permits and recommend that IOGLB reduce the state license numbers from five to four.  |  | <b>SRP-1.1.25.</b> Issue five federal permits (BLM only) and recommend that IOGLB maintain five state licenses.   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.26.</b> Federal Permits and IOGLB licenses are for the entire TE3 segment, a section of TE3 (refer to sections identified in SRP-1.1.22) cannot be separated from TE3 for the purposes of selling a portion of an outfitter's business. |   |  |   |
| <b><i>Clarify Types of Boats (Fishing only)</i></b>  |   |  |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.27.</b> Maintain the five IOGLB licenses for float boats only.<br><br>Allow motors not to exceed 10 hp.   | <b>SRP-1.1.27.</b> Issue all permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats only.<br><br>Allow motors not to exceed 10 hp in section a) (Harrop Bridge to Felt Dam Access) |  | <b>SRP-1.1.27.</b> Issue all permits (and their corresponding licenses from IOGLB) for float boats only.<br><br>Allow motors not to exceed 10 hp in section a) (Harrop Bridge to Felt Dam Access) only.<br><br>Float boats may use motors (5HP or less) for downstream steerage only in sections d), e) and (f).<br><br>Downstream steerage does not include holding or upstream travel |

| <b>Management of Commercial Outfitted Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>                  |  |                      |   |
|---|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
|   |  |                      | of watercraft with a motor.   |
| <i>Special Conditions and Stipulations of SRPs/SUPs</i>   |  |                      |   |
| <b>SRP-1.1.28.</b> Determine special conditions and stipulations of each SRP/SUP on a case by case basis. | <b>SRP-1.1.28.</b> Issue all SRPs/SUPs with the following special conditions and stipulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not allow activities that would result in permanent or long-term alterations to the character of the vegetation within delineated YBCU habitat areas. Delineated YBCU habitat is defined as identified occupied and suitable habitat (Figure 14). Delineated YBCU habitat may change over time due to the dynamic nature of the river corridor. For example, do not allow a large organized group to establish a dispersed campsite in previously undisturbed occupied or suitable habitat that would remove woody or herbaceous vegetation, compact the site, cause erosion, or potentially introduce non-native/invasive species.</li> <li>• Determine additional special conditions and stipulations of each SRP/SUP on a case by case basis.</li> </ul> |                      | <b>SRP-1.1.28.</b> Determine special conditions and stipulations of each SRP/SUP on a case by case basis. |

**Figure 2.** SS1 – River sections designated under Alternative A for outfitted fishing on the South Fork of the Snake River.



**Figure 3.** SS1 – River sections designated under Alternatives B, C, and D for outfitted fishing on the South Fork of the Snake River.



**Figure 4.** SS1 – River section designated under Alternative D for outfitted waterfowl hunting on the South Fork of the Snake River.

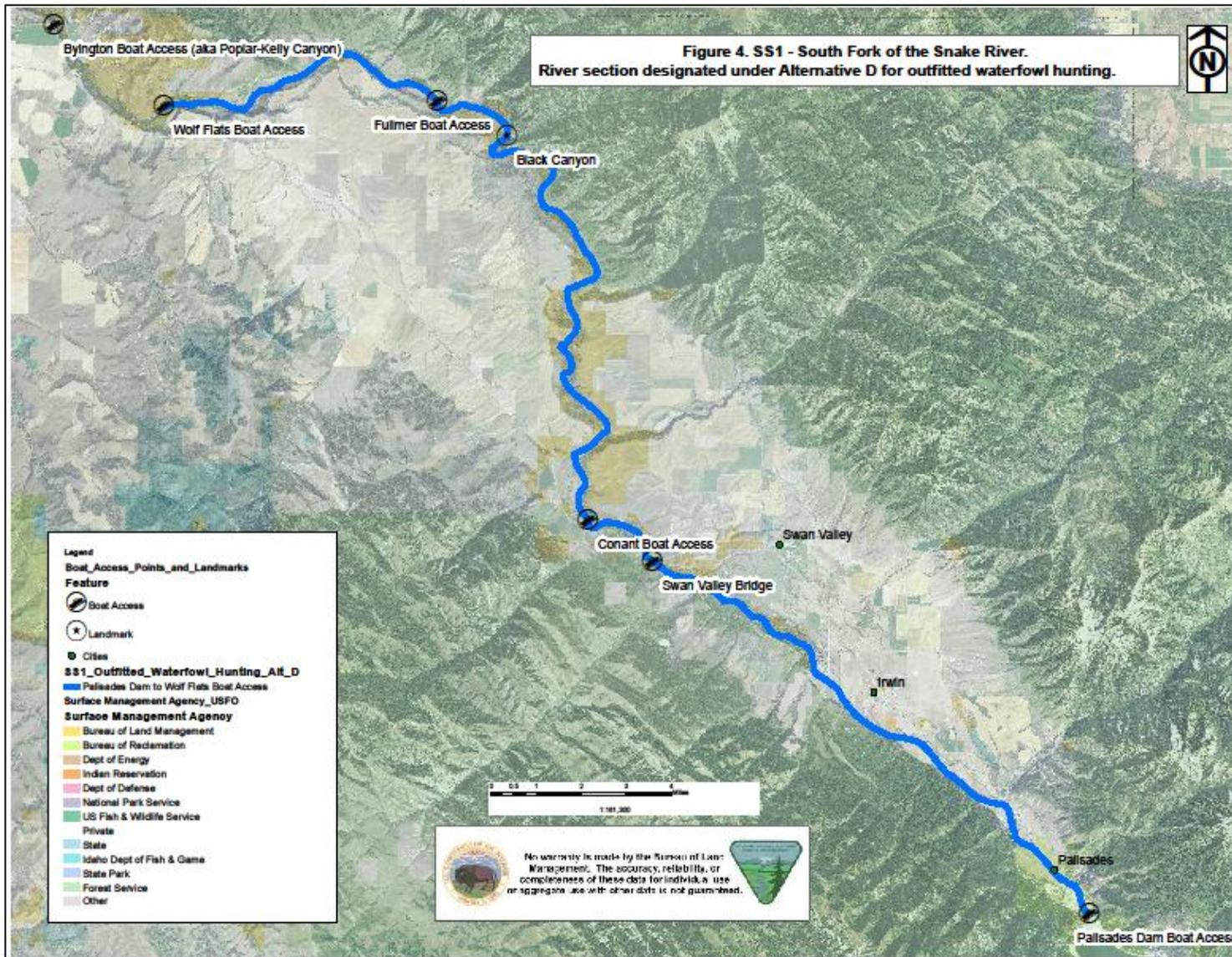
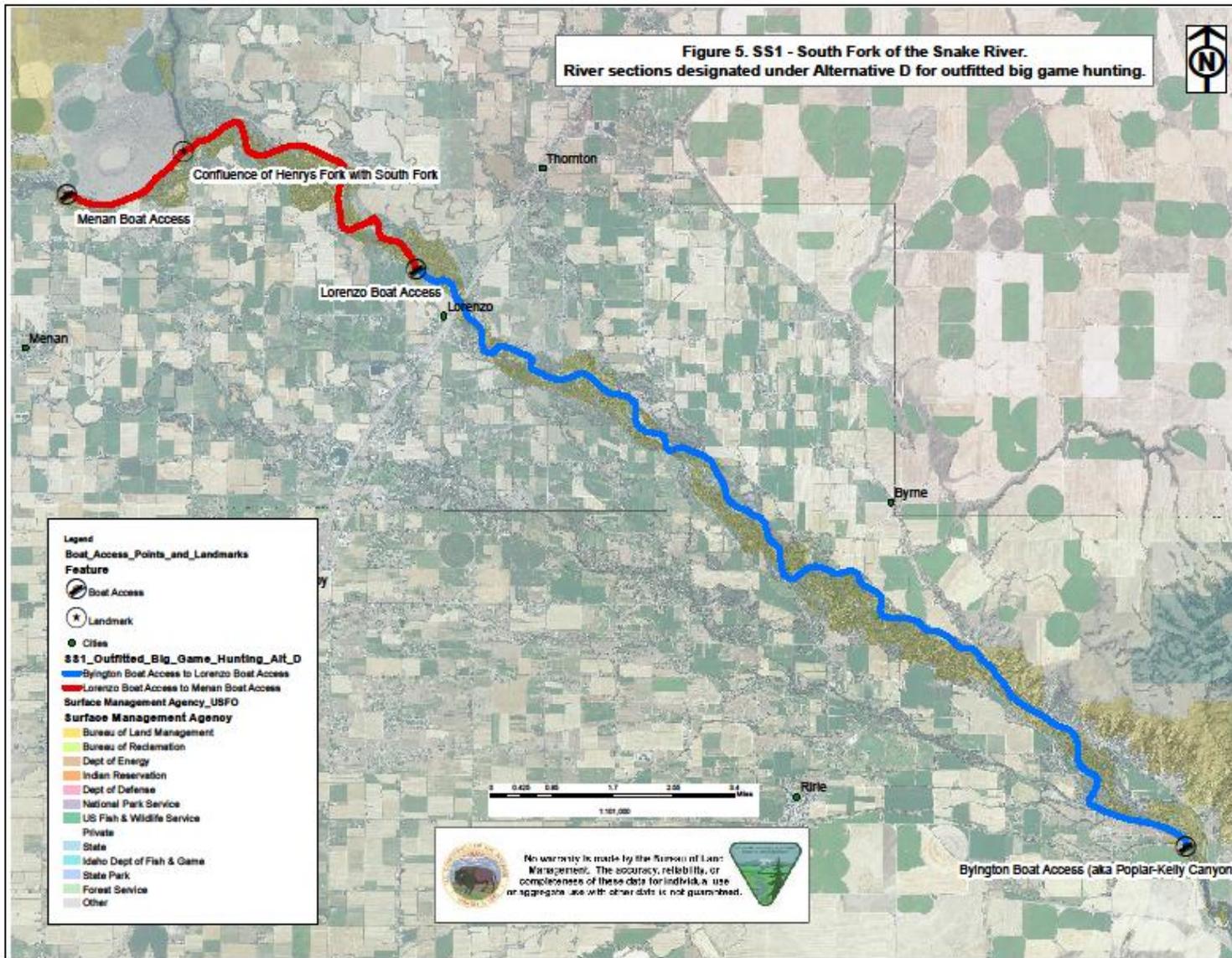


Figure 5. SS1 – River sections designated under Alternative D for outfitted big game hunting on the South Fork of the Snake River.



**Figure 6.** SN1 – River section designated under Alternative A for outfitted fishing on the Main Snake River.

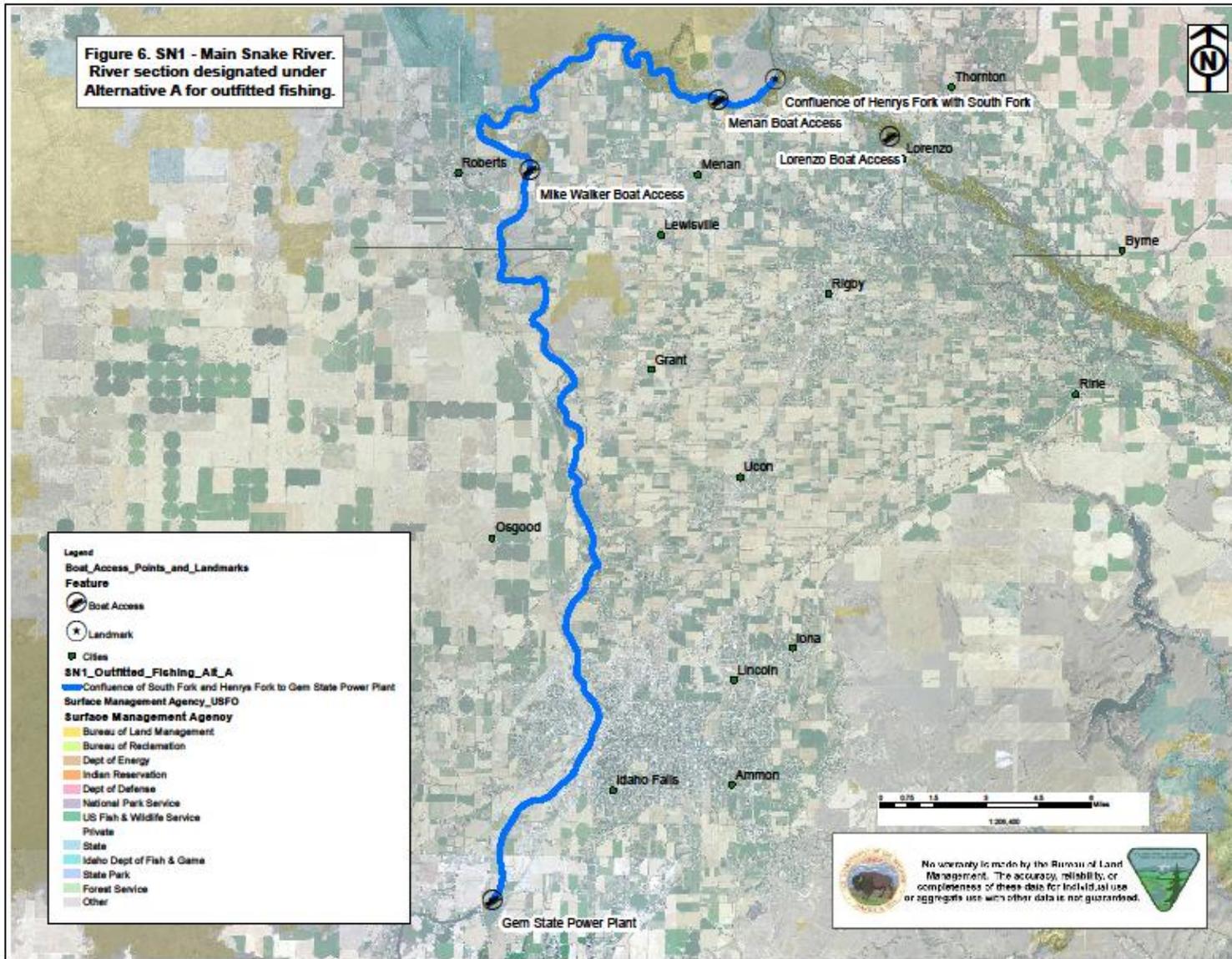
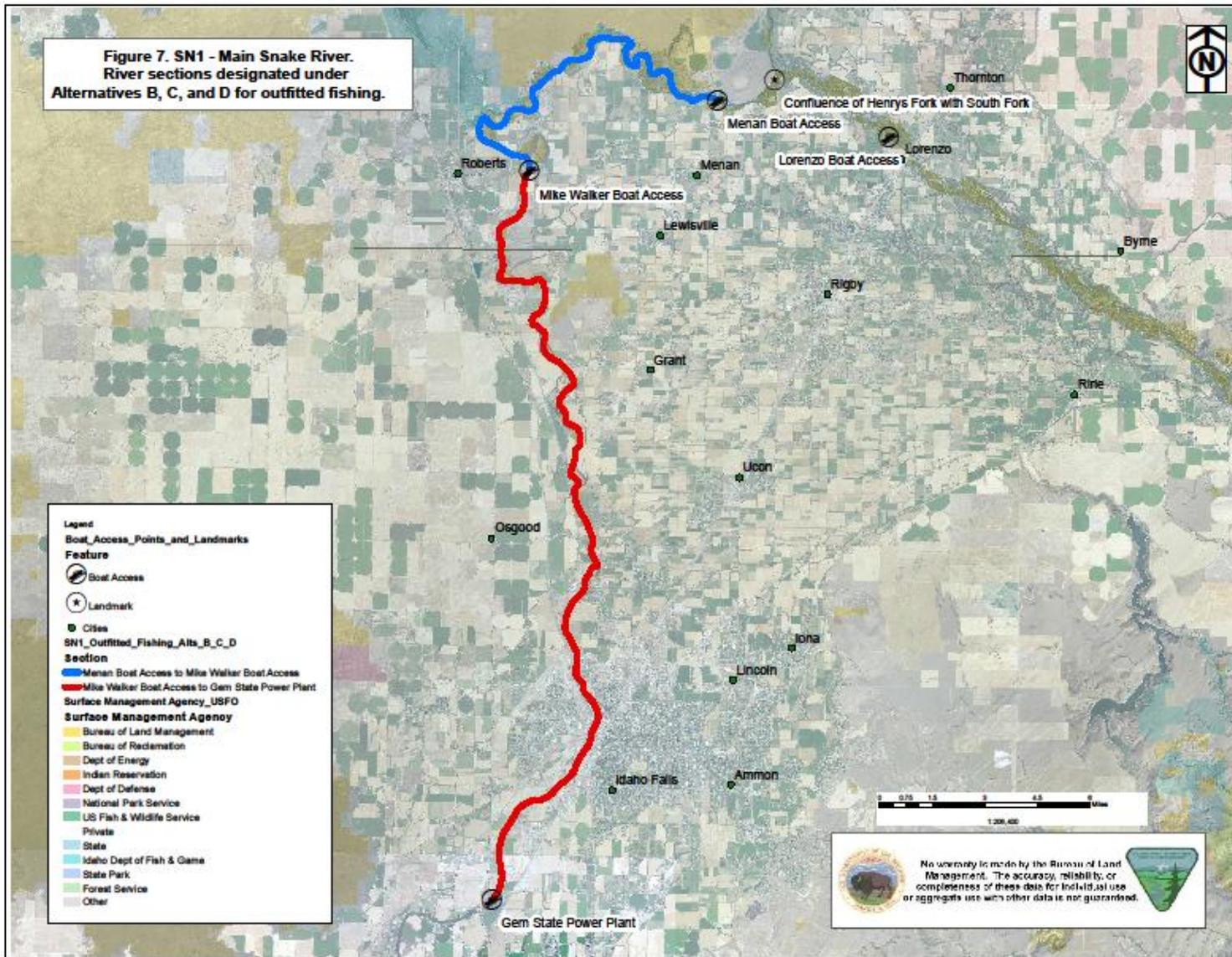
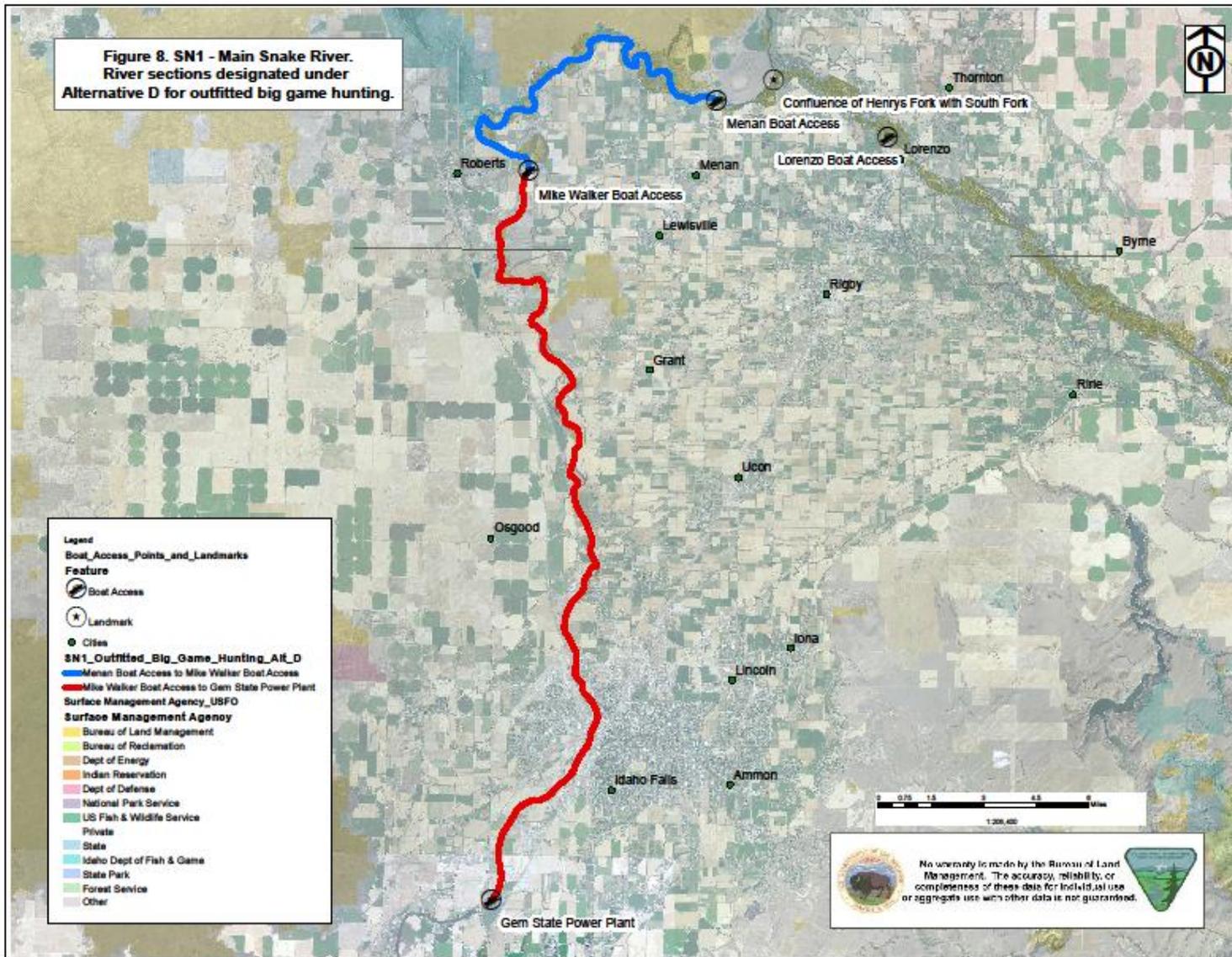


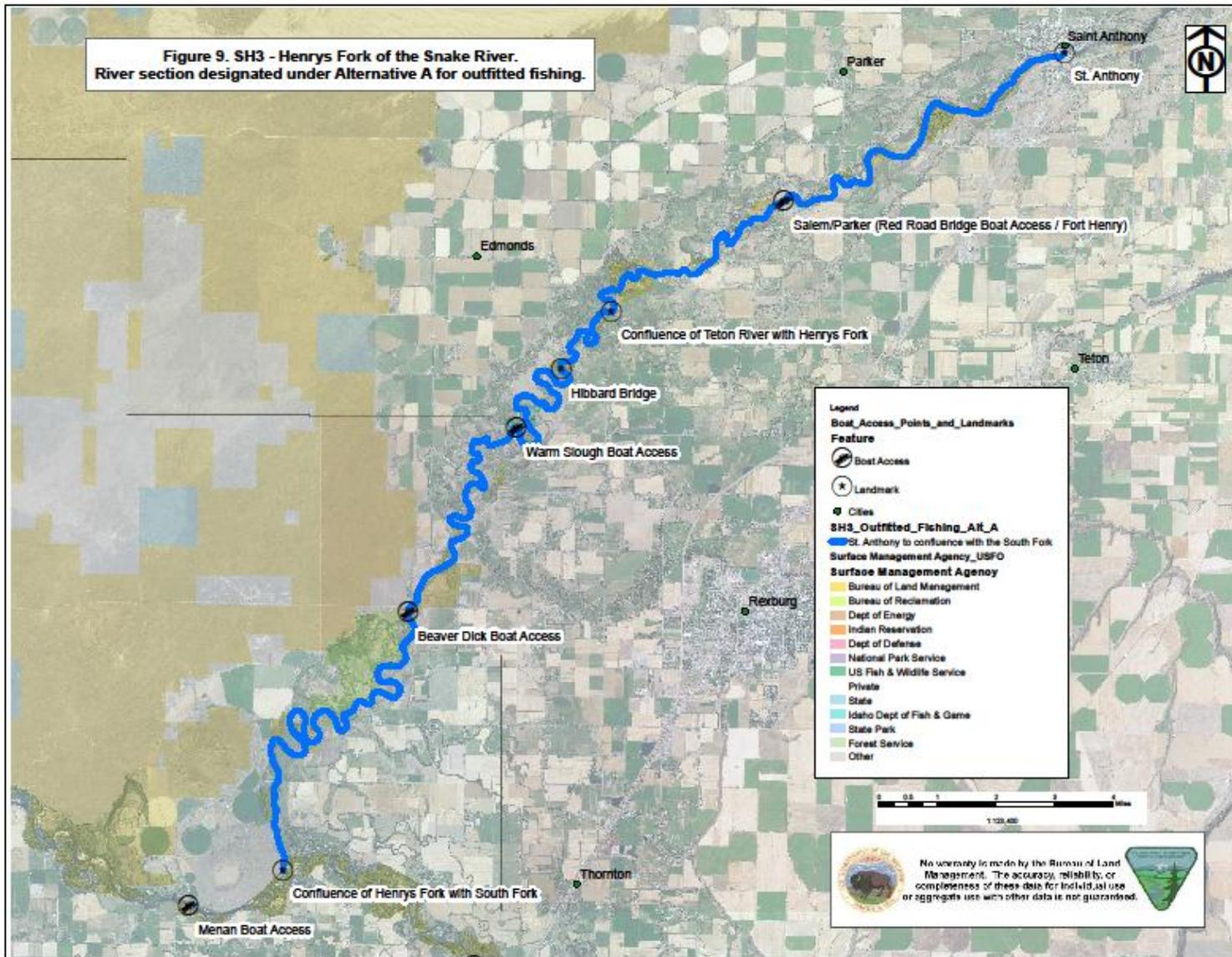
Figure 7. SN1 – River sections designated under Alternatives B, C, and D for outfitted fishing on the Main Snake River.



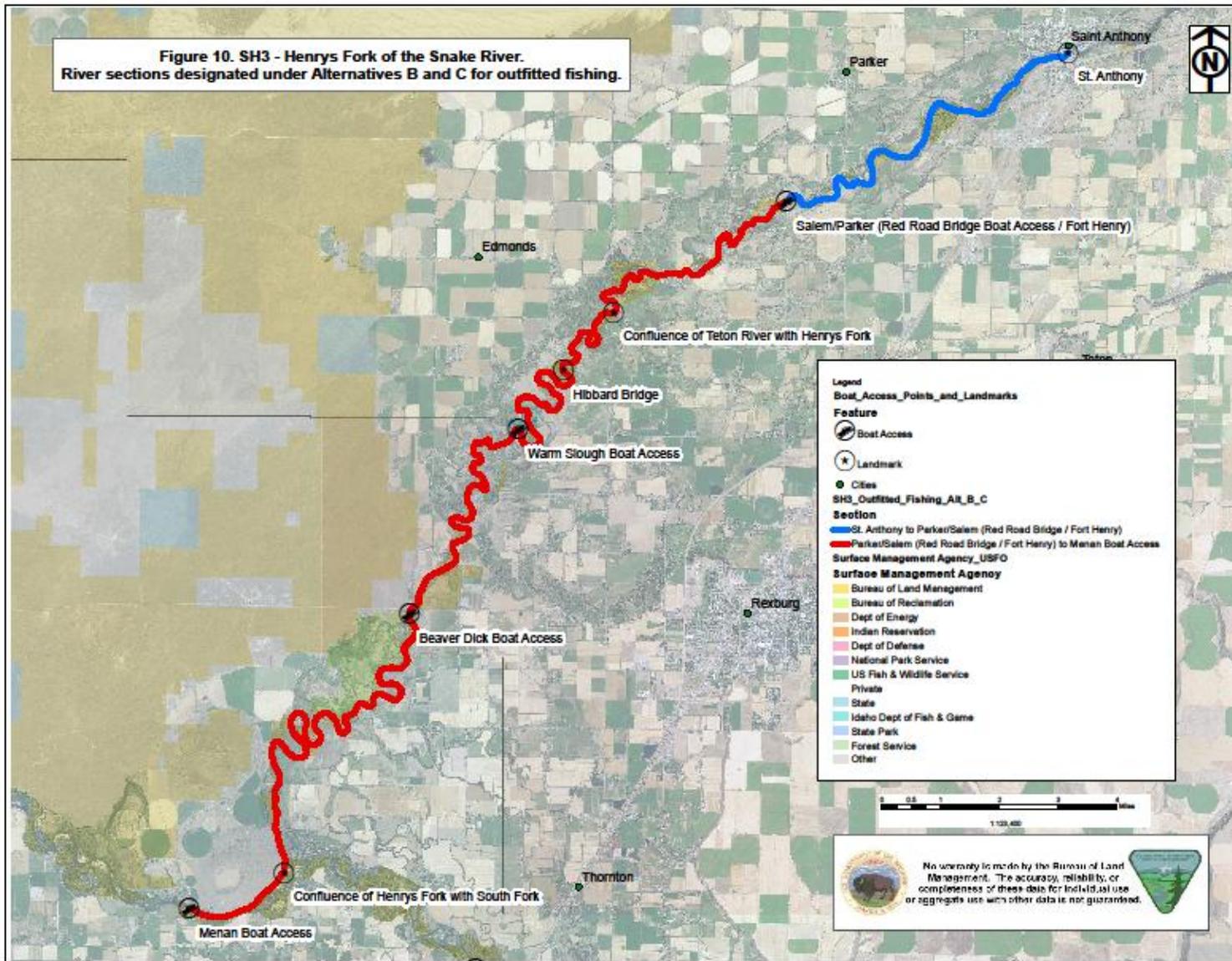
**Figure 8.** SN1 – River sections designated under Alternative D for outfitted big game hunting on the Main Snake River.



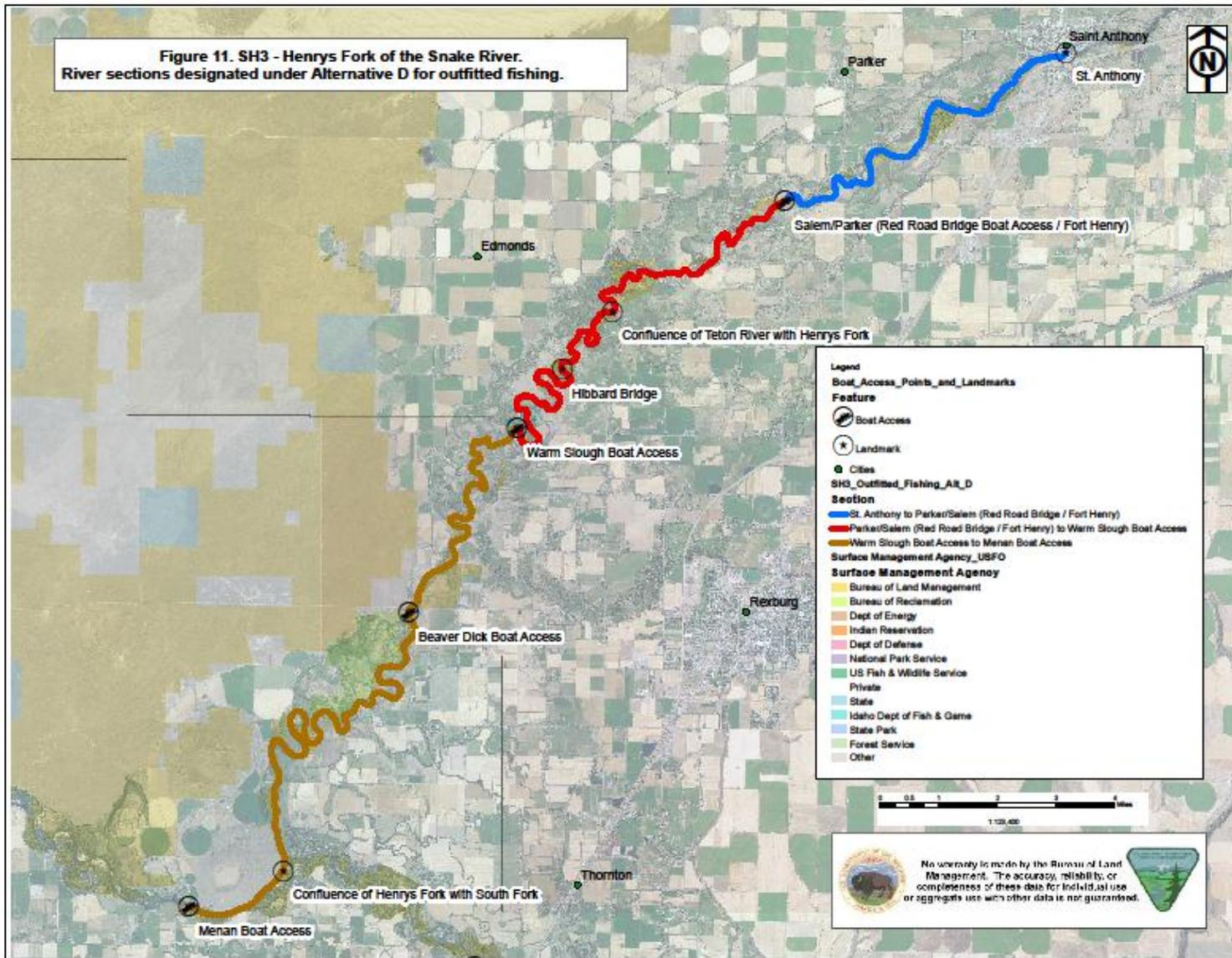
**Figure 9.** SH3 – River section designated under Alternative A for outfitted fishing on the Henrys Fork of the Snake River.



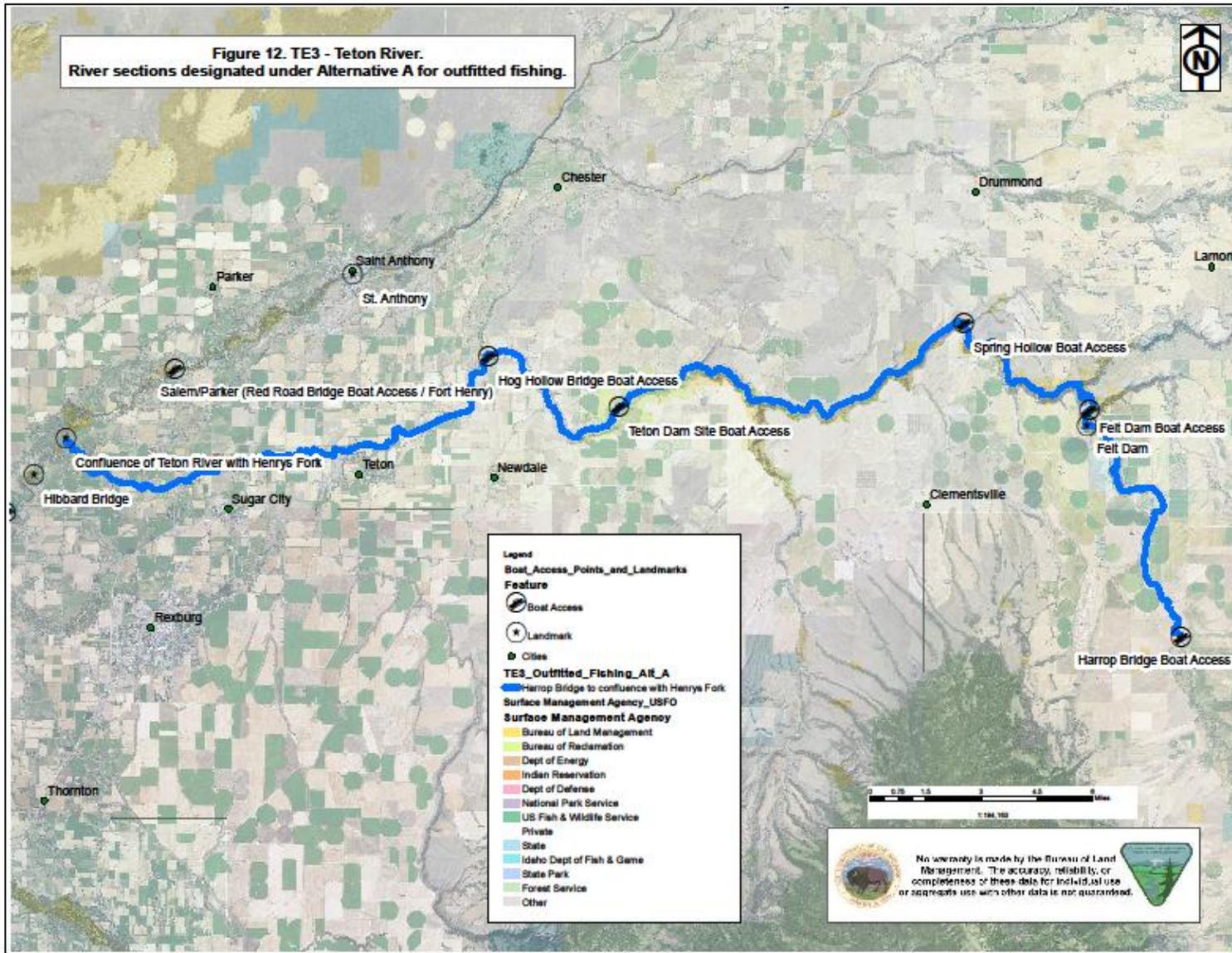
**Figure 10.** SH3 – River sections designated under Alternatives B and C for outfitted fishing on the Henrys Fork of the Snake River.



**Figure 11.** SH3 – River sections designated under Alternative D for outfitted fishing on the Henrys Fork of the Snake River.



**Figure 12.** TE3 – River section designated under Alternative A for outfitted fishing in the Teton River Canyon.



**Figure 13.** TE3 – River sections designated under Alternatives B, C, and D for outfitted fishing in the Teton River Canyon.

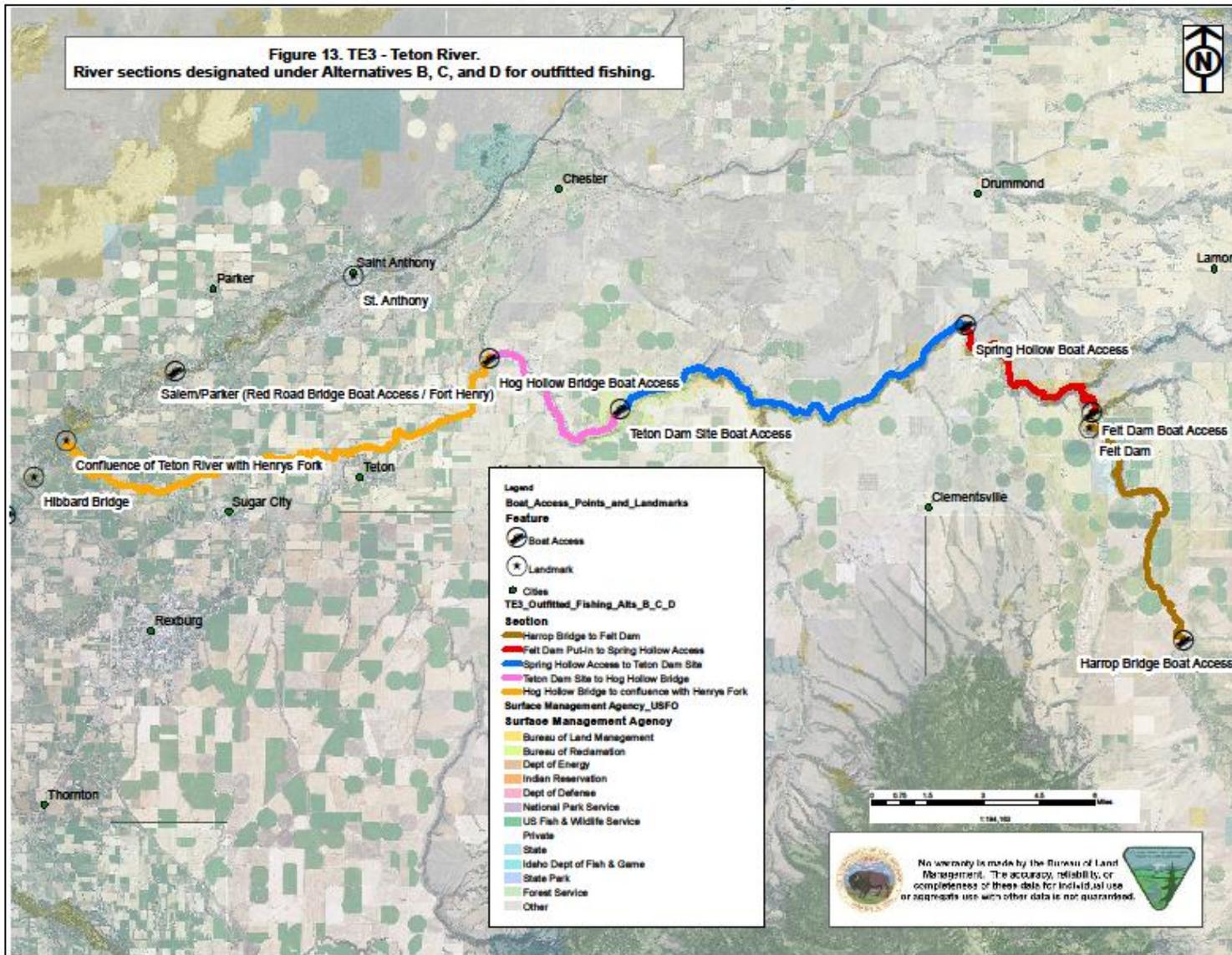
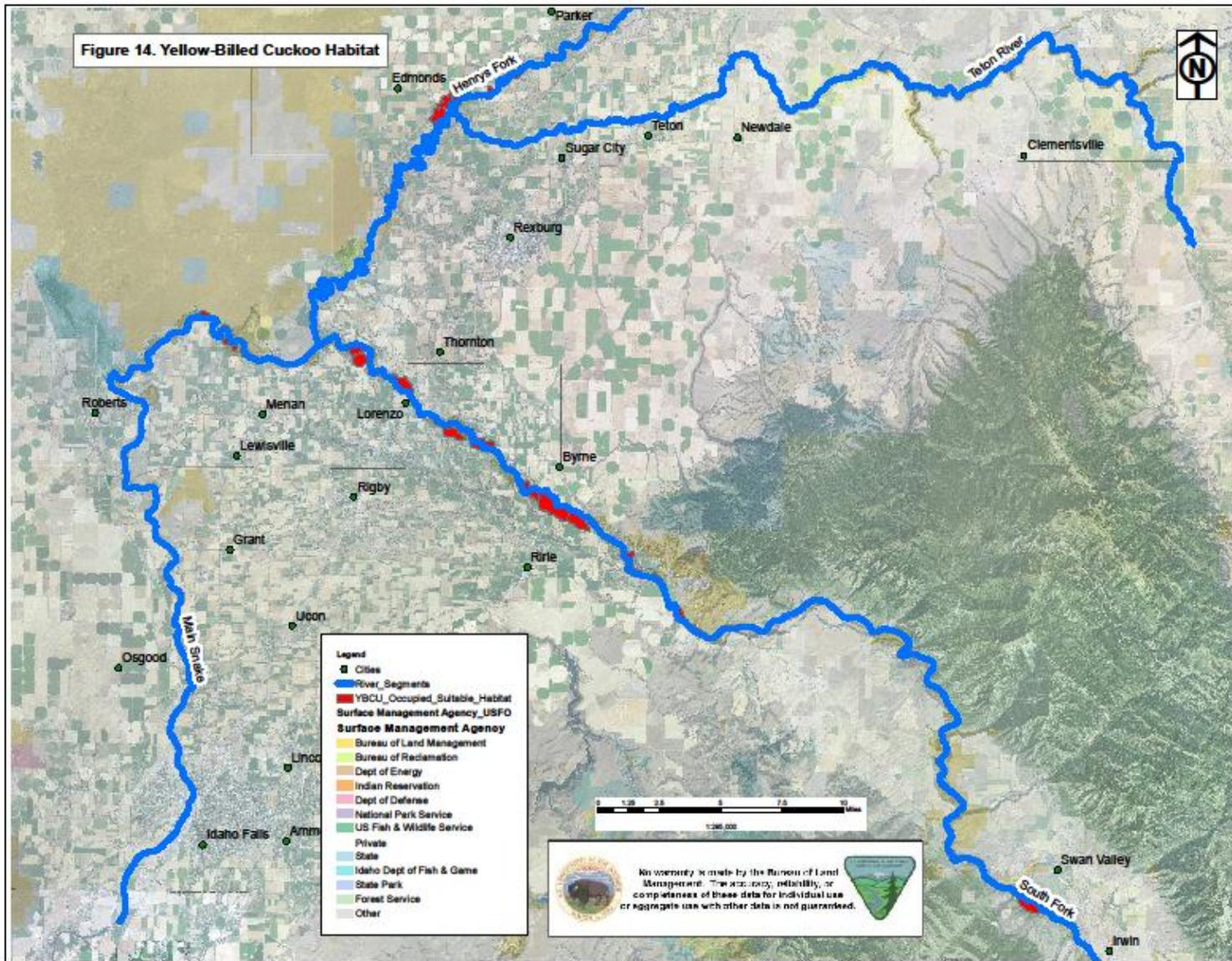


Figure 14. Yellow-Billed Cuckoo Habitat



**2.3.2 Issue No. 2 – Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits**

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
| <b>Goal SRP 1.</b>   |  |   |  |
| <b>Objective SRP-1.2. Manage for desired recreation outcomes by emphasizing and enhancing a range of recreational opportunities and experiences related to special recreation permits/special use permits for commercial, competitive, organized group, and vending. Figure 15</b> |  |   |  |
| <b>South Fork of the Snake River</b>   |  |   |  |
| <b>Clarify Commercial SRPs/SUPs (Non-Outfitted Uses [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</b>   |  |   |  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.1.</b> Allow commercial SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.1.</b> Do not allow commercial SRP/SUP activities | <b>SRP-1.2.1.</b> Do not allow commercial SRP/SUP activities July 1 through Labor Day   | <b>SRP-1.2.1.</b> Do not allow commercial SRP/SUP activities during the Salmon Fly hatch (last full week of June through third week in July).  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.2.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP/SUP activities.   | <b>SRP-1.2.2.</b> Nothing Comparable                         | <b>SRP-1.2.2.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP/SUP activities.  |  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.3.</b> Determine federal permit limits for commercial SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.3.</b> Nothing Comparable                         | <b>SRP-1.2.3.</b> Issue federal permits for commercial SRPs/SUPs as follows:<br><br>Palisades Dam Boat Access to Conant Boat Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of four permits per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access: | <b>SRP-1.2.3.</b> Issue federal permits for commercial SRPs/SUPs as follows:<br><br>Palisades Dam Boat Access to Conant Boat Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of six permits per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access: |

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of four permits per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> <li>• Allow one trip per month for each permit.</li> </ul> <p>Fullmer Boat Access to Byington Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of four permits per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> <p>Byington Boat Access to Menan Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine availability of permits on a case-by-case basis.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of six permits per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> <li>• Allow one trip per month for each permit.</li> </ul> <p>Fullmer Boat Access to Byington Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of six permits per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> <p>Byington Boat Access to Menan Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine availability of permits on a case-by-case basis.</li> </ul> |
| <b>SRP-1.2.4.</b> Determine maximum group size limits for commercial SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis. | <b>SRP-1.2.4.</b> Nothing Comparable   | <b>SRP-1.2.4.</b> Set a maximum group size of 15 people for each commercial SRP/SUP.  | <b>SRP-1.2.4.</b> Set a maximum group size of 25 people for each commercial SRP/SUP.  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.5.</b> Determine commercial SRP/SUP activities for shuttle companies on a case-by-case basis.         | <b>SRP-1.2.5.</b> Issue a maximum of two federal permits (BLM/FS combined) for shuttle companies. (Applies to the South Fork and Main Snake) |   | <b>SRP-1.2.5.</b> Issue a maximum of four federal permits (BLM/FS combined) for shuttle companies. (Applies to the South Fork and   |

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>                              | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>   |
|  |   |   | Main Snake)  |
| <i>Clarify Competitive SRPs/SUPs (Non-Outfitted Use [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</i> |   |   |  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.6.</b> Allow Competitive SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.  | <b>SRP-1.2.6.</b> Do not allow competitive events | <b>SRP-1.2.6.</b> Do not allow competitive events July 1 through Labor Day.   | <b>SRP-1.2.6.</b> Do not allow competitive events during the Salmon Fly hatch (last full week of June through third week in July).   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.7.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP/SUP activities.  | <b>SRP-1.2.7.</b> Nothing Comparable              | <b>SRP-1.2.7.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP/SUP activities.   | <b>SRP-1.2.7.</b> Allow fishing as part of competitive SRP/SUP activities.   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.8.</b> Determine motorized competitive SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.                            | <b>SRP-1.2.8.</b> Nothing Comparable              | <b>SRP-1.2.8.</b> Do not allow motorized competitive events due to the ACEC designation, social conflicts, and safety concerns  |  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.9.</b> Determine federal permit limits for competitive SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.            | <b>SRP-1.2.9.</b> Nothing Comparable              | <p><b>SRP-1.2.9.</b> Issue federal permits for competitive events as follows:</p> <p>Palisades Dam Boat Access to Conant Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of two competitive events per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> </ul> <p>Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of one competitive event per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> </ul> <p>Fullmer Boat Access to Byington Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of two</li> </ul> | <p><b>SRP-1.2.9.</b> Issue federal permits for competitive events as follows:</p> <p>Palisades Dam Boat Access to Conant Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of four competitive events per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> </ul> <p>Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of two competitive events per year (BLM/FS combined).</li> </ul> <p>Fullmer Boat Access to Byington Boat Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of four</li> </ul> |

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
|  |  | competitive events per year (BLM/FS combined).<br><br>Below Byington Boat Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine availability of permits on a case-by-case basis.</li> </ul>                           | competitive events per year (BLM/FS combined).<br><br>Below Byington Boat Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine availability of permits on a case-by-case basis.</li> </ul>                            |
| <b>SRP-1.2.10.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.10.</b> Nothing Comparable  | <b>SRP-1.2.10.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.   |   |
| <b>Clarify Organized Group SRPs/SUPs for Boating Activities</b>  |  |  |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.11.</b> Allow organized group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.11.</b> Require a SRP/SUP for all organized group activities with more than 15 people. Do not allow organized groups larger than 25 people. | <b>SRP-1.2.11.</b> Require a SRP/SUP for all organized group activities with more than 20 people. Do not allow organized groups larger than 30 people.   | <b>SRP-1.2.11.</b> Allow organized group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.12.</b> Do not restrict organized group SRP/SUP activities during the Salmon Fly hatch (last full week of June through third week in July). | <b>SRP-1.2.12.</b> Do not allow organized group SRPs/SUPs during the Salmon Fly hatch (last full week of June through third week in July).             | <b>SRP-1.2.12.</b> Allow a maximum of two organized group SRPs/SUPs during the Salmon Fly hatch (last full week of June through third week in July).   | <b>SRP-1.2.12.</b> Do not restrict organized group activities during Salmon Fly hatch (last full week of June through third week in July).  |
| <b>Clarify Vending SRPs/SUPs</b>   |  |  |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.13.</b> Allow vending SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.13.</b> Do not allow SRPs/SUPs for vending.   | <b>SRP-1.2.13.</b> Issue a maximum of two federal permits per year for vending (BLM/FS combined) in association with a permitted event.<br><br>Do not allow SRPs/SUPs for vending not associated with a permitted event. | <b>SRP-1.2.13.</b> Issue a maximum of four federal permits per year for vending (BLM/FS combined) in association with a permitted event.<br><br>Do not allow SRPs/SUPs for vending not associated with a permitted event. |

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management<br/>Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <b>Main Snake River(Confluence of Henrys Fork and South Fork to Roberts)</b>  |  |   |   |
| <i>Clarify Commercial SRPs (Non-Outfitted Use [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</i>  |  |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.14.</b> Allow commercial SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.14.</b> Do not allow SRPs/SUPs for commercial activities. | <b>SRP-1.2.14.</b> Issue federal permits for commercial SRPs as follows:<br><br>Menan Boat Access to Mike Walker Boat Access:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of two permits per year.</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> | <b>SRP-1.2.14.</b> Issue federal permits for commercial SRPs as follows:<br><br>Menan Boat Access to Mike Walker Boat Access:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of three permits per year.</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> |
| <b>SRP-1.2.15.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP activities.                                       | <b>SRP-1.2.15.</b> Nothing Comparable                                | <b>SRP-1.2.15.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP activities.   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.16.</b> Determine maximum group size limits for commercial SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.16.</b> Nothing Comparable                                | <b>SRP-1.2.16.</b> Set a maximum group size of 15 people for each commercial SRP.   | <b>SRP-1.2.16.</b> Set a maximum group size of 25 people for each commercial SRP.   |
| <i>Clarify Competitive SRPs (Non-Outfitted Use [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</i> |  |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.17.</b> Allow competitive SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.  | <b>SRP-1.2.17.</b> Do not allow competitive events.                  | <b>SRP-1.2.17.</b> Issue federal permits for competitive events as follows:<br><br>Menan Boat Access to Mike Walker Boat Access:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of two competitive events per year.</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.18.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.                                      | <b>SRP-1.2.18.</b> Nothing Comparable                                | <b>SRP-1.2.18.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.  | <b>SRP-1.2.18.</b> Allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.19.</b> Determine motorized competitive SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.                          | <b>SRP-1.2.19.</b> Nothing Comparable                                | <b>SRP-1.2.19.</b> Do not allow motorized competitive events due to the ACEC designation, social conflicts, and safety concerns   |   |

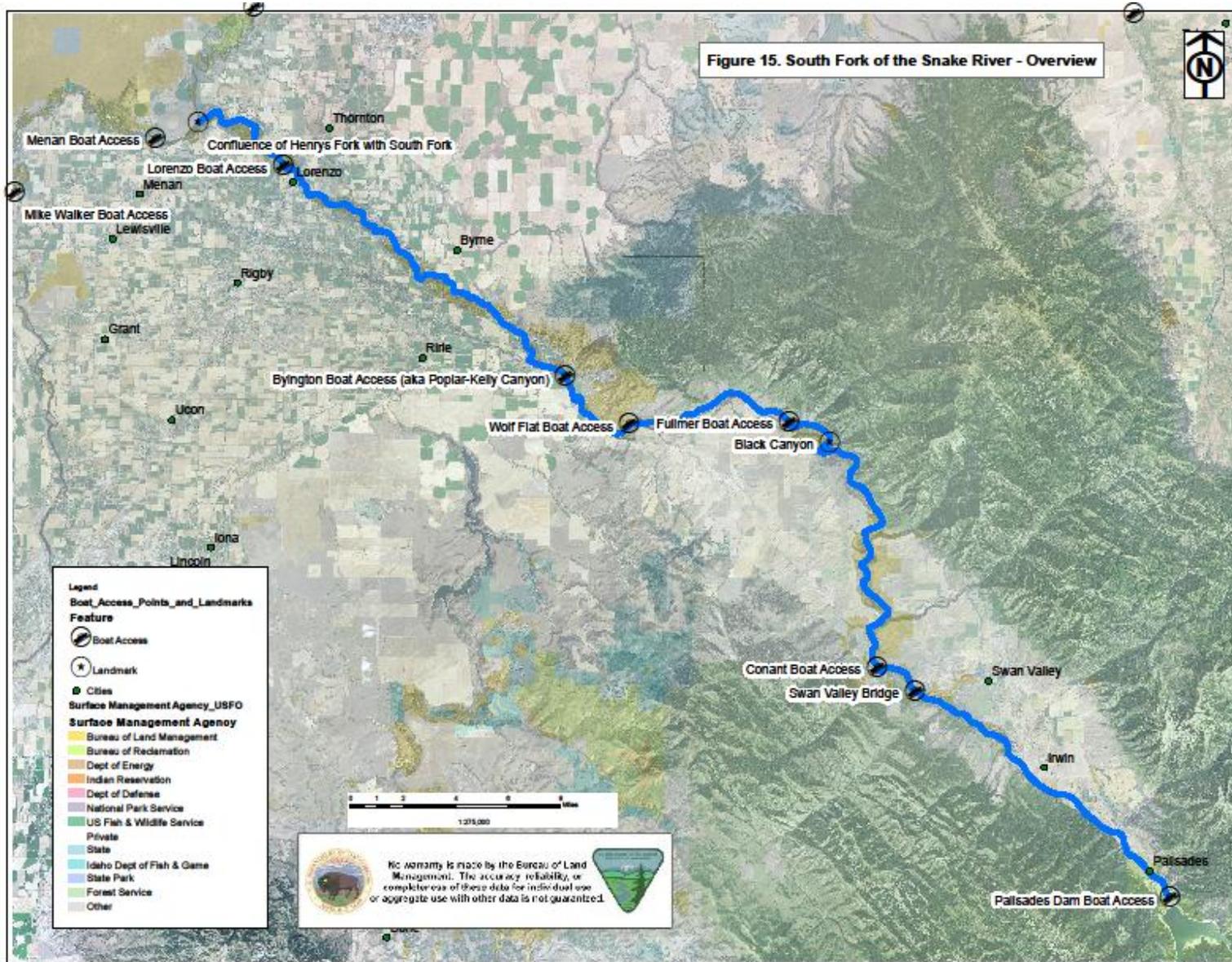
| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.20.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.                                    | <b>SRP-1.2.20.</b> Nothing Comparable  | <b>SRP-1.2.20.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.  |   |
| <b><i>Clarify Organized Group SRPs for Boating Activities</i></b>   |  |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.21.</b> Allow organized group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.                                      | <b>SRP-1.2.21.</b> Require a SRP for all organized group activities with more than 15 people. Do not allow organized groups larger than 25 people. | <b>SRP-1.2.21.</b> Require a SRP for all organized group activities with more than 25 people. Do not allow organized groups larger than 30 people.  | <b>SRP-1.2.21.</b> Allow organized group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.  |
| <b>Henry Fork of the Snake River (St. Anthony to Confluence with South Fork)</b>  |  |   |   |
| <b><i>Clarify Commercial SRPs (Non-Outfitted Use [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</i></b> |  |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.22.</b> Allow commercial SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.22.</b> Do not allow SRPs/SUPs for commercial activities.   | <b>SRP-1.2.22.</b> Issue federal permits for commercial SRPs as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of two permits per year.</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> | <b>SRP-1.2.22.</b> Issue federal permits for commercial SRPs as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of three permits per year.</li> <li>• Allow two trips per month for each permit.</li> </ul> |
| <b>SRP-1.2.23.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP activities.   | <b>SRP-1.2.23.</b> Nothing Comparable  | <b>SRP-1.2.23.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP activities.   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.24.</b> Determine maximum group size limit for commercial SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.              | <b>SRP-1.2.24.</b> Nothing Comparable  | <b>SRP-1.2.24.</b> Set a maximum group size of 15 people for each commercial SRP.   | <b>SRP-1.2.24.</b> Set a maximum group size of 25 people for each commercial SRP.   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.25.</b> Allow commercial SRP/SUP activities for shuttle companies on a case-by-case basis.                     | <b>SRP-1.2.25.</b> Issue a maximum of two federal permits for shuttle companies.   |   | <b>SRP-1.2.25.</b> Issue a maximum of four federal permits for shuttle companies.   |

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <i>Clarify Competitive SRPs (Non-Outfitted Use [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</i> |  |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.26.</b> Allow Competitive SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.  | <b>SRP-1.2.26.</b> Do not allow competitive event SRPs.  | <b>SRP-1.2.26.</b> Issue federal permits for competitive events as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a maximum of two competitive events per year.</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.27.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.                                      | <b>SRP-1.2.27.</b> Nothing Comparable  | <b>SRP-1.2.27.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.  | <b>SRP-1.2.27.</b> Allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.28.</b> Determine motorized competitive SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.                          | <b>SRP-1.2.28.</b> Nothing Comparable  | <b>SRP-1.2.28.</b> Do not allow motorized competitive events due to the ACEC designation, social conflicts, and safety concerns   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.29.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.                              | <b>SRP-1.2.29.</b> Nothing Comparable  | <b>SRP-1.2.29.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.  |   |
| <i>Clarify Organized Group SRPs for Boating Activities</i>  |  |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.30.</b> Allow organized group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis                                 | <b>SRP-1.2.30.</b> Require a SRP for all organized group activities with 15 to 25 people. Do not allow organized groups larger than 25 people. | <b>SRP-1.2.30.</b> Require a SRP for all organized group activities with 25 to 30 people. Do not allow organized groups larger than 30 people.                                      | <b>SRP-1.2.30.</b> Allow organized group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.  |
| <b>Teton River Canyon (Harrop Bridge to Teton Dam)</b>  |  |   |   |
| <i>Clarify Commercial SRPs (Non-Outfitted Use [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</i>  |  |   |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.31.</b> Allow commercial SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.31.</b> Do not allow commercial SRPs  |   | <b>SRP-1.2.31.</b> Issue federal permits for commercial boating SRPs as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a maximum of two permits per year.</li> </ul> |
| <b>SRP-1.2.32.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP activities.                                       | <b>SRP-1.2.32.</b> Nothing Comparable  |   | <b>SRP-1.2.32.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of commercial SRP activities.   |

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>  |  |                      |   |
|--|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.33.</b> Determine maximum group size limits for commercial SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.              | <b>SRP-1.2.33.</b> Nothing Comparable  |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.33.</b> Set a maximum group size of 12 people per section per day for each commercial boating SRP.<br><br>a) Felt Dam Boat Access to Spring Hollow Boat Access.<br><br>b) Spring Hollow Boat Access to Parkinson Access or Teton Dam Site Boat Access. |
| <b>SRP-1.2.34.</b> Allow commercial SRP/SUP activities for shuttle companies on a case-by-case basis.                      | <b>SRP-1.2.34.</b> Issue a maximum of two federal permits for shuttle companies. |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.34.</b> Issue a maximum of four federal permits for shuttle companies.   |
| <b><i>Clarify Competitive SRPs (Non-Outfitted Use [i.e., No requirement of State of Idaho license for outfitting])</i></b> |  |                      |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.35.</b> Allow Competitive SRP activities on a case-by-case basis.   | <b>SRP-1.2.35.</b> Do not allow competitive event SRPs.                          |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.35.</b> Issue federal permits for competitive events as follows:<br><br>Allow a maximum of two competitive events per year.  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.36.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.   | <b>SRP-1.2.36.</b> Nothing Comparable  |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.36.</b> Do not allow fishing as part of competitive SRP activities.  |
| <b>SRP-1.2.37.</b> Do not allow motorized competitive events.  | <b>SRP-1.2.37.</b> Nothing Comparable  |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.37.</b> Do not allow motorized competitive events.   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.38.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.                                     | <b>SRP-1.2.38.</b> Nothing Comparable  |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.38.</b> Identify number of participants/spectators on a case-by-case basis.  |
| <b><i>Clarify Organized Group SRPs for Boating Activities</i></b>  |  |                      |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.39.</b> Allow organized   | <b>SRP-1.2.39.</b> Require a SRP for all organized group activities with more    |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.39.</b> Allow organized  |

| <b>Management of Special Recreation Permits/Special Use Permits</b>                                       |  |                      |   |
|---|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b> | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis  | than 12 people. Do not allow organized groups larger than 15 people.   |                      | group SRP/SUP activities on a case-by-case basis.   |
| <i>Special Conditions and Stipulations of SRPs/SUPs</i>   |  |                      |   |
| <b>SRP-1.2.40.</b> Determine special conditions and stipulations of each SRP/SUP on a case by case basis. | <p><b>SRP-1.2.40</b> Issue all SRPs/SUPs with the following special conditions and stipulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not allow activities that would result in permanent or long-term alterations to the character of the vegetation within delineated YBCU habitat areas. Delineated YBCU habitat is defined as identified occupied and suitable habitat (Figure 14). Delineated YBCU habitat may change over time due to the dynamic nature of the river corridor. For example, do not allow a large organized group to establish a dispersed campsite in previously undisturbed occupied or suitable habitat that would remove woody or herbaceous vegetation, compact the site, cause erosion, or potentially introduce non-native/invasive species.</li> <li>• Determine additional special conditions and stipulations of each SRP/SUP on a case by case basis.</li> </ul> |                      | <b>SRP-1.2.40.</b> Determine special conditions and stipulations of each SRP/SUP on a case by case basis. |

Figure 15. Overview of the South Fork of the Snake River.



**2.3.3 Issue No. 3 – Management of Visitor Use**

| <b>Management of Visitor Use</b>   |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>   | <b>ALTRNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <b>Goal SRP 1.</b>   |  |  |   |
| <b>Objective SRP-1.3. Manage for desired recreation outcomes by emphasizing and enhancing a range of recreational opportunities and experiences related to special recreation permits/special use permits for special area (daily individual use) SRPs/SUPs. Figure 15</b> |  |  |   |
| <b>South Fork of the Snake River</b>   |  |  |   |
| <b>Special Area SRPs/SUPs (Daily Individual Use) for Boating</b>   |  |  |   |
| <p><b>SRP-1.3.1.</b> Allow unlimited daily individual use (boating) throughout the year (no permit system).</p>  | <p><b>SRP-1.3.1.</b> If the parking lot at Conant Boat Access has 64 or more vehicles per day 50% of the time July 1 through Labor Day for three consecutive years, convene a public process to consider the details of a special area daily permit system for boat launches in the canyon reach (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access) to reduce overcrowding on the river. The public process would solicit assistance from river users to address topics such as, but not limited to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Determine the annual period (e.g., July 1 through Labor Day) for which permits may be required in the canyon reach.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Determine the days of the week (e.g., Friday, Saturday, and</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.3.1.</b> If the parking lot at Conant Boat Access has 64 or more vehicles per day 50% of the time on weekends (i.e., Friday, Saturday, Sunday) and holidays (i.e., Independence Day) July 1 through Labor Day for three consecutive years, convene a public process to consider the details of a special area daily permit system for boat launches in the canyon reach (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access) to reduce overcrowding on the river. The public process would solicit assistance from river users to address topics such as, but not limited to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Determine the annual period (e.g., July 1 through Labor Day) for which permits may be required in the canyon reach.</p> | <p><b>SRP-1.3.1.</b> Allow unlimited daily individual use (boating) throughout the year (no permit system).</p> |

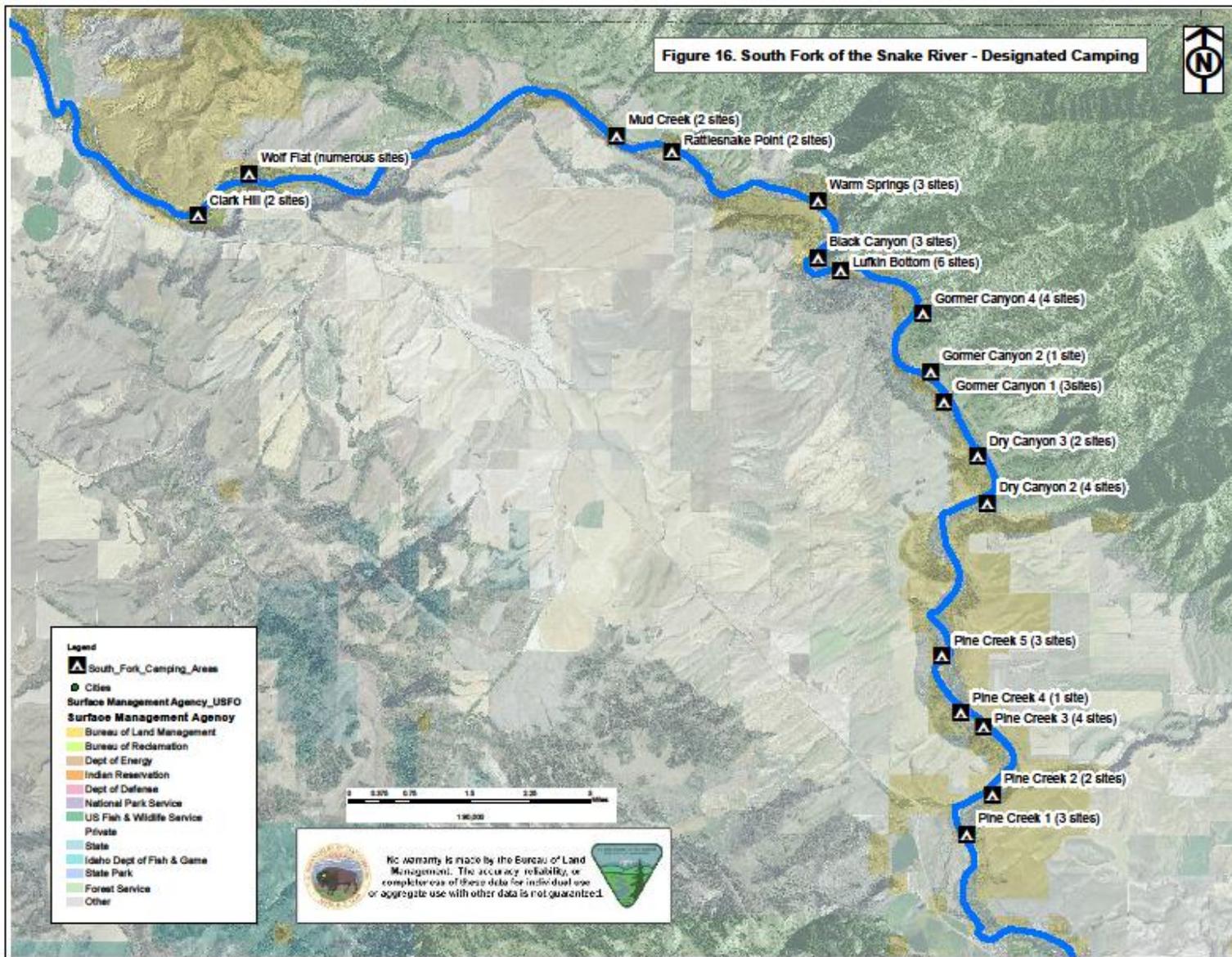
| <b>Management of Visitor Use</b>                         |  |  |                      |
|--|--|--|----------------------|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b> | <b>ALTRNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b> |
|  | <p>Sunday) for which permits may be required in the canyon reach.</p> <p>Determine the maximum number of permits per day that may be issued during the permit period.</p> <p>Determine the process for obtaining permits.</p> <p>Determine whether to stagger boat launches throughout the day to further limit crowding and to improve spatial distribution of boats.</p> | <p>Determine the days of the week (e.g., Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) for which permits may be required in the canyon reach.</p> <p>Determine the maximum number of permits per day that may be issued during the permit period.</p> <p>Determine the process for obtaining permits.</p> <p>Determine whether to stagger boat launches throughout the day to further limit crowding and to improve spatial distribution of boats.</p> |                      |

**2.3.4 Issue No. 4 – Management of Designated Camping**

| <b>Management of Designated Camping</b>   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
| <b>Goal Camping 2.</b>  |  |  |   |
| <i>Objective Rec-2.1. Manage for desired recreation outcomes by emphasizing and enhancing a range of recreational opportunities and experiences related to camping. Figure 16</i> |  |  |   |
| <b>Designated Camping – South Fork of the Snake River (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access)</b>  |  |  |   |
| <b>Rec-2.1.1.</b> Self-issue permit required for overnight camping.   | <b>Rec-2.1.1.</b> Implement a reservation permit system for camping.   | <b>Rec-2.1.1.</b> If campsites from Conant Boat Access to Warm Springs are full 50 % of the time (based on self-issue camping permits) on weekends (i.e., Friday night, Saturday night) and holidays (i.e., Independence Day) July 1 through Labor Day for three consecutive years, implement a reservation permit system for camping.   | <b>Rec-2.1.1.</b> Self-issue permit required for overnight camping. |
| <b>Rec-2.1.2.</b> Campsites are on a first come/first served basis.   | <b>Rec-2.1.2.</b> All boaters who wish to camp between Conant Boat Access and Byington Boat Access July 1 through Labor Day must register the day of use at Conant Boat Access or reserve campsites in advance online. A fee may be incurred in association with the permit system.<br><br>For the remainder of the year, campsites are on a first come/first served basis utilizing a self-issue permit during the following time | <b>Rec-2.1.2.</b> If a permit system is implemented, all boaters who wish to camp between Conant Boat Access and Byington Boat Access July 1 through Labor Day must register the day of use at Conant Boat Access or reserve campsites in advance online. A fee may be incurred in association with the permit system.<br><br>For the remainder of the year, campsites are on a first come/first served basis utilizing a self-issue | <b>Rec-2.1.2.</b> Campsites are on a first come/first served basis. |

| <b>Management of Designated Camping</b>                             |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>ALTERNATIVE A<br/>(Existing Management Situation)</b>            | <b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>  | <b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>   | <b>ALTERNATIVE D</b>  |
|   | periods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 1 through June 30</li> <li>• Day after Labor Day through December 31.</li> </ul>  | permit during the following time periods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 1 through June 30</li> <li>• Day after Labor Day through December 31.</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>Rec-2.1.3.</b> Campsites are on a first come/first served basis. | <b>Rec-2.1.3.</b> Group size would be determined for each site based upon site capacity, with the maximum group size limited to 15 people. Larger groups (e.g., 10 to 15 people) would be restricted to specific sites that can accommodate these groups. | <b>Rec-2.1.3.</b> If a permit system is implemented, group size would be determined for each site based upon site capacity, with the maximum group size limited to 25 people. Larger groups (e.g., 12 to 25 people) would be restricted to specific sites that can accommodate these groups. | <b>Rec-2.1.3.</b> Campsites are on a first come/first served basis. |

**Figure 16.** Designated camping locations on the South Fork of the Snake River.



## CHAPTER 3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter describes the present conditions within the proposed project area that could be affected by the alternatives. The information in this section serves as a general baseline for determining the impacts of the alternatives. Enough detail has been given to determine if implementation of any of the alternatives would cause impacts to the environment.

### 3.1 Resources Considered in the Impact Analysis

Table 1 lists the critical elements of the environment which are subject to statute, regulation, or executive order. Direct and indirect impacts on those resources that are present and impacted are discussed in the following narratives.

| <b>Table 1. Resources Considered in the Impact Analysis</b> |             |                       |                  |   |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|------------------|---|
| Resource  | Not Present | Present, Not Impacted | Present Impacted | Rationale   |
| Access  |             | X                     |                  | The alternatives would not result in changes in access to the project area.   |
| Air Quality   |             | X                     |                  | The alternatives would not result in the production of emission or particulate matter above incidental levels.                                      |
| Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC's)            |             |                       | X                | Impacts disclosed under <b>Areas of Critical Environmental Concern</b> .  |
| Cultural Resource   |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Cultural Resources</b> .   |
| Economic and Social Values                                  |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Economic and Social Values</b> .   |
| Environmental Justice                                       | X           |                       |                  | There are no minority or low income populations residing near the proposed project area.  |
| Existing and Potential Land Uses                            |             | X                     |                  | The alternatives would not affect existing or potential land uses within the area.  |
| Fisheries   |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Fisheries (Including Sensitive Fish Species)</b> .   |
| Floodplains   |             | X                     |                  | Floodplains would not be affected by the alternatives.  |
| Forest Resources  |             | X                     |                  | Forest resources would not be affected by the alternatives.   |
| Invasive, Non-Native Species                                |             | X                     |                  | Invasive, Non-Native Species would not be affected by the alternatives.   |
| Mineral Resources   |             | X                     |                  | The alternatives would have no impact on mineral resources within the area.   |
| Migratory Birds   |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Wildlife (Including Migratory Birds, Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species)</b> .                            |
| Native American Religious Concerns                          |             | X                     |                  | The alternatives would have no impact on Native American Religious Concerns within the project area.  |
| Paleontological Resources                                   | X           |                       |                  | There are no known paleontological resources located in the project area.   |
| Prime and Unique Farmlands                                  | X           |                       |                  | There are no prime or unique farmlands located within the project area.   |
| Range Resources   |             | X                     |                  | Majority of grazing ends June 1 before visitor use picks up.  |
| Recreational Use  |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Recreation</b> .   |
| Soil Resources  |             | X                     |                  | Soil resources would not be affected by the alternatives.   |
| Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plants                |             | X                     |                  | SRPs/SUPs would not be authorized within known populations of Ute ladies'-tresses orchid habitat August 1 through Labor Day (the flowering period). |
| Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Animals               |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Wildlife (Including Migratory Birds, Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species)</b> .                            |
| Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Fish                  |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Fisheries (Including Sensitive Species)</b> .  |

| <b>Table 1. Resources Considered in the Impact Analysis</b> |             |                       |                  |   |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|------------------|---|
| Resource  | Not Present | Present, Not Impacted | Present Impacted | Rationale   |
| Tribal Treaty Rights and Interests                          |             | X                     |                  | The alternatives would have no effect on the Tribes' access to use the area to exercise their treaty rights and would have no known effects on resources they use for traditional purposes. |
| Vegetation  |             | X                     |                  | No increase in campground area of impact proposed.  |
| Visual Resources  |             | X                     |                  | Visual Resources would not be affected by the alternatives.   |
| Wastes, Hazardous and Solid                                 | X           |                       |                  | There are no solid or hazardous wastes in the project area and none would be created during the implementation of the alternatives.   |
| Water Quality (Surface and Ground)                          |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Water Quality</b> .  |
| Wetlands and Riparian Areas                                 |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Wetlands and Riparian Areas</b> .  |
| Wild and Scenic Rivers                                      |             | X                     |                  | River segments determined eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not be affected by the alternatives.   |
| Wild Horse and Burro HMAs                                   | X           |                       |                  | There are no wild horse and burro HMAs in the region.   |
| Wilderness  |             | X                     |                  | Wilderness Study Areas would not be affected by the alternatives. None of the designated campsites are located on the WSA islands.  |
| Wildlife Resources  |             |                       | X                | Impacts are disclosed under <b>Wildlife (Including Migratory Birds, Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species)</b> .  |

## 3.2 Resources Present and Brought Forward for Analysis

### 3.2.1 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

The area analyzed under this EA includes the Snake River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), the Pine Creek Island Research Natural Area (RNA), the Reid Canal Island RNA, the Squaw Creek Island RNA, the North Menan Butte ACEC, and the North Menan Butte RNA.

The Snake River ACEC covers approximately 21,908 acres of BLM-managed public lands along approximately 88 miles of river and includes the South Fork of the Snake River (South Fork) from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River (Henrys Fork), the Henrys Fork from the confluence to St. Anthony, Idaho, and the main stem of the Snake River from the confluence south to Market Lake Canal below Lewisville Knolls (USDI-BLM 2008). The ACEC was designated to protect and conserve riparian–wetland habitat within the unique cottonwood ecosystem, recreation values, scenic qualities, bald eagle habitat, and other wildlife species and their habitats. The river flows through some of the most valuable terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat in Idaho (USDI-BLM 1985).

The Snake River SRMA falls within the same boundaries as the Snake River ACEC, and three RNA islands—Pine Creek Island (5 acres), Reid Canal Island (30 acres), and Squaw Creek Island (35 acres)—reside inside the boundaries of the ACEC. The Pine Creek Island RNA is designated for its botanical uniqueness, consisting of two islands located approximately one mile downstream from the mouth of Pine Creek on the South Fork of the Snake River within the Snake River ACEC. The islands are characterized by dense riparian vegetation with an overstory of middle-aged cottonwoods and an understory of forbs, grasses, and scattered shrubs, creating occasional park-like openings. The RNA is located within a bald eagle nesting territory. A foot trail has been created by fishermen who pull their boats in to fish from the banks. The shape and size of the islands changes periodically as a result of the dynamic nature of the Snake River. Although historical livestock grazing and camping have occurred on the islands, grazing is not authorized, and no camping areas are designated.

The Reid Canal Island RNA is designated for its botanical uniqueness, consisting of three islands located approximately 1.5 miles southwest of Archer, Idaho, and 2.25 miles downriver from the Sunnydell rookery on the South Fork of the Snake River within the Snake River ACEC. Reid Canal Island is the most pristine of the Island RNAs and has the least amount of human influence from livestock or recreational use. Yellow-billed cuckoos have been documented on the RNA islands (Saab 1993). Although historical livestock grazing and camping have occurred on the islands, grazing is not authorized, and no camping areas are designated.

The Squaw Creek Island RNA, designated for its botanical uniqueness, is a single island located at the mouth of Squaw Creek on the South Fork of the Snake River within the Snake River ACEC. It is a drier site than the Pine Creek and Reid Canal RNA islands. In 1993, a leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) patch was observed on the southwest side of the island. In 1995, an interagency weed team released a colony of black dot spurge flea beetles (*Apthona nigriscutis*) on the island to retard the expansion of the leafy spurge patch. Since then, black dot spurge flea beetles and brown-legged spurge flea beetles (*Apthona lacertosa*) have been released several

times on the island. In 2007, a 70–80% reduction of leafy spurge on the island and an increase in recovery of the native vegetation were noted. Although historical livestock grazing and camping have occurred on the island, grazing is not authorized, and no camping areas are designated. During low river flows when cattle can access the island from the adjoining FS grazing allotment, occasional unauthorized livestock use results in resource damage.

The USFWS has identified the ACEC as containing the highest-quality cottonwood riparian zone in the western United States (USDI-BLM 2008). This area has one of the most extensive cottonwood riparian–wetland ecosystems in North America and is one of the last well-developed ecosystems of this type in Idaho. The South Fork from Palisades Reservoir to the confluence with the Henrys Fork is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Maintaining quality habitat for wildlife that occupies the lands along the Snake River is a major concern. The extensive river banks and islands within the Snake River ACEC provide wintering habitat for bald eagles, elk, moose, mule deer, whitetail deer, and dozens of bird species. Much of the deer population remains year-round. The Snake River, particularly the South Fork, is a high-quality Yellowstone cutthroat fishery with brown, lake, and rainbow trout also present. Three special status species—Utah valvata snail (*Valvata utahensis*), Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*), and yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)—live in the Snake River ACEC.

The North Menan Butte ACEC (780 acres) is located within the boundaries of the Snake River ACEC at the confluence of the Henrys Fork of the Snake River and the South Fork of the Snake River. The area is also designated as a National Natural Landmark (NNL) with the boundaries matching those of the ACEC. North Menan Butte is an outstanding example of a glassy tuff cone, which is found in only a few places in the world. The butte began as an eruption through the saturated alluvium of the Snake River valley, and the erupted lava chilled suddenly to form basaltic glass, which then disrupted into small particles that formed a huge volcanic crater. The butte's large size and unusual composition make it particularly instructive of an unusual aspect of basaltic volcanism (Gibbons 1992).

The North Menan Butte ACEC has been excluded from livestock grazing for many years. Several radio towers are located on the rim of the butte, and agriculture is the primary land use occurring on the private lands adjacent to the butte. A long history of unauthorized OHV use has degraded portions of the butte. However, recent rehabilitation efforts include a new trailhead on the west side with barriers, gates, and interpretive signs to preclude further damage. North Menan Butte is of high scenic value and can be easily accessed by an unimproved road that connects to the paved highway north of the town of Menan, Idaho. The rim of the butte can be accessed via a series of hiking trails.

The North Menan Butte RNA (340 acres) is located within the boundaries of the North Menan Butte ACEC and was designated because of its value as a unique geologic feature within a variety of vegetation types. The dominant sagebrush/grass types include basin big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *tridentata*), black sagebrush (*Artemisia nova*), and threetip sagebrush (*Artemisia tripartita*), with an understory dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), Sandberg bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), and needle-and-thread grass (*Hesperostipa comata*).

In places, scattered Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*) combines with the basin big sagebrush and bluebunch wheatgrass to form a woodland (Caicco and Wellner 1983).

### 3.2.2 Cultural Resources

A Class I literature review was conducted to assess the effects of the proposed action and alternatives on cultural resources. The review consists of site and inventory GIS and other pertinent historic documentation.

There have been 22 previous inventories conducted within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The APE is considered to be the South Fork, Henrys Fork, Main Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. River users may use the banks to camp (designated areas only), but also to have lunch, stretch their legs, or use the restroom. These Class III inventories have been conducted within the APE between the years 1989 and 2014 (Table 2). Within the APE, approximately 932 acres have been inventoried for cultural resources.

**Table 2.** Class III Cultural Resource Inventories within the Area of Potential Effect (APE).

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Report Title</b>   | <b>Acres Inventoried</b> |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1989        | Cultural Resource Inventory, Conant Boat Ramp   | 10                       |
| 1990        | Pete Gold Land Use Permit   | 25                       |
| 1991        | Byington Boat Ramp Access Facility Upgrade  | 25                       |
| 1992        | City of Idaho Falls Upper Plant No. 1 Right-Of-Way  | 19                       |
| 1993        | Gary Rhodes Private Exchange  | 40                       |
| 1993        | Utah Power and Light Right-Of-Way   | 8                        |
| 1995        | Clark Land Exchange   | 28                       |
| 1995        | Gunderson Land Exchange   | 23                       |
| 1996        | Twin Bridges Park Recreation & Public Purposes (R&PP) Lease   | 7                        |
| 1996        | Sage Junction State/BLM Land Exchange   | 10                       |
| 1998        | Quinn Isthmus Bank Barb Right-Of-Way  | 45                       |
| 1999        | Upper Snake River/South Fork Snake River Land Exchanges   | 280                      |
| 2002        | Warm Springs Road and Parking Area and Wolf Flat Off-Highway Vehicle Barriers   | 14                       |
| 2003        | Fremont County Road Right-of-Way  | 23                       |
| 2004        | Amendment of the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Direct Sale with Conservation Easement (Blakely Land Patent) | 6                        |
| 2007        | Red Road Bridge River Access Site   | 5                        |
| 2009        | Blakely Access Road Right-Of-Way  | 1                        |
| 2009        | Wolf Flat Dispersed Camping Area Improvements   | 80                       |
| 2010        | Fisher Allotment (#05180) Grazing Permit Renewal  | 11                       |
| 2010        | Idaho Falls Power New Substation  | 14                       |
| 2010        | St. Anthony Greenway Right-Of-Way   | 12                       |
| 2010        | Twin Bridges South Channel Dredging and Material Removal Right-Of-Way   | 3                        |
| 2012        | Conant Boat Ramp Accessibility  | 1                        |
| 2012        | New Lorenzo Boat Ramp, Parking Lot, and Access Road   | 25                       |
| 2014        | 2014 Deer Parks Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) Projects   | 25                       |
|             | <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>730</b>               |

As a result of the Class I literature review, six cultural resources have been identified within the APE. Of the six cultural resources, four are Pre-Contact sites, and two are historic sites. A historic property refers to cultural resources that are listed, or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Of the six cultural resources recorded within the APE, five are recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP.

The Pre-Contact resources within the APE are described as lithic and tool scatters, possible house depressions and rock shelters. These resources are eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion D, due to the potential for intact buried deposits that could lead to a better understanding of local and regional prehistory.

The historic sites include a historic debris scatter and a homestead site. The debris scatter is not eligible for inclusion to the NRHP; however, the homestead site is eligible for inclusion on the NRHP under Criteria A, C, and D.

### **3.2.3 Recreation**

BLM's policy for Recreation and Visitor Services is based on outcomes-focused management, which is an approach to park and recreation management that focuses on the positive outcomes of engaging in recreational experiences. Outcomes are categorized as personal (e.g., learning, enjoying nature, physical), community/social (e.g., lifestyle, sense-of-place), environmental (e.g., greater stewardship, awareness, and protection of natural landscapes) or economic (e.g., increased revenue and jobs, supporting local businesses). There is a direct relationship between an individual's ability to obtain specific outcomes and the physical, social, and operational recreation setting characteristics of the recreation area.

The FS manages the South Fork in accordance with the Targhee National Forest RFP of 1997. These management areas are in alignment with the BLM's special recreation management area as described below.

#### *Snake River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)*

A SRMA is defined as an area where existing or proposed recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics (RSC) are recognized for their values, importance, and/or distinctiveness when compared to other areas used by recreationists. SRMAs are managed for the long-term and protect or enhance recreation activities, experiences, benefits, and desired RSCs.

The Snake River SRMA comprises the same boundary as the Snake River Planning Area. Throughout the Snake River SRMA, recreation activities and opportunities are very diverse and offer unique experiences and beneficial outcomes. In order to gain an understanding of recreation users' desired outcomes and how those relate to the RSCs for the Snake River Planning Area and Teton River Canyon, BLM commissioned a visitor study by the University of Idaho (Laniga and Watt, 2012). This report provided a framework both for the development of alternatives and for understanding the potential impacts of these alternatives. Desired recreation opportunities and beneficial outcomes were also derived from a 2001 South Fork of the Snake River Boaters and Campers Visitor Survey (Utah State University, 2002), results of the scoping process initiated at the beginning of the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan revision (University of Idaho, 2006), 2009 Visitor Capacity Study (Laniga and Watt, 2010a, 2010b) and

professional knowledge of the planning area. The USFO Recreation and Visitor Services program also gathers information in the form of patrol logs, daily logs, road counter data, and monitoring data, as well as through general interaction with the public.

Table 3 reflects the range of activities and reasons for why (experiences and beneficial outcomes) people recreate on public lands administered by the BLM and FS. In addition, the information provides a range of personal, community, economic, and landscape benefits that are achieved through recreating on public lands.

**Table 3.** Targeted activities, experiences and benefits for the Snake River Planning Area.

| Activities   | Experiences  | Benefits   |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing</li> <li>• Boating</li> <li>• Camping</li> <li>• Hunting</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoying the scenery or wildlife</li> <li>• Being close to nature</li> <li>• Developing one’s skills/abilities</li> <li>• Reducing mental stress</li> <li>• Being on one’s own; escaping everyday responsibilities</li> <li>• Keeping physically fit</li> <li>• Being with family and friends</li> <li>• Teaching others about the outdoors</li> <li>• Testing equipment</li> </ul> | <p><b>Personal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger ties with family/friends</li> <li>• Greater sense of adventure</li> <li>• Closer relationship with the natural world</li> <li>• Increased sense of place</li> <li>• Improved physical fitness</li> </ul> <p><b>Community/Social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of community dependence on public lands</li> <li>• Maintenance of unique recreation opportunities</li> <li>• Greater community involvement in recreation</li> <li>• Increased community involvement in public land use decisions</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of natural landscapes</li> <li>• Increased ecologically-friendly tourism operations</li> <li>• Greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features</li> <li>• Reduced wildlife harassment by recreation users</li> </ul> <p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased desirability as a place to live or retire</li> <li>• Increased local tourism revenue</li> <li>• Improved local economic stability</li> <li>• Increased local job opportunities</li> </ul> |

Visitors seek a diverse range of setting-dependent outdoor recreation opportunities. They choose to recreate in different areas based on the qualities and conditions of the area and because they desire to have distinctive recreation experiences. For example, primitive camping in a backcountry valley by a remote lake offers a different set of outcomes than camping in a highly developed campground adjacent to a manmade reservoir. Engaging in the same activity in different settings can produce different recreation outcomes.

Because of these factors, the BLM utilizes the Recreation Setting Characteristics (RSC) matrix (Appendix A) as the framework for planning, management and research and helps to clarify relationships between recreational settings, activities, experiences, and the ensuing outcomes. The RSC matrix is a conceptual framework that characterizes recreation physical (qualities of the landscape), social (qualities associated with use), and operational components (conditions created by management and controls over recreation use). Attributes of the physical component are described by the remoteness, naturalness, and the type of facilities available. Attributes of the social component focus on the number of contacts a visitor can encounter, the group size of those contacted, and how evident it is that a site has been used and altered. Attributes of the operational component address the type of access to a specific location, visitor services provided by the agency, and the type and amount of management controls provided. These components are categorized across a spectrum of classes that describe a range of qualities and conditions of a recreation setting, for example primitive to urban. Changing or maintaining the physical, social, and operational components of the recreation setting make different recreation opportunities available.

The RSC of the Snake River SRMA vary greatly as the river flows through different landscapes and communities. Due to the proximity to local communities, and the popularity of the Snake River SRMA, visitation occurs year-round with the most intense use from July 1<sup>st</sup> through Labor Day. During this intense period the social and administrative settings are very different compared to the rest of the year. The RSCs vary depending on the following five sections:

#### Palisades Dam to Conant Boat Access (15 miles)

This uppermost section of the South Fork runs through a narrow channel, then widens and flows around several island complexes and passes a waterfall upstream from the Swan Valley Bridge, where Fall Creek cascades into the river. The river is within ½ mile of both unpaved county roads and paved primary roads. The naturalness attribute for this section of river varies. The first nine miles is confined by a narrow channel and is classified as Front Country to Rural due to the proximity to a gravel road and Highway 26, private property development, utilities, and agriculture. Combined, these create a partially to considerably modified landscape. The majority of the last five miles is classified as Back to Middle Country. Modifications to the landscape in this area is generally not visually obvious or with few contrasts. An exception exists near river mile 13, where the landscape is classified as Front Country to Rural due to Highway 26 crossing the river, private land development, agriculture, and ranching.

Like naturalness, there is a wide variety in the visitor facility attribute within this section of the river. Overall, the section is classified as Front Country to Rural. The FS manages Falls Campground, Palisades Dam Boat Access, Spring Creek Boat Accesses, and the Snake River Administrative site (multiple cabins, barn, storage sheds, and corrals); the IDFG manages

Palisades Creek Boat Access; and the BLM manages Irwin Recreation Site and Conant Boat Access.

The contact attribute is classified as Back to Middle Country. During busy weekends, visitors can expect to have up to 29 encounters per day, but on an average day, visitors may encounter seven to 15 groups.

The group size attribute is classified as Front Country with up to 25 people per boating group during busy weekends. On an average day, the group size attribute is classified as primitive due to three people per boating group. The Falls Campground would be classified as Urban due to the large groups that utilized the site.

Like the naturalness attribute, the evidence of use attribute varies across this section of river. The first nine miles is classified as Front Country to Rural due to the proximity to private land development, Highway 26 and the unpaved county road. Within the last five miles of this section, areas of human alteration are small or uncommon and sounds of people are infrequent to occasionally heard. These areas are classified as Back to Middle Country. The developed recreation facilities are Front Country since visitors are congregated in these areas.

The public access attribute is classified as Middle to Front Country. Access to BLM-managed public lands in this stretch of river is primarily by foot or boat, although the entire river reach is within ½ mile of both unpaved and paved primary roads. Access to FS-managed lands is primarily by vehicle from an unpaved road that runs parallel to the river along the south bank of the river.

The visitor services attribute is classified as Front Country to Rural. BLM staff and volunteers are regularly present at Conant Boat Access and periodically at the other boat accesses within this section. Information materials are displayed at all the boat accesses and campground.

The management control attribute is classified as Rural. Regulations are strict and are clearly posted at all developed recreation facilities within this section. For example, all visitors are required to pay a fee at the boat accesses, possess and use a portable toilet, fire plan, and self-issue permit when camping within the SRMA.

#### Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access (26 miles)

The remoteness attribute is Middle Country. From Conant Boat Access, the river leaves U.S. Highway 26 and enters a scenic canyon. Vertical canyon walls hundreds of feet high flank the river, and tall cottonwood trees grow on the islands and the banks. For the first 12 miles (Conant Boat Access to Black Canyon), the BLM-managed public lands and FS-managed lands are within ½ mile of a designated motorized route (motorcycles and ATVs).

The naturalness attribute for this section varies. For the first 12 miles, the landscape is classified as Primitive to Middle Country. Numerous islands and portions of the landscape remain undisturbed natural landscapes. But there are also areas that remain primarily natural, with modifications being in harmony with the surroundings or with few modifications that contrast with the landscape. The last 14 miles are classified as Back Country to Rural due to areas that

remain primarily natural, areas that are in proximity to a gravel road with private property development, areas of agriculture, and areas modified with recreation facilities. Combined, these create a partially modified landscape.

Like naturalness, there is a wide variety in the visitor facility attribute within this section of river. The first 12 miles are classified as Back to Middle Country. The only visitor facilities within this 12 mile reach are the designated camp areas. Sixteen large camp areas are currently designated from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access. Within those 16 camp areas, there are 39 designated camp sites. On average, each camp area has three designated camp sites for visitors to use. All designated camp areas and camp sites are signed to identify where visitors are required to camp. The remainder of the river section (Black Canyon to Byington, 14 miles) is classified as Front Country to Rural and is within ½ mile of an unpaved county road. The FS manages Fullmer Boat Access, Wolf Flats Recreation Area, Kelly Island Campground, and Byington Boat Access; except for the developed recreation sites the majority of the river has no structures.

From Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access, the impressive canyon scenery attracts numerous day and overnight visitors. It is not uncommon to encounter 29 groups per day during busy weekends. But similar to the river reach from Palisades Dam to Conant Valley, an average day may provide seven encounters. Generally the contact attribute is classified as Back to Front Country. An exception would be the area around Wolf Flats, where people are generally everywhere during the busy season of use. Wolf Flats is classified as Rural.

The group size attribute is classified as Front Country with up to 25 people per boating group during busy weekends. On an average day, the group size attribute is classified as primitive due to three people per boating group. The Wolf Flats area is classified as Rural due to the large groups that utilize the site.

Like the naturalness attribute, the evidence of use attribute varies across this section of river. With the exception of the developed recreation facilities and a few locations with private land development, areas of human alteration are small or uncommon and sounds of people are infrequent to occasionally heard. These areas are classified as Back to Middle Country. The developed recreation facilities and areas of private land development are Front Country since visitors are congregated in these areas and small areas of alteration exist. The Wolf Flats area is classified as Rural since most visitors to this area are participating in OHV riding or camping, and other visitors can be heard. There are numerous designated camp sites in this area with trash associated with these campsites.

The public access attribute is classified as Middle Country for the first 12 miles. Access to BLM-managed public lands in this stretch of river is primarily by foot or boat. Access to FS-managed lands is primarily by foot, boat, or off highway vehicle (e.g., motorcycle, ATV, UTV) due to the proximity to the designated motorized trail on FS-managed lands. The remainder of the river section (Black Canyon to Byington, 14 miles) is classified as Middle Country to Rural due to the access to BLM managed public and FS-managed lands from an unpaved county road. The visitor services attribute is classified as Middle Country to Rural. BLM staff and volunteers are regularly present at Conant and Byington Boat Accesses, and Kelly Island Campground.

Staff is periodically present at Wolf Flats and Fullmer Boat Access. Staff perform river patrols from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access approximately once per week July 1<sup>st</sup> through Labor Day

The management control attribute is classified as Rural. Regulations are strict and are clearly posted at all developed recreation facilities within in this section. For example, all visitors are required to pay a fee at the boat accesses, possess and use a portable toilet and fire plan, and obtain a self-issue permit when camping within the SRMA. Information materials are displayed at all the boat accesses and campground.

#### Byington Boat Access to the confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River (21 miles)

Below Byington Boat Access the cliffs give way to a level and extremely dynamic flood plain. Although the river meanders through island complexes and is sheltered by cottonwood forests, the character of the natural landscape is primarily modified; with farmlands and levees flanking the river on both sides. This reach is within ½ mile of primary paved roads; railroads and/or highways span across the river in five locations. The naturalness attribute for this section of the river is classified as Back Country to Rural due to areas that remain primarily natural, areas that are in proximity to county roads with private property development, areas of agriculture, canal diversions and rip rap on the bank for stability and flood purposes.

The visitor facility attribute across this river section is Front Country to Rural. BLM manages the Byington and Lorenzo Boat Accesses, both of which are modern facilities with concrete boat ramps, restrooms, water and large parking areas. Madison County manages a campground and boat access in the Twin Bridges area.

This section receives less recreation use compared to the upstream sections because of the difficulty of navigation (e.g., braided channels, log jams, debris in the river, and canal diversions) and lack of scenic qualities. Visitors can expect to encounter up to 14 groups on the busiest weekends, but less than seven encounters is more common. The contact attribute for this section is Primitive to Back Country.

The group size attribute is generally Primitive to Back Country.

The evidence of use attribute is Primitive to Middle Country due to no alteration of natural terrain to small alterations. Sounds of people are rare to occasionally heard (unless adjacent to primary roads and bridges).

Access in this section is generally via foot or boat due to the limited access by land (river corridor is bound by private land). The visitor services attribute is classified as Middle to Front Country. Staff is periodically present to provide visitor services and information at Lorenzo Boat Access. Madison County manages Twin Bridges Boat Access, where county and BLM staff are occasionally present. An exception is Byington Boat Access, where staff are present regularly.

The management control attribute for this river section is Middle to Front Country due to the signage at boat accesses.

### Confluence of the Henrys Fork and South Fork to Lewisville Knolls (22 miles)

This section is the main stem of the Snake River and is within ½ mile of primary paved roads. The naturalness attribute for this section of river is classified as Front Country to Rural due to the landscape being considerably modified by agricultural fields, water diversions, levees, and private land development.

The visitor facility attribute within this zone is classified as Rural. The BLM manages Menan Boat Access, which contains a concrete boat ramp, vault toilets and signage. Jefferson County manages Mike Walker Boat Access near Roberts, ID, which has similar facilities as Menan. These two boat accesses are not as highly developed as the other facilities upstream.

The contact attribute for this river section is Primitive to Back Country. On average, visitors can expect to encounter less than three groups per day during the spring and summer. This stretch is primarily used in the fall and early winter by big game and waterfowl hunters. During this time period, visitors can expect to encounter up to 15 groups per day.

The group size attribute is classified as Primitive to Back Country. The average size is fewer than or equal to three, but during big game and waterfowl season the group size may be four to six people.

The evidence of use attribute varies greatly across the river section from Primitive to Rural. The sound of people is rare, whereas, alteration to the vegetation is common due to the agriculture that occurs within this section.

Access to BLM-managed lands is primarily by boat due to the river corridor being bound by private lands. The visitor services attribute is classified as Back to Front Country. Staff are periodically present to provide visitor services and information at Menan Boat Access. Jefferson County manages Mike Walker Boat Access, where BLM staff are occasionally present.

The management control attribute for this river section is Middle to Front Country due to the signage at boat accesses.

### Henrys Fork of the Snake River, St. Anthony to the confluence with the South Fork (approximately 21 miles)

This river section is very different than the South Fork, with less volume of water and a slow-moving river meandering through the flood plain. This reach is within ½ mile of primary roads. The railroad spans the river, and county highways cross the river in two locations. The landscape is considerably modified by agriculture, private land development, and water diversion projects. This river section also has areas of island complexes and a natural landscape with modifications in harmony with the surroundings. The naturalness attribute for this river section varies and is classified as Back Country to Rural.

Similar to naturalness, the visitor facility attribute varies within this river section. BLM administers three river access areas within this river section. Red Road Bridge Boat Access (Parker-Salem Bridge) is a modern facility with a boat ramp, a visitor information kiosk, and a restroom facility. This site is classified as Rural. Hibbard Bridge and Trestle Bridge are

undeveloped, and the BLM provides little or no visitor information or amenities to the public at these sites. The attribute for these two sites are Back Country. The IDFG and Madison County also have facilities within this river section; they are classified as Front Country to Rural.

This section receives less recreation use because of the slow moving, meandering river and the limited fishery. Visitors can expect to encounter up to 14 groups on the busiest weekends, but less than seven encounters is more common. The contact attribute for this section is Primitive to Back Country.

The group size attribute is generally Primitive, but group size is Front Country during some periods due to the use by large organizations (e.g., universities, scouts, and church groups).

The evidence of use attribute varies greatly across the river section from Primitive to Middle Rural. Sounds of people are rare to occasionally heard (unless adjacent to primary roads and bridges), whereas, alteration to the vegetation is common due to the agriculture that occurs within this section.

It is common to encounter fewer than three groups, with each group encompassing less than three people.

BLM staff are infrequently present at Red Road Bridge Boat Access.

Access to BLM-managed public lands is primarily by boat or foot, but the majority of lands within this section offer no public access due to private land ownership. The visitor services attribute is classified as Primitive to Middle Country. Staff are rarely present at Hibbard and Trestle Bridge. Staff are occasionally present to provide visitor services and information at Red Road Bridge Boat Access.

The management control attribute for this river section is classified as Primitive to Back Country.

### ***Visitation and Recreation Facilities***

The South Fork supports the largest riparian cottonwood gallery forest in the west (Merigliano 1996) and is among the most bio-diverse ecosystems in Idaho (Boccard 1980). The river also supports the largest native cutthroat trout fishery outside of Yellowstone National Park. Because of these attributes, the Snake River Planning Area, from a recreation standpoint, is a destination for regional, national, and international visitors. For example, in 1997, the World Flyfishing Championships was held on the South Fork, and every year a portion of the Jackson Hole One Fly Competition is held on the South Fork. The native cutthroat trout fishery, excellent dry fly fishing, and a seasonal salmon fly hatch draw heavy angling attention to the Snake River Planning Area. Fishermen travel from many states and abroad to fish the river. Table 4 summarizes recreation visitation at developed boat accesses along the South Fork and Main Snake River.

**Table 4.** South Fork and Main Snake River Recreation Visitation (number of people per site) for 2004-2014.

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Palisades Dam</b> | <b>Palisades Creek</b> | <b>Spring Creek</b> | <b>Conant</b> | <b>Fullmer</b> | <b>Byington</b> | <b>Twin Bridges</b> | <b>Lorenzo</b> | <b>Menan</b> | <b>Mike Walker</b> | <b>Totals</b> |
|-------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 2004        | 17,360               | 11,120                 | 52,896              | 34,650        | 9,000          | 43,225          | 20,589              | 17,607         | 9,747        | N/A                | 216,194       |
| 2005        | 15,537               | 8,070                  | 22,064              | 38,437        | 5,613          | 43,893          | 15,732              | 20,000         | 14,943       | N/A                | 184,289       |
| 2006        | 27,123               | 9,138                  | 26,320              | 32,218        | 7,911          | 46,448          | 15,255              | 27,381         | 14,943       | 5,922              | 212,659       |
| 2007        | 15,234               | 9,591                  | 28,487              | 31,476        | 8,376          | 53,557          | 4,581               | 33,672         | 15,045       | 8,499              | 208,518       |
| 2008        | 18,084               | 9,924                  | 28,091              | 29,656        | 9,204          | 53,340          | 2,859               | 23,553         | 15,045       | 6,795              | 196,551       |
| 2009        | 19,080               | 10,101                 | 27,766              | 25,890        | 9,702          | 57,008          | 3,195               | 27,225         | 15,045       | 6,795              | 201,807       |
| 2010        | 15,063               | 8,205                  | 27,444              | 28,368        | 11,568         | 34,734          | 2,889               | 25,824         | 13,641       | 7,137              | 174,873       |
| 2011        | 12,651               | 8,322                  | 20,713              | 22,862        | 7,095          | 33,502          | 3,120               | 16,290         | 15,513       | 4,605              | 144,673       |
| 2012        | 10,106               | 9,367                  | 28,321              | 32,760        | 10,290         | 45,534          | 3,717               | 40,320         | 33,801       | 6,132              | 220,348       |
| 2013        | 16,506               | 8,887                  | 27,265              | 39,093        | 7,026          | 35,878          | 3,561               | 31,040         | 17,415       | 7,345              | 194,016       |
| 2014        | 16,111               | 8,607                  | 29,163              | 48,107        | 8,118          | 42,882          | 3,910               | 27,625         | 15,516       | 6,260              | 186,299       |

The FS manages the Fall Creek campground (23 units), a large group camping area and two developed boat accesses (Palisades Dam and Spring Creek) in Swan Valley. The FS also manages the Fullmer Boat Access, approximately 14 miles downstream from Conant Boat Access. Fullmer Boat Access is accessible by boat or via the gravel E. Heise Road/Forest Service Road 206. This gravel road provides vehicle access to numerous trailheads, dispersed camping, and general recreation access to the river. The road has become more highly utilized in recent years.

BLM manages Conant, Byington, Lorenzo and Menan Boat Accesses, which are also heavily used by both outfitters and the general public. The BLM also manages Kelly Island Campground (14 units and one group area), located near Heise Hot Springs Resort and Wolf Flats Recreation Area (two vault toilets, metal fire rings and multiple designated campsites) upstream from Kelly Island Campground.

Sixteen designated camp areas exist in the South Fork Canyon (Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access). These areas are highly used July 1<sup>st</sup> through Labor Day. Visitors are required to have a portable toilet, fire pan and self-issue permit for camping in the South Fork Canyon. Table 5 identifies the camping use in the South Fork Canyon based on self-issue permits.

**Table 5.** Self-Issue Permit Statistics 1995-2014.

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Number of Permits</b> | <b>Number of People</b> | <b>Average Group Size</b> |
|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1995        | 208                      | 787                     | 3.79                      |
| 1996        | 213                      | 839                     | 3.93                      |
| 1997        | 155                      | 564                     | 3.64                      |
| 1998        | 270                      | 987                     | 3.66                      |
| 1999        | 289                      | 1,051                   | 3.63                      |
| 2000        | 325                      | 1,291                   | 3.97                      |
| 2001        | 379                      | 1,377                   | 3.63                      |
| 2002        | Data Not Available       | 1015                    | Data Not Available        |
| 2003        | 327                      | 1,350                   | 4.13                      |
| 2004        | 341                      | 1,272                   | 3.73                      |
| 2005        | 334                      | 1,286                   | 3.85                      |
| 2006        | 404                      | 1,509                   | 3.74                      |
| 2007        | 446                      | 1,808                   | 4.05                      |
| 2008        | 446                      | 1,696                   | 3.8                       |
| 2009        | 484                      | 1,703                   | 3.5                       |
| 2010        | 539                      | 1,759                   | 3.3                       |
| 2011        | 331                      | 948                     | 2.86                      |
| 2012        | 578                      | 2,090                   | 3.6                       |
| 2013        | 544                      | 1,610                   | 2.9                       |
| 2014        | 453                      | 1,827                   | 4.3                       |

Visitation along the Henrys Fork of the Snake River (Henrys Fork) is much lower than the South Fork. Due to the scouring of the river bed from the Teton Dam failure in 1976, the fishery on the lower Henrys Fork is minimal. The recreation facilities are not as highly developed along the

Henry's Fork as described in the previous section describing facilities along the South Fork and Main Snake.

**Table 6.** Henry's Fork recreation visitation for 2008-2014.

| Year | Visitor Use |
|------|-------------|
| 2008 | 2,095       |
| 2009 | 2,168       |
| 2010 | 2,305       |
| 2011 | 2,993       |
| 2012 | 3,280       |
| 2013 | 4,724       |
| 2014 | 6,619       |

### ***Fee Program***

The South Fork Fee Program was one of the original 17 demonstration projects approved by the BLM in 1996 and one of many originally approved by the FS under the Pilot Fee Demonstration Legislation. This interagency and intergovernmental approach to collecting fees within the planning area has ultimately achieved great success, creating improved internal communications between the agencies, and between the agencies and the public. The fee program now operates under the Recreation Enhancement Act Authority (Public Law 108-447 [118 Stat. 2809] 2004).

The South Fork Fee area has ten developed boat accesses (See Table 7) included in the program. Management of the 10 sites is spread between the BLM, the FS, the IDFG, and Bonneville, Jefferson, and Madison Counties. A working group, composed of a representative from each agency and county exists and is tasked with managing the basic structure and distribution of funds related to the fee system.

The strength of the interagency and county approach, however, is rooted in the process developed for utilizing the collected funds. Regardless of which jurisdictional site funds are collected from, the working group comes to consensus on where the funds will be spent within the river corridor. This approach allows all partners in the pilot fee system a voice in how the South Fork access sites are managed, regardless of ownership. Fees are collected from May 24 through September 30 each season. The working group meets once a year to determine project funding for the coming year.

**Table 7.** Fee Revenues for the South Fork 1997-2014.

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Fees Collected</b> |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1997         | \$14,001.00           |
| 1998         | \$27,960.65           |
| 1999         | \$30,469.00           |
| 2000         | \$36,401.00           |
| 2001         | \$38,278.79           |
| 2002         | \$37,991.00           |
| 2003         | \$35,457.70           |
| 2004         | \$34,391.90           |
| 2005         | \$37,348.21           |
| 2006         | \$40,492.67           |
| 2007         | \$44,697.77           |
| 2008         | \$48,862.00           |
| 2009         | \$46,156.00           |
| 2010         | \$43,026.00           |
| 2011         | \$33,248.00           |
| 2012         | \$39,688.00           |
| 2013         | \$41,566.00           |
| 2014         | \$40,619.00           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>\$377,489.69</b>   |

***Special Recreation Permits (BLM)/Special Use Permits (FS)***

Special Recreation Permit - an authorization that allows specified recreational uses of the public lands and related waters. Special recreation permits are issued as a means to manage visitor use and to protect natural and cultural resources. Following are the five major types of SRPs issued by the BLM and FS (Defined further in the Glossary):

Commercial Use (BLM)/Outfitter and Guide Permit (FS)

Commercial use means recreation use of the public lands and related waters for business or financial gain. When any person, group, or organization makes or attempts to make a profit, receive money, amortize equipment, or obtain goods or services as compensation from participants in recreation activities occurring on public lands and related waters, the use is considered commercial. An activity, service, or use is commercial if anyone collects a fee or receives other compensation that is not strictly a sharing of, or is in excess of, actual expenses incurred for the purposes of the activity, service, or use. Commercial use is also characterized by situations when a duty of care or expectation of safety is owed participants as a result of compensation. It may also be characterized by public advertising for participants.

Competitive Use (BLM)/Recreation Event Permit (FS)

Competitive use means any organized, sanctioned, or structured use, event, or activity on public lands and related waters in which one or more individuals contest an established record (e.g., speed or endurance) or in which two or more contestants compete and either of the following elements apply:

- (1) Participants register, enter, or complete an application for the event; or
- (2) A predetermined course or area is designated.

Vending

Vending is a type of commercial use defined as a temporary, short-term, nonexclusive, revocable authorization to sell goods or services on public lands and related waters in conjunction with a recreation activity or at a recreation site.

Special Area Use (BLM)/Non-Commercial Group Use Permit (FS)

Individual special recreation permits (ISRPs) may be required for individual (e.g. private, noncommercial) recreation use in Special Areas.

Organized Group Activity or Event Use (BLM)/Non-Commercial Group Use Permit (FS)

Organized group or event permits are intended for group outdoor recreation activities or events that are neither commercial nor competitive. The Authorized Officer determines when a permit is required based on planning decisions, resource concerns, potential user conflicts, or public health and safety issues. A group is defined as more than one person participating in a recreation activity or event.

The BLM and FS permit eight commercial fishing outfitters on the South Fork. The BLM permits three fishing outfitters on the Henrys Fork and five fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon. Outfitters and guides are governed by State of Idaho statutes and rules and federal permit stipulations (identified in Alternative A). Table 8 displays the total visitation per year related to fishing outfitters for the South Fork and the Henrys Fork.

**Table 8.** South Fork and Henrys Fork Commercial Outfitted Use.

| <b>Total Visitation</b> |                        |                                    |                        |                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                         | <b>South Fork</b>      |                                    | <b>Henrys Fork</b>     |                                    |
| <b>Year</b>             | <b>Number of Boats</b> | <b>Number of Clients and Guide</b> | <b>Number of Boats</b> | <b>Number of Clients and Guide</b> |
| <b>2008</b>             | 4,037                  | 12,370                             | 40                     | 108                                |
| <b>2009</b>             | 4,185                  | 12,056                             | 62                     | 175                                |
| <b>2010</b>             | 4,811                  | 14,434                             | 40                     | 113                                |
| <b>2011</b>             | 3,276                  | 10,221                             | 42                     | 117                                |
| <b>2012</b>             | 4,706                  | 13,954                             | 57                     | 167                                |
| <b>2013</b>             | 4,671                  | 12,695                             | 55                     | 158                                |
| <b>2014</b>             | 4,576                  | 15,048                             | 66                     | 192                                |

Compared to visitation by non-outfitted public, commercial outfitted use is 8-12% (7.59 % during the summer of 2014 and 11.59% during the salmon fly hatch of 2014) of the total use on the South Fork.

The BLM and FS receive requests (e.g., National Outdoor Leadership School, BYU- Idaho, City of Rexburg) for SRPs and SUPs for commercial (e.g., commercial activities that do not require

an IOGLB license), group and competitive activities. These requests are dealt with on a case-by-case basis each year.

### *Teton River Canyon*

Currently, access to the Teton River Canyon and its recreational opportunities is limited. Additionally, there are no developed recreation sites, only informal sites that are minimally maintained. The visitation that does take place, primarily occurs in the spring and summer. As such, recreation activity and use levels are generally considered low, although several commercial outfitters do operate fishing/floating trips in the Teton River Canyon. This section provides a general discussion of these recreation and public use related topics including recreation sites and use areas, primary activities and use levels, and outfitter/guide use within the Teton River Canyon.

The RSCs of the Teton River Canyon do not vary like the Snake River SRMA. The following section describes the RSCs for the Teton River Canyon, the description is for one segment (Felt Dam to the Teton Dam site).

The remoteness attribute is Primitive, with the exception of several access points (e.g. Felt Dam, Spring Hollow, private accesses Linderman and Parkinson, and the old dam site), which could be attributed to front country. These locations provide limited motorized access to the river's edge. The remainder of the river sections lies within a scenic canyon that eliminates opportunities for motorized access. Vertical canyon walls 300 to 500 feet high flank the river and tall cottonwood trees grow on the islands and the banks. The surrounding landscape is administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation.

The naturalness attribute for this section is primarily Primitive, with the exception of the few access points. Due to the canyon's inaccessibility and remoteness, the majority of the river remains as an undisturbed natural landscape.

There are relatively few visitor facilities attributes within this section of river. Facilities include Felt Dam, Spring Hollow, and the old dam site. These facilities primarily provide access to the river and are classified as Primitive.

Due to inaccessibility, contacts attribute rests at a Primitive classification.

Group size average is 3 people.

The evidence of use attribute is largely Primitive. Low use keeps sounds at a minimum and minimal alteration of natural terrain occurs at boat access sites, leaving the landscape largely unaltered. There are private water developments (i.e., concrete structures, water pumps and pipes) and private accesses (i.e., Linderman and Parkinson) within the river corridor. These areas have large areas of alteration and surface vegetation is absent. The old dam site also has large areas of alteration. These areas are classified as Rural.

Public access attribute is to Primitive. Due the steep canyon walls, there are no designated trails, and visitor use is primarily by boat.

The visitor services attribute is classified as Primitive. BLM staff and volunteers are rarely present at access sites and on-site information is not available.

The management control attribute is classified as Primitive. There are few use restrictions and no on site postings or interpretive displays.

### Recreation Sites and Use Areas

Planned recreational development at the time of the Teton Dam construction consisted of day use, campground, and boat launch facilities, as well as improved public access to the Teton River Canyon. All planned recreation development would have been jointly financed by the BOR and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR). Boat ramps at Spring Hollow River Access and Teton Dam Take-Out Sites were the only developed recreation facilities that were completed prior to failure of the dam in 1976. These boat ramps now serve as portions of the access roads to the river.

Currently, there are no developed recreation sites in the Teton River Canyon, although several sites are used as recreation and public use areas. These areas consist primarily of user-defined parking areas, boat launches/take-outs, and river bank access trails, as well as other visitor-created facilities (e.g., fire pits). These recreation sites and public use areas are only minimally maintained and include the following:

- Harrop Bridge Boat Access—Located on the Teton River off of SR 33, this site can be used to access the Teton River Canyon by boat. The site is co-managed by the IDFG and the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and provides a gravel boat launch, a vault toilet, and a gravel parking area for approximately 8 to 10 vehicles.
- Felt Power Plant—Located on Power Plant Road, this site provides pedestrian access to the river immediately downstream of the Felt Dam. A gravel parking area for approximately five to six vehicles is located along the canyon rim with pedestrian access via a hydroelectric project-related road to the river.
- Bitch Creek Access—Located just downstream of the Teton River and the Bitch Creek confluence, this site has a small undefined parking area for approximately five to six vehicles and is located near the canyon rim on BLM-managed lands.
- Spring Hollow River Access Site—This site is located on the Teton River four miles downstream of the confluence with Bitch Creek. A paved boat ramp and dirt, user-defined road provides vehicular access to the river at this site. This river bank use area consists of a small parking area for approximately three to four vehicles, a vehicle turnaround area, an informal boat launch, and at least one identified fire pit.
- Upper Teton Dam Site Access and Take-Out Site—Located about one mile upstream of the old dam site, this site can be accessed via a steep road off of Teton Dam Road. This site consists of a small parking area and an unimproved boat take-out.
- Teton Dam Site Access and Take-Out Site—This site is located immediately above the old dam and is accessed via the remnants of a paved boat ramp that was installed during dam

construction. The site consists of several small parking areas, dispersed camping areas, user-defined river access trails, and multiple unimproved boat take-outs.

- In addition to these sites, several identified dispersed day use and camping areas are scattered along the river and are used by boaters.

#### Primary Activities and Use Levels

Prior to construction of the Teton dam, the Teton River fishery was categorized by IDFG as one of the finest in the state. The river provided opportunities for sport fishing primarily by float trip during the summer, although access to the river canyon was limited because of the steep canyon walls and lack of public roads to the canyon rim. No developed public recreation facilities were available in the river canyon prior to dam construction. The dam, resulting reservoir, and planned developed recreation facilities would have improved access to the area and created opportunities for flatwater related recreation activities. It was estimated by the National Park Service (NPS) and IDPR that recreation development along the Teton Reservoir would initially result in approximately 85,000 recreation days on an annual basis and rise to nearly 200,000 recreation days on an annual basis 40 years after construction of the dam. With the failure of the dam and its resulting impacts, recreation development and opportunities have been limited in the Teton River Canyon.

Because of the lack of developed recreation facilities and difficulty associated with accessing the river, the Teton River Canyon offers a relatively primitive recreation setting in which to pursue several recreation activities. Currently, the primary recreation activities in the canyon are fishing, whitewater boating, wildlife observation, hunting, sightseeing, picnicking, and camping, among others.

While specific visitor monitoring has not been completed in the Teton River Canyon, professional observations and outfitter post-use reports indicate that recreational use within the area is low, with the majority of use occurring during the summer months. In general, the river canyon receives low levels of recreational use because of its remoteness and inaccessibility, while the canyon rim receives even less use because of private lands and lack of recreation facilities. As such, the physical capacity of the Teton River Canyon is likely low (that is, the area could accommodate much higher levels of use in terms of visitors per acre without these limitations). Without access and recreation site improvements, physical capacity will likely not become an issue in the near future (10 to 15 years).

#### Commercial Outfitter Special Recreation Permits (SRPs)

The BLM, in cooperation with the BOR, has issued five commercial outfitter SRPs for guided fishing that occurs on the river on both BLM- and BOR-managed lands and related waters. The permits allow guided float fishing trips on the river from Harrop Bridge Boat Access to the confluence of the Teton River and Henrys Fork of the Snake River. Table 9 lists the total visitations per year related to fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon. Use reports provided by the outfitters indicate that use is trending higher over the past four years.

**Table 9.** Teton River Canyon Commercial Outfitted Use.

| <b>Total Visitation</b>   |                 |                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Teton River Canyon</b> |                 |                   |
|                           | Number of Boats | Clients and Guide |
| <b>2008</b>               | 155             | 464               |
| <b>2009</b>               | 184             | 548               |
| <b>2010</b>               | 125             | 357               |
| <b>2011</b>               | 202             | 605               |
| <b>2012</b>               | 189             | 565               |
| <b>2013</b>               | 215             | 639               |
| <b>2014</b>               | 227             | 681               |

### **3.2.4 Water Quality**

The area for this analysis covers the river corridors contained within four subbasins: Lower Henrys (Hydrologic Unit Code, HUC# 17040203); Palisades (HUC# 17040104); Idaho Falls (HUC# 17040201) and Teton (HUC# 17040204). From the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) 2012 Integrated Report ([www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)), the only water quality-impaired stream by a pollutant is the Teton River. The South Fork of the Snake River, the Main Snake River to Idaho Falls, and the Lower Henrys Fork are not water quality-impaired by a pollutant. Three reaches of the South Fork of the Snake River, however, are not supporting their beneficial uses due to flow alteration.

Designated beneficial uses for the South Fork are cold water aquatic life, salmonid spawning, primary contact recreation, and domestic water supply. In addition, in the Palisades Subbasin the South Fork is also a special resource water, and in the Idaho Falls Subbasin the South Fork is also designated for agricultural water supply. The designated beneficial uses for the Henrys Fork are cold water aquatic life, salmonid spawning, primary and secondary contact recreation, domestic water supply, agricultural water supply, and a special resource water. The designated beneficial uses for the Teton River are cold water aquatic life, salmonid spawning, primary contact recreation, drinking water supply, and a special resource water.

In general, water quality is fairly high in the South Fork. When IDEQ assessed the South Fork through the large river protocol, it was essentially found to be a reference site, a least-disturbed site. For example, the Palisades Subbasin of the South Fork has no non-point discharge elimination system (NPDES) permits for point sources. There are no confined animal feedlot operations (CAFO's) nor industrial pollution sources on this reach. Past United States Geological Survey (USGS) water quality data show sample data within state water quality standards. From IDEQ's TMDL Report, any impacts to water quality in the Palisades Subbasin

are mainly caused by flow alteration, roads and trails, recreation, and livestock grazing in riparian areas, contributing fine sediment.

The Lower Henrys Fork, with the sediment deposits remaining from the 1976 Teton Dam failure, appears to continue to show fine sediment impacts along this lower reach. The primary causes for the Teton River being water quality-impaired are nitrate-nitrogen, total phosphorus, and sediment.

### **3.2.5 Wetlands and Riparian Areas**

#### South Fork of the Snake River

Approximately 79 miles of the South Fork of the Snake River flows through federally managed lands within the planning area. The South Fork has one of the most extensive cottonwood riparian-wetland ecosystems in North America. This cottonwood forest is one of the last well-developed ecosystems of this type in Idaho. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has identified this area as the highest quality cottonwood riparian zone in the western United States. The dense and diversified vegetative community is dominated by narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*), box elder (*Acer negundo*), willow (*Salix* spp.), red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), silverberry (*Elaeagnus commutata*), and western serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*).

Two studies have been conducted along the South Fork that have aided federal agencies in managing the planning area (Merigliano, 1996 and 2005). These studies were instrumental in inventorying the cottonwood riparian-wetland system, determining the present age class, and other associated ecological implications from the 1956 Palisades Dam construction and subsequent flow releases. The studies also offered management recommendations on how best to augment what remains of the historical floodplain.

Merigliano's first study (1996) determined that, as a result of the Palisades Dam, the current floodplain area is much smaller than its pre-dam size, and that the cottonwood forest area is shrinking and becoming older. "Although very extensive, ninety five percent of today's cottonwood forest is a legacy of pre-dam, natural conditions." Later he states, "The South Fork's potential for new cottonwoods has changed since the construction of Palisades Dam. The river is less dynamic now because of flood control" (Merigliano, 1996).

Merigliano's second study (2005) determined that erosion and deposition of the flood plain during the 1997 flood far exceeded all other years since closure of Palisades Dam in 1956, and it even exceeded many pre-dam floods. The resulting sediment deposition timed with seed dispersal increased the amount and distribution of cottonwood recruitment, resulting in a slightly improved age class distribution (Merigliano, 2005).

Sediment retention in Palisades Reservoir, combined with erosive floods, would likely cause net channel erosion, as increased average channel width or down-cutting of the bed occur. Width changes have been negligible, but some (0.3 feet) downcutting has occurred at the Irwin and

Heise gaging stations. The channel at Irwin is not expected to recover, but by 2004, mean bed elevations at Heise were nearly recovered (Merigliano, 2005).

Camping in the designated sites within the canyon reach from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access has resulted in encroachment beyond the boundaries of some of the designated sites. This has occurred primarily as a result of camping by large groups that exceed the capacity of certain camp sites. Trampling, soil compaction, and physical removal of trees and shrubs from this encroachment has resulted in introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced overall vigor of some areas.

#### Henry's Fork of the Snake River

Approximately 19 miles of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River flow through BLM-managed lands within the planning area, making up about 1900 acres of riparian-wetland vegetation. The Lower Henry's Fork is regulated by four upstream dams (Henry's Lake, Island Park, Grassy Lake and Ashton Dams) and several irrigation diversions. The Lower Henry's Fork below the Teton River confluence was extensively changed during the June 6, 1976 Teton Dam failure (Randle et al, 2000). This lower channel was over-widened and deepened in places, with tons of fine sediment deposited in the floodplain, resembling a wider, pooled, and slow moving river compared to before the dam failure.

Major riparian-wetland species occurring along the Henry's Fork include willow, red-osier dogwood, narrowleaf cottonwood, box elder, quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), common chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), mountain alder (*Alnus incana*), black hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*), common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), Woods rose (*Rosa woodsii*), Rocky Mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*), sedge (*Carex* spp.), rush (*Juncus* spp.), and sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.).

#### Main Snake River

Approximately 29 miles of the Main Snake River flow through BLM-managed lands between the confluence of the South Fork with the Henry's Fork and Gem State Power Plant, making up about 695 acres of riparian-wetland vegetation. The Main Snake River begins as a highly meandering, braided channel within a dense cottonwood/willow forest, slowly changing to a single-channel river with higher banks, and more shrubs than trees. Agricultural development adjacent to the river banks has increasingly become the land use trend, particularly at the downstream end of the reach.

The dominant riparian-wetland vegetation along the Main Snake River is made up of willow, red-osier dogwood, narrowleaf cottonwood, box elder, silverberry, and common snowberry. Alluvial sediment bar development is naturally limited along the lower 14 miles of the BLM-managed reaches, and this limits the potential for cottonwoods to establish along this reach of the river.

### Teton River Canyon

Approximately nine miles of the Teton River flow through BLM-managed lands between Harrop Bridge and the confluence with the Henrys Fork, comprising approximately 46 acres of riparian-wetland vegetation. All BLM-managed lands in the Teton River Canyon are upstream of the Teton Dam site. On June 5, 1976, the newly constructed Teton Dam structure failed within days of initial filling, resulting in significant physical and biological changes in the Teton River Canyon. The rapid draining of the reservoir resulted in numerous landslides and habitat loss. The canyon walls were sloughed and pools and gravel/sediment dams were created across the river. Riparian communities were eliminated during the filling and subsequent emptying of Teton Reservoir. Early attempts to stabilize landslides near the river included extensive seeding of reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinaceae*). This species now dominates the herbaceous understory along much of the length of the Teton River Canyon (USDI-BOR 2006).

Major riparian-wetland communities occurring in the Teton River Canyon include a Rocky Mountain juniper/red-osier dogwood habitat type (HT), a Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)/red-osier dogwood HT, a reed canarygrass HT, a beaked sedge (*Carex utriculata*) HT, a narrowleaf cottonwood/red-osier dogwood community type (CT), a red-osier dogwood CT, a coyote willow (*Salix exigua*) CT, a yellow willow (*Salix lutea*) CT, and a geyer willow (*Salix geyeriana*)/beaked sedge HT. In the riparian and floodplain areas along the river, woody vegetation such as willow, red-osier dogwood, and cottonwood are recovering very slowly (Saban 2005).

### **3.2.6 Fisheries (Including Sensitive Fish Species)**

The diverse cold water fishery in the Henrys and South Forks of the Snake River and the Teton River is a biologically and economically valuable resource. The native species found in the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon include Yellowstone cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki bouvieri*), mountain whitefish (*Prosopium williamsoni*), Utah chub (*Gila atraria*), Utah sucker (*Catostomus ardens*), mountain sucker (*Catostomus platyrhynchus*), longnosed dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*), speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osulus*), redbelly shiner (*Richardsonius balteatus*), mottled sculpin (*Cottus bairdi*), and Paiute sculpin (*Cottus beldingi*). Introduced species include rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), and in the South Fork, lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*).

The Snake River is an internationally recognized trout fishery. Around this fishery a substantial outfitter and guiding industry has developed. Between the general fishing public use and the outfitted use on the river, a high demand has been put on the fishery resource. The primary species sought after by anglers are the native Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YCT), rainbow trout, and brown trout. Also of interest to anglers are native mountain whitefish and lake trout. In a study done by Loomis (2005) it was estimated that from May to September of 2004, 87% of the total visitor days on the Henrys Fork and 82 % on the South Fork were anglers. Out of the total angler visitor days on the South Fork, about half were fishermen targeting YCT. The Teton River is also a recognized fishery, but not to the extent of the Snake River.

YCT is a BLM special status species, a FS sensitive species and a State of Idaho species of special concern. In August 1998, a group of conservation groups filed a petition with the

USFWS to list the YCT under the Endangered Species Act. The USFWS determined in February 2006, based on their review, that YCT did not warrant listing under the ESA. This finding was partly determined due to states with YCT management plans in place.

Some taxonomists such as Robert Behnke recognize the “fine-spotted” cutthroat trout (*O. clarkii* subsp.) of the upper Snake River as a separate subspecies of cutthroat trout (Behnke 1988). The distribution of the fine-spotted morphotype overlaps that of the large-spotted form of YCT, which is an unusual occurrence since all other cutthroat trout subspecies are geographically isolated from each other. Because of the overlap in taxonomic characters and the occasional specimen with intermediate spotting, Behnke (1988) suggests that hybridization and limited gene flow do occur. The fine spotted form is primarily found above Palisades Reservoir. Below Palisades Dam downstream to Shoshone Falls, the large-spotted YCT is the native trout. Genetic differentiation between large-spotted YCT and the fine-spotted forms so far has not been possible. (Loudenslager and Kitchin, 1979; Leary et al., 1987; Allendorf and Leary, 1988; Mitton et al., 2006 in review; Novak et al., 2005). Until and if the question of subspeciation is addressed, the IDFG considers the fine-spotted form a unique morphotype of YCT and manages it accordingly.

YCT inhabit relatively clear, cold streams, rivers, and lakes. Optimal temperatures have been reported to be from 4° C to 15° C, with occupied waters ranging from 0° C to 27° C (Gresswell, 1995). YCT typically spawn in spring and early summer after flows have declined from their seasonal peak and tend to select sites with suitable substrate (gravel less than 85 mm in diameter), water depth (9-30 cm), and water velocity (16-60 cm/s) (Varley and Gresswell, 1988; Byorth, 1990; Thurow and King, 1994). Water temperature determines the time to hatching and emergence of fry. After emergence, fry immediately begin feeding, typically in nearby stream margin habitats, but they may also undertake migrations to other waters (Gresswell, 1995). Juvenile fish require three or more years to mature. Spawning fish tend to be from 200 to over 600 mm long and weigh from 0.1 to 5 kg (Thurow et al., 1988). Fish may live as long as 11 years (Gresswell, 1995).

There are three primary life history patterns: resident, fluvial, and adfluvial (Gresswell, 1995). Resident fish occupy home ranges entirely within relatively short reaches of streams. This may be the dominant strategy in headwater streams, particularly those isolated from other waters by barriers. Fluvial fish migrate as adults from larger streams or rivers to smaller streams to reproduce. The resulting fry migrate to the larger waters one to three years after emergence. This is the life stage that is found within the South Fork and Henrys Fork. Populations of YCT in basins providing a diversity of habitats have evolved variations of all these strategies (Gresswell et al., 1994, 1997); individuals with different strategies may use the same habitats and even interbreed (cf. Jonsson, 1985).

Movement in cutthroat trout may also be associated with temporal habitat changes. At low water temperatures in winter, fry (and probably juvenile) YCT entered spaces in the stream bottom during the day, and emerged from them at night (Griffith and Smith, 1993). Larger cutthroat trout may also shift habitats from fall to winter as water temperature declines and anchor and shelf ice develop (Brown and Mackay, 1995; Jakober et al., 1998). YCT probably undergo

localized movements associated with changes in habitat or food availability in other seasons (cf. Young, 1996; Young et al., 1997, 1998).

The tributaries to the South Fork are particularly important to YCT because they provide spawning areas for both the resident fluvial life forms of the species. A research project utilizing radio telemetry to describe where and when rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and rainbow cutthroat hybrids are spawning indicated rainbow and hybrid trout primarily use mainstem side channel habitat for spawning while YCT use both mainstem side channel and tributary habitat (Henderson, 1999; Henderson et al., 2000). Following these results, an intensive tributary management program was implemented to preserve the genetic integrity of YCT spawning in Burns Creek, Pine Creek, Rainey Creek, and Palisades Creek. Permanent tributary weir and trapping facilities now allow IDFG personnel to block escapement of rainbow and hybrid spawners and allow passage of nearly genetically pure YCT spawners.

The goals of the Management Plan for the Conservation of YCT in Idaho are:

1. Ensure the long-term persistence of the subspecies within its current range in Idaho;
2. Manage YCT populations at levels capable of providing angling opportunities;
3. Restore YCT to those parts of its historical range in Idaho where practical.

The Teton River, and the Henrys and South Forks of the Snake River and their tributaries make up the major part of the Upper Snake Geographic Management Unit (GMU), one of four GMU's developed range wide for the conservation and management of YCT.

Potential threats to YCT not listed in any particular order include genetic introgression with rainbow trout; impoundments, water diversion, road culverts, improper livestock grazing, mineral extraction, angling, and competition with nonnative species. Whirling disease has been identified as a more recent potential threat.

Most of the area addressed in this EA is in good riparian-wetland condition and does not show adverse grazing impacts as they pertain to fisheries. In those areas where the riparian-wetland condition is not properly functioning, it is primarily due to water management and not grazing.

The introduction and subsequent spread of non-native trout has been one of the greatest threats to the status of YCT since stocking in YCT habitats first began over 100 years ago. Competition, predation, and hybridization from other salmonids including rainbow, brook and brown trout, as well as genetically compromised cutthroat, continue to pose a threat to the expansion and conservation of YCT. In the 2007 Status report (May et al., 2007) 105 miles of occupied habitat (6% of occupied habitats) were identified as having the potential of being hybridized due to the presence, or past stocking, of hybridizing nonnative species or subspecies.

Two strategies to decrease the threat of competition from and hybridization with rainbow trout in the South Fork are being tested. One is to release a larger discharge of water from Palisades Dam during the spawning of rainbow trout to try to flush fish and eggs downstream prior to YCT spawning. In a study by Moller and Van Kirk (2003) it was shown that flood peak releases of water from Palisades Reservoir that would mimic a more natural hydrograph would not impact irrigation storage and delivery responsibilities of the dam. It is hoped that these releases would

benefit the YCT because their spawning takes place later in the year (May through June as opposed to March through early May for rainbow trout), and in river tributaries as opposed to the main channel of the river. The other strategy is to allow fishing on the South Fork for rainbow yearlong without any limit while keeping all YCT fishing catch and release. This regulation was put into effect in 2004. In 2003 the composition of total catch of rainbow trout was 14%; in 2005 it was 13%. In 2003 the composition of total harvest of rainbow trout was 56%; in 2005 it was 71%. The cumulative harvest rate for rainbow trout on the South Fork has increased from 5,070 fish in 2003 to 6,718 fish in 2005.

Another limiting factor to fisheries in the both the Henrys Fork and South Fork are depleted flows. Flow regulation has caused decreased flows on the lower Henrys Fork during the summer irrigation season and decreased winter flows and increased summer flows on the South Fork. The fishery of the Henrys Fork and the Main Snake below the confluence with the South Fork along with Teton River below the dam site was severely degraded by the failure of the Teton Dam in 1976. Sediment deposition in the stretches of river below where the flood water reached the Henrys Fork has changed the stream bottom to one of shifting sand and silt. This type of stream bottom has reduced the capability of the Teton, Henrys and the Main Snake Rivers to maintain healthy fish populations.

The Teton River below the Teton Dam suffered extensive damage to the fisheries and riparian areas downstream of the dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River during and after the dam failure in June of 1976. Upstream of the dam, prior to filling the Teton Reservoir, 17 miles of woody and riparian areas within the canyon were cleared to prepare for the reservoir filling. Following the dam failure, landslides within this area further impacted the wetlands, riparian, and aquatic conditions, as well as to those species dependent on these habitats (Randle et al. 2000).

The fisheries within the Teton River, also continue to be impacted by habitat degradation, disease, and competition hybridization with non-natives (Van Kirk and Jenkins 2005). Habitats continue to be impacted by tributary passage barriers created by irrigation diversions as well as the altered hydrologic regime created from the withdrawal of water for irrigation in the upper subbasin and the influx of diverted water from other drainages within the lower end of the subbasin (Van Kirk and Jenkins 2005). Whirling disease has been known within the Teton River since the mid-1990s. Competition with introduced brook and rainbow trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis* and *Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and hybridization with rainbow trout are likely contributors to the decline of native YCT populations (Van Kirk and Jenkins 2005).

### **3.2.7 Wildlife (Including Migratory Birds, Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species)**

There are four species identified by the USFWS as endangered, threatened, proposed and/or candidate under the ESA that occur within the analysis area. The threatened Canada Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), Gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) which is considered to be an experimental-nonessential population south of I-90 in Idaho (USDI-FWS, 1994), and is currently in a recovery status (USDI-FWS, 2008), the Grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) and the Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) (YBCU), recently listed as a threatened species (USDI-FWS, 2014a).

### *Gray Wolf (Experimental nonessential population)*

Wolves in Idaho south of I-90 are listed as "experimental, non-essential," under Section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act (USDI-FWS, 1994). The Northern Rocky Mountain Population of gray wolf encompasses the eastern third of Washington and Oregon, a small part of north-central Utah and all of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. This portion of the population has been removed from the List of Threatened and Endangered Species effective March 28, 2008 (USDI-FWS, 2008). More than 700 wolves are present through-out the state of Idaho with greater than 25 breeding pairs. Recent reports indicate there is a pair of reproducing gray wolves becoming established in upper Fall Creek which runs into the South Fork. As of January 2008, one male was taken by Animal Depredation Control for domestic sheep depredation, and the pup that was with the female is now missing. Another gray wolf is running with the female. This group is not classified as an official wolf pack or official pair by the USFWS, because it does not meet the "pack" qualification. This wolf group has yet to be documented in the river corridor, but other observations have been reported near the river over the past several years. Potential wolf prey species within the river corridor include rabbits, voles, mice, birds, small mammals and big game.

### *Canada Lynx (Threatened)*

Lynx are highly mobile and have large home ranges from 12 to 83 square miles, and individuals can regularly travel more than 62 miles and are documented to go up to 680 miles. There are no lynx denning sites documented in or near the river corridor or on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, but have been on the adjacent Bridger-Teton National Forest. Snowshoe hare is a primary prey comprising 35 to 97 percent of the diet and conifer forests are important habitat for hare. Lynx survival depends on a hare density of 1.2 hares per acre. A confirmed lynx was seen about 10 miles from the river in 1999, but a subsequent three year lynx hair-snare study in the adjacent Big Hole Mountains found no lynx hair. The closest lynx hair sample collected during the FS study was on the west side of the Teton Mountains about 30 miles northeast on the Teton Basin Ranger District. No lynx tracks have been found on any FS furbearer transects in the Palisades Ranger District. The nearest critical habitat from the scope of this document is approximately 15 miles near the Alpine Junction. Specific management goals can be found in the Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy (Interagency Lynx Biology Team 2013). Canada lynx is a Management Indicator Species for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, but there is no critical habitat on the forest.

### *Grizzly bear (Threatened)*

On April 30, 2007 (50 CFR Part 17, 2007) the USFWS established the Yellowstone grizzly bear distinct population segment (DPS) and determined they had reached recovery goals and they were removed from the list of Threatened and Endangered Species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. However, on September 21, 2009 the delisting of the grizzly bear was vacated and they were returned the list of Threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (USDI-FWS 2009).

In October 2009, at the Yellowstone Grizzly Coordinating Committee meeting, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (IGBST) estimated the current Yellowstone grizzly DPS at 579 bears. All recovery targets for grizzly bears are still being met and the IGBST has requested the judge to alter the original decision. The management alternatives within this EA are compliant with the Conservation Strategy and is outside the recovery zone of USFWS delineated occupied and suitable areas.

#### *Yellow-billed Cuckoo (Threatened)*

The western Yellow-billed Cuckoo (YBCU) is a secretive, difficult to detect, neotropical migrant that formally bred in riparian regions throughout the western United States (Hughes 1999). Historically, cuckoos are thought to have been fairly common although few early records exist (Gaines and Laymon 1984). However, over the last 100 years, wide-spread loss of their preferred cottonwood/willow habitat has resulted in the extirpation of the YBCU from most of its historic range in the west (including British Columbia and Washington) (Laymon and Halterman 1987, Hughes 1999). YBCUs still occupy small areas of California, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming, occur sporadically in Oregon (Marshall et al. 2003), and have very sparse populations in Idaho (Taylor 2000) and Nevada (Halterman 2001).

The Western Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of the YBCU was listed as a threatened species on October 2, 2014 (50 CFR Part 17, 2014). Critical habitat was proposed on August 15, 2014 (50 CFR Part 17, 2014), with a final determination expected sometime in 2015. The YBCU was historically considered a rare-breeder with the majority of sightings occurring in the Upper Snake River Basin. Breeding habitat of YBCUs in the west consists of a minimum of five acres of riparian habitat typically comprised of mature cottonwoods with a dense willow understory. The most important documented breeding habitat in Idaho for YBCU exists primarily on BLM lands administered by the Upper Snake Field Office and adjacent private lands (Reynolds and Hinckley 2005). Specifically, Reynolds and Hinckley (2005) identify the South Fork of the Snake River between Heise and the Lorenzo Bridge and the Main stem of the Snake River upstream of American Falls and at Deer Parks Wildlife Mitigation Unit (WMU) between Blackfoot and American Falls Reservoir as “the stronghold for YBCU in Idaho”. Surveys conducted from 2010-2012 recorded 17 positive detections within the Snake River Planning Area (Cavallaro 2011). Although no nests were located, surveyors observed presence of cuckoo in these areas. At present, there is no approved Conservation Strategy for YBCUs. However, recommendations to avoid potential negative impacts on cuckoos discussed in this document were developed during Section 7 consultation with USFWS (Englestead 2015).

#### *Sensitive Species*

Many wildlife species within the Snake River Planning Area are considered species of conservation concern by the BLM, FS, and IDFG. A list of these species and their status can be found in Appendix B. Lists of sensitive species tend to be dynamic as their status changes based on population size, range extent, area of occupancy, trend, threats, vulnerability, environmental specificity, and other considerations. This document does not address management of each of these species specifically, but agencies continue to monitor their populations and habitat

conditions to maintain their viability. One sensitive species is featured here, the bald eagle, because of its prominence in the river corridor.

### *Bald Eagle*

The Snake River provides very important nesting and wintering habitat for the restoration and maintenance of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem bald eagle population as well as the Idaho bald eagle population. When the original Snake River Activity/Operations Plan was written in 1991, bald eagles were listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended. Delisting goals have been met, and the bald eagle was removed from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife on August 8, 2007. However, the BLM and FS would continue to manage them per the specific management plan for bald eagle habitat developed by the Greater Yellowstone Bald Eagle Group, whose responsibility is to recommend management actions to protect and enhance bald eagle habitat to aid in the recovery of the species. Bald eagle is a Management Indicator Species for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.

In 1991, there were eight active bald eagle nests on the South Fork below Palisades Dam and three on the Main Snake and Henrys Fork. Currently there are 21 active nests on the South Fork between Palisades Dam and the Henrys Fork confluence, three on the Henrys Fork below St. Anthony, and three on the Main Snake. This comprises thirteen percent of the active nests in Idaho. The majority of nests are located in large cottonwood trees along sections of the river while a few are found in large, above stand Douglas fir trees. The Snake River Planning Area continues to be an important bald eagle management area in Idaho as 64 % of nests produced young in 2012. Detailed discussion and data presentation of bald eagle productivity can be found in the 2012 Annual Productivity Report (Whitfield 2012).

The specific management plan for bald eagle habitat discussed in this document was developed by the Greater Yellowstone Bald Eagle Working Group (1996). Specific restrictions and mitigation for this proposed action was adopted from the 2008 Snake River Activity/Operations Plan (USDI-BLM 2008; USDA-FS 2008).

### *General Wildlife*

Towering cliffs, islands, free-flowing water, cottonwood galleries, Douglas fir, quaking aspen, and juniper/sage-brush vegetation and mountains provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Mammals that use the analysis area include elk (*Cervus elaphus*), white tail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), moose (*Alces alces*), black bear (*Ursus americanus*), mountain lion (*Puma concolor*), badger (*Taxidea taxus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), otter (*Lontra canadensis*), mink (*Mustela vison*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*), mountain cottontail (*Sylvilagus nuttalli*), hares (*Leporidae* family), American pika (*Ochotona princeps*), marmot (*Marmota flaviventris*), red squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*), northern flying squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*), common porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*), and mice and voles (*Zapodidae* and *Muridae* families). Elk are a Management Indicator Species for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Waterfowl species such as Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*), mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), blue-winged teals (*Anas discors*), green-winged teals (*Anas crecca*) and cinnamon teals (*Anas cyanoptera*), common mergansers

(*Mergus merganser*), and wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*) are found nesting on islands and along the river's edge.

Migratory songbirds such as warblers, vireos, buntings, flycatchers, gnatcatchers, sparrows, swallows, thrushes, and wrens use the planning area for their breeding and nesting sites. Avian game species found include ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), and ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), gray partridge (*Perdix perdix*), and wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*). Along with the nesting and perching habitat and fish in the river, the previously named species provide a prey base that draws many raptors to the river including Cooper's (*Accipiter cooperii*), sharp-shinned (*Accipiter striatus*), red-tailed (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and Swainson's hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*), and American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*). Additionally, a variety of owls such as great-horned (*Bubo virginianus*), flammulated owl (*Otus flammeolus*) (Management Indicator Species for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest), pygmy (*Glaucidium gnoma*), saw-whet (*Aegolius acadicus*), long-eared (*Asio otus*) and short-eared (*Asio flammeus*) call the planning area home. Golden (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), as well as turkey vultures (*Cathartes aura*) osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) can be seen soaring above the cliffs, perched in trees or foraging along the river. Woodpeckers, sapsuckers, and flickers are Management Indicator Species for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Portions of the analysis area are recognized as important winter range habitat for a number of these animals. (See Targhee National Forest RFP and Medicine Lodge RMP for more information).

The South Fork, Henrys Fork, Main Snake and Teton River, including adjacent mountain ranges, have a potential of 156 nesting species of birds. The most productive habitat for species diversity is the cottonwood type.

### *Big Game*

The analysis area and adjacent lands provide crucial yearlong habitat to white-tailed deer and moose, and crucial winter habitat to mule deer and elk. Juniper shrubs and basin big sagebrush above the river provide thermal cover as well as shelter and protection from predators. Along the river, riparian-wetland habitat provides cover and browse. Winter ranges play a disproportionate role in maintaining ungulate populations as they ensure a significant proportion of the breeding population survives to the following year and is in good enough condition to produce a healthy new crop of young. Human activity within and adjacent to key wintering areas adds stress and increases energy drain for animals. They may be forced to move about more than normal and even relocate to less favorable habitat (ASRD Fish and Wildlife Division, 2000). Critical winter range within the Snake River Planning Area consists of southwest facing slopes that receive more sun and less snow accumulation. Valleys provide protection from high winds.

Generally, elk stay in the canyon during the early spring green-up and then move to the mountains for the summer. Some elk remain near the confluence throughout the year. Mule deer are found along the north side of the South Fork during the winter with a few remaining in the corridor throughout the year. The BLM, FS, and IDFG continue to work closely together to

ensure habitat requirements for big game are being met and to reduce disturbance during the critical winter season.

### *Heron Rookeries*

Great blue herons are considered common in most riparian-wetland environments such as wet meadows, river and lake edges, swamps, marshes, and ditches. They are colonial nesters and use a variety of deciduous and evergreen trees, bushes, and artificial structures as nesting sites. They are considered an indicator species for the presence of mature-aged cottonwood stands that also provide nesting habitat for eagles. Great blue herons are known to be sensitive to disturbance by human activities and the size and location of nesting sites, called rookeries, may vary based on human activities in the area.

### *Bats*

Bats are an important component of forest, desert, and rangeland ecosystems due to their roles in controlling insects and pollination. Forty-five species of bats are known to occur in the United States, with 14 occurring in Idaho.

Surveys were conducted, using a variety of acoustical and trapping methods, during the summer of 2005 to determine species diversity, sex and reproductive status of bats in the analysis area. Acoustical surveys identified 11 species of bats, of which two, Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) and spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*), are Federal Species of Concern and another, fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*) is an Idaho Species of Concern. Trapping identified seven species of bats. The big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) was detected most often via acoustical surveys while the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) was captured most frequently. Males were captured four times more frequently than females and adults were captured nearly eight times more often than juveniles. Twenty-eight females from six species were captured, of which 21 exhibited signs of reproductive activity. The species diversity and reproductive status underline the importance of the analysis area to bats in eastern Idaho.

### **3.2.8 Economic and Social Values**

Careful management of the Snake River Planning Area has supported traditional economies related to irrigated agriculture, hydropower generation, and a robust recreation economy for several generations. Angling, boating, outfitted fishing trips, and other river-related recreation activities are an important economic driver in the Upper Snake River region. According to a 2005 study, fishing, boating, and other river recreation activities yields an annual economic value of \$31.8 million along the Snake River corridor in Southeastern Idaho. The recreation and economic benefits of fishing and other recreation activities to participants also translates to \$40.9 million in local community income in the form of jobs and consumer spending (Loomis 2005).

In 2005, consumer spending related to fishing, boating, and general recreation on the South Fork and the Henrys Fork provided 1,214 jobs, resulting in an annual income of \$41.8 million. For every 1000 angler days on the Henrys Fork and South Fork, 10.4 jobs were supported. The net economic value of fishing to anglers was \$90 per angler day on the Henrys Fork and \$75 per

angler day on the South Fork, for an annual total of \$29.7 million. The net economic value of boating to visitors was \$64 per day on the Henrys Fork and \$135 per day on the South Fork, for an annual total of \$2 million. Average visitor spending per trip for anglers was approximately \$600 per day, while the average for non-anglers was approximately \$450 per day; this included expenditures for food, camping, supplies, equipment, lodging, fees, and transportation (Loomis 2005). The values presented from Loomis' 2005 study include portions of the upper Henrys Fork that are outside the scope of this EA, and they don't include the Main Snake River or the Teton River Canyon. However, this study provides the most current data available; for purposes of analysis, the values from the study were extrapolated across all of the river segments analyzed in this EA.

The BLM and FS permit eight fishing outfitters and one waterfowl outfitter on the South Fork, four fishing outfitters on the Henrys Fork, and five fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon. These outfitters employ a total of 230 guides. From 2008 to 2014, an average of 8,645 clients per year hired fishing outfitters to guide them on trips down the South Fork. Similarly, a yearly average of 95 clients on the Henrys Fork and 366 clients on the Teton River hired fishing outfitters. Using the average visitor spending of \$600 per day from the 2005 study (Loomis 2005), expenditures for these trips injected \$5,463,600 each of the seven years into the local economy.

The economic importance of fishing and other recreational activities along rivers in the analysis area emphasize the importance of maintaining riparian-wetland habitat, fisheries habitat, water quality, and river flows, among other factors. Additionally, maintaining recreation use levels within an acceptable range (for example, low perceived/actual crowding, and limited ecological impacts) is also important for the long-term economic viability of tourism and recreation in the region.

## **CHAPTER 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

This chapter presents an analysis of the direct and indirect impacts likely to result from the implementation of the alternatives.

### **4.1 Assumptions and Clarifications**

To aid the specialists prepare the environmental consequences section, there were several assumptions made and a reasonable foreseeable scenario developed. This would guide the identification of impacts by resource and provide a better understanding of the scope of the impacts. The analysis is based on the following assumptions:

1. Recreation use within the Snake River Planning Area has stabilized within the last ten years. The visitation at the boat accesses along the South Fork range between 174,000 to 220,000 visitors per year (except for 2011, visitor use was low due to natural conditions of the river). Recreation use along the Teton River Canyon is limited due to limited access, and the area is not as well known.

2. Recreation use associated with the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon will continue and is expected to contribute to the local economy.
3. It is expected that the demand for recreation will continue to increase and new or unforeseen forms of recreation that are not an issue today may evolve into major recreation issues (e.g., mountain biking, ATVs, and paddle boards have evolved into major recreation activities).
4. The public and communities want recreation opportunities on public and forest lands and realize benefits from these opportunities.
5. Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) and Special Use Permits (SUPs) are based on public demand and will continue to be authorized to provide and manage recreation opportunities on public land.
6. Recreation use will place more demand on resources such as riparian areas, vegetation and wildlife habitat.
7. As the population of the area increases so will the potential to develop private land along the river. When the private land becomes developed and riparian vegetation is removed, especially cottonwoods, federal land will become more critical for the long term survival of bald eagles and other nongame and game species in the analysis area.
8. As more use occurs between Swan Valley and Heise, it can be expected that more recreation use will occur on the lower stretch of the South Fork, on the Main Snake, and Henrys Fork.
9. Outfitting services will continue to be in demand. As a result, agencies will see an increase in illegal outfitter occurrences. This type of activity is difficult for the federal agencies and IOGLB to monitor.
10. Even though a good diverse riparian complex is maintained, the increased number of users may displace nongame and game species, especially in the lower stretches of the South Fork.
11. The likelihood of a user fee(s) to increase or be required year-round would increase as public demand for additional management and services increases beyond agency funding capabilities.
12. Flows controlled by releases at Palisades Reservoir affect all the resources along the South Fork from the Dam to the confluence. These effects are not known, they may have substantial impacts on the survival of existing cottonwood stands and limit future cottonwood recruitment.

## **4.2 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

### **4.2.1 Alternative A – No Action**

Although the North Menan Butte ACEC and RNA are located within the area analyzed under this EA, they are not located directly on the river, and would not be impacted by any of the actions proposed. Therefore, they will not be discussed further. All references to the Snake River ACEC include the Pine Creek Island, Reid Canal Island, and Squaw Creek Island RNAs.

Under Alternative A, no change to the existing management of SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would occur on the South Fork, Main Snake, or Henrys Fork of the Snake River within the Snake River ACEC. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 70 more total boats per day compared to Alternative B, 18 fewer boats than Alternative C, and 218 fewer boats compared to Alternative D. No federal permits for outfitted fishing would be issued on the Main Snake River within the analysis area, whereas Alternatives B, C, and D would issue three federal permits.

Non-outfitted uses within the Snake River ACEC may include SRPs/SUPs for commercial, competitive, and organized groups. In addition, vending SRPs/SUPs may be authorized on the South Fork. There would be no limit on the total number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued, and maximum group size limits would be set on a case-by-case basis. Organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented under this alternative. Unlike Alternatives B and C, this alternative would not include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat).

Outfitted and non-outfitted uses under Alternative A provide many opportunities for SRP/SUP activities and camping to occur within the Snake River ACEC. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur compared to all other alternatives as a result of the lack of limitations, particularly on non-outfitted SRPs/SUPs. This equates to more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time in the Snake River ACEC. Impacts on relevant and important values (RIVs) within the ACEC (primarily recreation, scenic, riparian-wetland, and wildlife values) would result from boaters and campers entering the river banks. Alternative A would potentially result in less protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs compared to Alternatives B and C. Compared to Alternative D, outfitted fishing SRPs/SUPs would result in more protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs, but the lack of restrictions for non-outfitted uses would potentially result in less protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs.

#### **4.2.2 Alternative B**

Although the North Menan Butte ACEC and RNA are located within the area analyzed under this EA, they are not located directly on the river, and would not be impacted by any of the actions proposed. Therefore, they will not be discussed further. All references to the Snake River ACEC include the Pine Creek Island, Reid Canal Island, and Squaw Creek Island RNAs.

Under Alternative B, numerous restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would be implemented on the river reaches within the Snake River ACEC. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 70 fewer total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 88 fewer boats than Alternative C, and 288 fewer boats compared to Alternative D.

Unlike Alternatives A, C, and D, commercial and competitive SRPs/SUPs for non-outfitted uses would not be authorized on any of the Snake River reaches. Organized groups would require a permit for groups greater than 15 people, with a maximum group size of 25. The potential usage

from organized groups would be lower compared to Alternatives A, C, and D, all of which would allow larger group sizes.

Implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be required in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. The threshold would likely be reached at a slower speed compared to Alternative C, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based on daily boat launch numbers from July 1 through Labor Day, factoring in weekdays (less busy) with weekends and holidays (periods of highest usage). Overall, Alternative B would have the most restrictions related to non-outfitted uses compared to all other alternatives.

Under Alternative B, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day. A maximum group size limit would be set at 15 people. Groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. All designated camping sites in the canyon reach are located within riparian-wetland areas. Although impacts from trampling, soil compaction, and vegetation removal within each designated site would continue, these restrictions would eliminate encroachment into undisturbed areas beyond the boundaries of each site. The smaller group size limit and the immediacy of implementing a reservation permit system would result in greater protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs compared to Alternative C, which would allow larger group sizes. Similarly, protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs would be higher compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not implement a reservation permit system for camping and would allow larger group sizes.

This alternative would include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). This restriction would result in more protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not include this special condition/stipulation for SRP/SUP activities. Impacts to RIVs would be the same as Alternative C.

The combination of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses within the Snake River ACEC would result in the fewest number of daily boat launches and the fewest impacts from designated camping compared to Alternatives A, C, and D. Fewer people would be entering the river banks or encroaching on undisturbed areas, thus protecting, maintaining, or enhancing RIVs to a greater extent compared to Alternatives A, C, and D.

### **4.2.3 Alternative C**

Although the North Menan Butte ACEC and RNA are located within the area analyzed under this EA, they are not located directly on the river, and would not be impacted by any of the actions proposed. Therefore, they will not be discussed further. All references to the Snake River ACEC include the Pine Creek Island, Reid Canal Island, and Squaw Creek Island RNAs.

Under Alternative C, restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would be implemented on the river reaches within the Snake River ACEC. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would

allow 18 more total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 88 more boats than Alternative B, and 200 fewer boats compared to Alternative D.

Unlike Alternative B, non-outfitted commercial and competitive events would be authorized under SRPs/SUPs on the Snake River reaches. A total of 100 commercial trips per year would potentially be authorized with a maximum group size of 15 people. This would include up to 60 trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis between Byington Boat Access and Menan Boat Access) and 20 trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. A total of nine competitive trips per year would potentially be authorized, including five trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis below Byington) and two trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. The total number of commercial and competitive events would exceed the number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternative B (not allowed), but would be less than Alternative D (180 commercial trips; 14 competitive trips). It would also potentially be less compared to Alternative A, which would issue permits on a case-by-case basis.

Organized groups would require a permit for groups greater than 20 people on the South Fork (maximum group size of 30 people) and greater than 25 people on the Main Snake and Henrys Fork (maximum group size of 30 people). This potential usage would exceed organized group SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternative B, which would allow smaller maximum group sizes (25 people on Snake River segments). However, potential usage would be less than Alternatives A and D, which would issue permits for organized groups on a case-by-case basis.

As in Alternative B, implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be considered in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. The threshold would likely be reached more rapidly compared to Alternative B, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based solely on daily boat launch numbers on weekends and holidays from July 1 through Labor Day, the period when the South Fork receives the highest usage. Overall, Alternative C would have fewer restrictions related to non-outfitted uses compared to Alternative B, but more compared to Alternatives A and D.

Under Alternative C, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. A maximum group size limit would be set at 25 people. As in Alternative B, groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. All designated camping sites in the canyon reach are located within riparian-wetland areas. Although impacts from trampling, soil compaction, and vegetation removal within each designated site would continue, these restrictions would eliminate encroachment into undisturbed areas beyond the boundaries of each site. The larger group size limit and the delay in implementing a reservation permit system would result in less protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs compared to Alternative B. However, protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs impacts would be higher compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not implement a reservation permit system for camping.

As in Alternative B, this alternative would include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). This restriction would result in more protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not include this special condition/stipulation for SRP/SUP activities.

The combination of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses within the Snake River ACEC would result in fewer daily boat launches and fewer impacts from designated camping compared to Alternatives A and D. As a result, fewer people would be entering the river banks or encroaching on undisturbed areas, thus protecting, maintaining, or enhancing RIVs to a greater extent compared to Alternatives A and D. However, Alternative C has fewer restrictions compared to Alternative B, thus potentially resulting in more boating and camping usage, and less protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs.

#### **4.2.4 Alternative D**

Although the North Menan Butte ACEC and RNA are located within the area analyzed under this EA, they are not located directly on the river, and would not be impacted by any of the actions proposed. Therefore, they will not be discussed further. All references to the Snake River ACEC include the Pine Creek Island, Reid Canal Island, and Squaw Creek Island RNAs.

Under Alternative D, restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs would be implemented on the river reaches within the Snake River ACEC. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 218 more total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 288 more boats than Alternative B, and 200 more boats compared to Alternative C.

Non-outfitted commercial and competitive events would be authorized under SRPs/SUPs within the Snake River ACEC. A total of 180 commercial trips per year would potentially be authorized with a maximum group size of 25 people. This would include up to 120 trips on the South Fork above the Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis between Byington Boat Access and Menan Boat Access) and 30 trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. A total of 14 competitive trips per year would potentially be authorized, including 10 trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis below Byington) and two trips each on the Main Snake and Henrys Fork. The numbers of potential commercial and competitive events would exceed the number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B (not allowed) and C (100 commercial trips; nine competitive trips), but would potentially be less compared to Alternative A, which would issue permits on a case-by-case basis.

Organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis on the Snake River reaches, and a maximum group size would not be established. This potential usage would exceed organized group SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B and C, which would set maximum group sizes. Impacts would be similar to Alternative A.

Unlike Alternatives B and C, special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork in the canyon reach from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented, nor would a reservation permit system for designated camping in the

canyon reach be implemented. Similarly, unlike Alternatives B and C, this alternative would not include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat).

The lack of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses under Alternative D provides many opportunities for SRP/SUP activities and camping to occur within the Snake River ACEC. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur compared to Alternatives B and C. This equates to more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time in the Snake River ACEC. As a result, impacts to relevant and important RIVs within the ACEC would result from boaters and campers entering the river banks. The lack of restrictions under Alternative D would potentially result in less protection, maintenance or enhancement of RIVs compared to Alternatives B and C. Compared to Alternative A, outfitted fishing SRPs/SUPs would result in less protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs, but restrictions on non-outfitted uses would potentially result in more protection, maintenance, or enhancement of RIVs.

### **4.3 Cultural Resources**

#### **4.3.1 Alternative A – No Action**

The lack of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses under Alternative A provides many opportunities for activities on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon to exceed their capacity to accommodate these uses. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur compared to all other alternatives. This equates to more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time in areas along the river that may contain cultural resources. As a result, impacts to cultural resources may include reduced vegetative cover, erosion, and exposure of cultural resources to visitors along these rivers.

The lack of restrictions may indirectly impact cultural resources by destabilizing the soils and increasing the risk of erosion. Erosion can cause the movement of artifacts from their horizontal or vertical context. Furthermore, reduced vegetation cover can increase the risk of vandalism and unauthorized collection of cultural resources by increasing the visibility of sites. These types of impacts can alter resource integrity and the eligibility status of historic properties. The lack of restrictions under Alternative A would potentially result in more impacts to cultural resources compared to Alternatives B, C, and D.

#### **4.3.2 Alternative B**

The combination of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses on the four river segments would result in the fewest number of daily boat launches and the fewest impacts from designated camping compared to Alternatives A, C, and D. Fewer people would be entering the areas on the river banks that may contain cultural resources. As a result, cultural resources would have less exposure and risk of vandalism or unauthorized collection, as well as a decrease in the threat of erosion, which can alter resource integrity and the eligibility status of historic properties.

### **4.3.3 Alternative C**

The impacts to cultural resources are similar to those presented in Alternative B. However, Alternative C has fewer restrictions compared to Alternative B, thus potentially resulting in more boating and camping usage, and higher impacts to river banks. The protection of cultural resources along these river segments would be higher compared to Alternatives A and D, but lower compared to Alternative B.

### **4.3.4 Alternative D**

Similar to Alternative A, there is a lack of restrictions for outfitter and non-outfitter uses on the four river segments. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur compared to Alternatives B and C. This equates to more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time on the river banks where there may be cultural resources. The lack of restrictions may indirectly impact cultural resources by destabilizing the soils and increasing the risk of erosion. Erosion can cause the movement of artifacts from their horizontal or vertical context. Furthermore, reduced vegetation cover can increase the risk of vandalism and unauthorized collection of cultural resources by increasing the visibility of sites. These types of impacts can alter resource integrity and the eligibility status of historic properties.

The lack of restrictions under Alternative D would potentially result in more impacts to cultural resources compared to Alternatives B and C, but less than Alternative A.

## **4.4 Recreation**

### **Methodology**

In order to gain an understanding of recreation users' desired outcomes and how those relate to the RSCs for the Snake River Planning and Teton River Canyon, BLM commissioned a Visitor Recreation Study (Laninga and Watt, 2012) and a Visitor Capacity Study (Laninga and Watt, 2010a, 2010b) by the University of Idaho. These studies provided a framework both for the development of alternatives and for understanding the potential impacts of these alternatives. The USFO Recreation and Visitor Services program also gathers information in the form of patrol logs, daily logs, road counter data, and monitoring data, as well as through general interaction with the public. All of this information was considered to determine potential impacts. In addition, professional observation and judgment were used to determine potential impacts.

Impacts are described in terms of quantity and quality as they relate to impacts associated with recreation opportunities, which include recreation activities, the RSCs, and recreation outcomes (experiences and benefits) realized from participation in recreation activities.

### **4.4.1 Alternative A – No Action**

Under Alternative A, no change to the existing management of SRPs/SUPs for commercial outfitters would occur on the South Fork, Main Snake, Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Under Alternative A, there are discrepancies or inconsistencies between

federal permit stipulations and State of Idaho statutes. For example, there are eight federal permits and 11 state licenses. Currently the additional holders of the three state licenses are unable to exercise the license opportunities due to federal permit limits. The state licenses are identified for float boat or power boat use. The Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB) has provided guidance to help clarify the difference between boats, but confusion still exists. The State of Idaho statutes also identify sections of river where outfitters can operate with specific rules related to each section. These sections do not correspond with the actual location of boat accesses. Under this alternative these discrepancies would not be clarified, making it difficult for the federal agencies and IOGLB to manage the permits/state licenses consistently. At the same time it causes confusion with the outfitters, as well as, the general public.

Commercial outfitters on the Teton River Canyon would not have a limitation on daily boat launches. This provides opportunities for recreation for those who utilize outfitters, yet at the same time there would be more interaction between outfitters and the general public. Federal permits for commercial outfitting would not be issued on the Main Snake within the analysis area, whereas Alternatives B, C, and D would issue three federal permits.

Commercial outfitted boats under this alternative would be 58 fewer than Alternative C and 278 fewer compared to Alternative D, yet 38 more total boats compared to Alternative B. Under Alternative A, there would be less interaction between commercial outfitted boats and general public boats compared to Alternatives C and D.

Non-outfitted uses may include SRPs/SUPs for commercial, competitive, vending and organized groups. There would be no limit on the total number of SRPs/SUPs for these uses that may be issued. Another consideration is that maximum group size limits and whether to permit organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented under this alternative. Under this alternative, there is a lack of restrictions and more opportunities for recreation provided by SRP/SUP activities. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches and this equates to more people on the river compared to all other alternatives as a result of the lack of limitations on non-outfitted SRPs/SUPs. This would create more opportunities for recreation and could enhance satisfaction in recreation experiences and outcomes. For example, more visitors are able to experience natural landscapes, while at the same time, enjoy the closeness of friends and family. This experience may result in better mental and physical health. With these additional opportunities for recreation, there is also a high likelihood that there would be more interactions at the boat accesses and on the river between visitors. For some visitors, recreation experiences and outcomes may be diminished. These visitors may not be able to escape from crowds of people, which may cause increased mental anxiety.

Under Alternative A, a reservation permit system for camping would not be implemented. Based on comments from the Visitor Capacity Study (Laninga and Watt 2010b), some visitors enjoy the freedom of first come/first served overnight camping. The lack of restrictions would provide opportunities for recreation and allow visitors to experience a greater sense of independence.

Some visitors support a reservation system in order to avoid rushing to a designated site. Having a reserved site would enable them to enjoy the float which may improve satisfaction in recreation experiences and outcomes.

#### **4.4.2 Alternative B**

Under Alternative B, numerous restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs for commercial outfitters would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. River sections on each river would be clarified. The number of boats would be reduced compared to Alternatives A, C and D; and the number of federal permits would be reduced compared to Alternatives A, C and D on the South Fork, Henrys Fork and Teton River Canyon. Waterfowl and big game hunting would not be federally permitted on the South Fork and Main Snake. Three fishing outfitters on the Main Snake would be permitted under this alternative. Commercial outfitter SRPs/SUPs would allow 38 fewer total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 96 fewer boats than Alternative C, and 316 fewer boats compared to Alternative D.

Commercial outfitters provide a recreation opportunity for a segment of the recreating public that do not have the technical skills (e.g., boating, fishing), knowledge (e.g., river hazards, river segments, geographic area), and/or ability (e.g., boats, fishing equipment, vehicle) to recreate on public and forest lands within the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon. Commercial outfitters provide a recreation opportunity to a segment of the public, enabling them to gain satisfying experiences (e.g., developing skills and abilities, enjoying participating in outdoor events, enjoying easy access to natural landscapes) and outcomes (e.g., improved outdoor recreation skills, a more outdoor-oriented lifestyle, greater sense of adventure). Under Alternative B, commercial outfitters would provide fewer trips on the river corridors. The fewer commercial outfitted trips would impact the outfitted public's opportunity for recreation and resulting experiences and outcomes.

Based on comments from the Visitor Capacity Study (Laninga and Watt 2010b), some visitors would like to see a reduction in commercial outfitters as identified in Alternative B. For these visitors, their recreation experience may be enhanced by the reduction. Overall, Alternative B would have the most restrictions and/or reductions related to commercial outfitters compared to all other alternatives

Unlike Alternatives A, C, and D, commercial, vending and competitive SRPs/SUPs for non-outfitted uses would not be authorized on any of the Snake River reaches or the Teton River Canyon. Under Alternative B, recreationists that like to participate in these types of uses would not be permitted, potentially diminishing satisfaction in recreation experiences (e.g., enjoying learning outdoor skills, testing endurance, enjoying strenuous physical exercise) and outcomes (e.g., improved teamwork and cooperation, more balanced competitive spirit, increased local job opportunities).

An SRP/SUP would be required for groups greater than 15 people, with a maximum group size of 25. The potential usage from organized groups would be lower compared to Alternatives A, C, and D, all of which would allow larger group sizes (Alternatives A and D do not have

restrictions related to group size). Identifying a group size limit would maintain the existing social recreation setting characteristic, specifically the contacts and group size attributes. This requirement would be beneficial for a visitor that would like more solitude, less crowding and would like to see large groups restricted (Laninga and Watt 2010b). Opportunities for recreation for some visitors would be limited, and thereby potentially diminish satisfaction in recreation experiences (e.g., relishing group affiliation and togetherness, enjoying participation in group outdoor events) and outcomes (e.g., greater family bonding, improved group cooperation). Some comments from the Visitor Capacity Study do not support restrictions or regulations.

Under Alternative B, a special condition and stipulation on SRPs/SUPs would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). This restriction would limit opportunities for recreation and thereby potentially diminish satisfaction in recreation experiences (e.g., enjoying easy access to natural landscapes) and outcomes. This restriction could also create an enhanced awareness and understanding of nature for some recreationists. The restriction may have a limited impact on opportunities for recreation due to how visitors recreate on the river. For example, most visitors would not have the need or desire to permanently alter habitat on the river. There would be less impacts to recreation in Alternatives A and D (which would not include this special condition/stipulation for SRP/SUP activities), compared to this alternative. Impacts to recreation would be the same as Alternative C.

Implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be required in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. The threshold would likely be reached at a slower speed compared to Alternative C, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based on daily boat launch numbers from July 1 through Labor Day, factoring in weekdays (less busy) with weekends and holidays (periods of highest usage). Some comments in the Visitor Capacity Study (Laninga and Watt 2010b) were not supportive of a permit system for daily individual boating use. Specifically, "...do not implement a permit system, just be courteous –there is no reason to limit any one type of vessel" (2009, p19). The visitors like the freedom to utilize the river corridor with no restrictions related to boat limits. Some visitors would lose the opportunity to float the canyon reach during certain periods of the year. For these visitors, this alternative would limit opportunities for recreation and thereby potentially diminish satisfaction in recreation experiences (e.g., enjoying access to close-to-home outdoor amenities, enjoying ability to frequently participate in desired activities in preferred settings, knowing that things are not going to change much) and outcomes (e.g., enhanced sense of personal freedom, improved sense of control over one's life). Other comments were supportive (e.g., "more people will come-may have to limit boats, I would like to see an allotment system... to limit the number of users on the river, the only way to limit conflicts would be to limit users by a permit system", p. 18, 2009) of a permit system during the peak season. For these visitors, this alternative would ensure more solitude and less crowding. Alternative B would provide a different type of opportunity for these visitors and would enhance satisfaction in recreation experiences and outcomes.

Overall, Alternative B would have the most restrictions related to non-outfitted SRPs/SUPs compared to all other alternatives.

Under Alternative B, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day. A maximum group size limit would be set at 15 people. Groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. Some comments in the Visitor Capacity Study (Laniga and Watt 2010b) were not supportive of this option. Specifically, the visitors like the freedom of camping on a first come/first serve basis. This alternative would limit opportunities for recreation and thereby potentially diminish satisfaction in recreation experiences (e.g., experiences a greater sense of independence, being in control of things that happen) and outcomes (e.g., greater self-reliance, enhanced sense of personal freedom). Other comments were supportive of a reservation system during the peak season. This would ensure that a campsite was available. Alternative B would provide a different type of opportunity for these visitors and would enhance satisfaction in recreation experiences and outcomes.

#### **4.4.3 Alternative C**

Under Alternative C, numerous regulations related to SRPs/SUPs for commercial outfitters would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Commercial outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 58 more total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 96 more boats than Alternative B, and 220 fewer boats compared to Alternative D. Fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon would not have a limitation on daily boat launches under Alternative A, so the actual number of daily boat launches for this river segment has the potential to be higher under Alternative A compared to Alternative C.

This would have the same impacts as described for Alternative B for commercial outfitters. Overall, Alternative C would have a slight increase in the number of commercial outfitted boats compared to Alternative A. This is due to permitting waterfowl hunting outfitters and outfitters on the Main Snake.

Unlike Alternative B, commercial, vending and competitive SRPs/SUPs for non-outfitted uses would be authorized on the Snake River reaches and Teton River Canyon. However, under this alternative, competitive events would not be permitted on the Teton River Canyon. Under Alternative C, recreationists that like to participate in these types of uses would be permitted, potentially enhancing satisfaction in recreation experiences (e.g., enjoying learning outdoor skills, testing endurance, enjoying strenuous physical exercise) and outcomes (e.g., improved teamwork and cooperation, more balanced competitive spirit, increased local job opportunities). Some comments in the Visitor Capacity Study (Laniga and Watt 2010b) were not supportive of issuing a permit for these types of SRPs/SUPs. For example, “I oppose all commercial or competitive activities, no competitive use should be allowed” (Laniga and Watt 2010b, p. 43). Some commented on the acceptability of these types of permits if they were issued in specific sections or times of year. For these visitors, this alternative would potentially diminish satisfaction in recreation experiences and outcomes.

An SRP/SUP would be required for groups greater than 20 people, with a maximum group size of 30 people. The potential usage from organized groups would be slightly higher compared to Alternative B, although Alternatives A and D do not have restrictions related to group size.

Impacts from identifying a group size limit would be similar to impacts described for Alternative B.

Under Alternative C, a special condition and stipulation on SRPs/SUPs would not allow prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). Impacts from this restriction would be the same as described for Alternative B.

As in Alternative B, implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be considered in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. The threshold would likely be reached more rapidly compared to Alternative B, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based solely on daily boat launch numbers on weekends and holidays from July 1 through Labor Day, the period when the South Fork receives the highest usage. This would have the same impacts as described for Alternative B.

Overall, Alternative C would have fewer restrictions related to non-outfitted uses compared to Alternative B, but more compared to Alternatives A and D.

Under Alternative C, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. A maximum group size limit would be set at 25 people. As in Alternative B, groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. Impacts would be the same as described for Alternative B.

#### **4.4.4 Alternative D**

Under Alternative D, numerous regulations related to SRPs/SUPs for commercial outfitters would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Commercial outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 278 more total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 316 more boats than Alternative B, and 220 more boats compared to Alternative C. Fishing outfitters on the Teton River Canyon would not have a limitation on daily boat launches under Alternative A, so the actual number of daily boat launches for this river segment has the potential to be higher under Alternative A compared to Alternative D. The large increase in commercial outfitted boats, under this alternative, is due to the additional boats from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access. The additional boats would enable the guides to by-pass the vehicle shuttle to Fullmer Boat Access. Under this alternative, some commercial outfitted boats would fish in Section B (Conant Boat Access to Fullmer Boat Access) and some would motor through Section B to start fishing in Section C (Fullmer Boat Access to Byington Boat Access). This opportunity has the potential to enhance the overall experiences and outcomes of the outfitted public.

Overall, there would be similar impacts as described for Alternative B for commercial outfitters. Alternative D provides the most recreation opportunities to the outfitted public and thereby potentially enhancing satisfaction in recreation experiences and outcomes.

Commercial, vending and competitive SRPs/SUPs for non-outfitted uses would be authorized on the Snake River reaches and Teton River Canyon. A total of 180 commercial trips per year would potentially be authorized with a maximum group size of 25 people. This would include up to 120 trips on the South Fork above the Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis between Byington Boat Access and Menan Boat Access) and 30 trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. A total of 14 competitive trips per year would potentially be authorized, including 10 trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis below Byington) and two trips each on the Main Snake and Henrys Fork. The numbers of potential commercial and competitive events would exceed the number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B (not allowed) and C (100 commercial trips; nine competitive trips), but would potentially be less compared to Alternative A, which would issue permits on a case-by-case basis. There would be the same impacts as describe for Alternative C.

Organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis in the Snake River reaches and the Teton River Canyon, and a maximum group size would not be established. This potential usage would exceed organized group SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B and C, which would set maximum group sizes. Impacts would be similar to Alternative A.

Unlike Alternatives B and C, special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork in the canyon reach from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented, nor would a reservation permit system for designated camping in the canyon reach be implemented. Similarly, unlike Alternatives B and C, this alternative would not include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). Under Alternative D, impacts would be the same as described for Alternative A.

#### **4.5 Water Quality**

##### **4.5.1 Alternative A – No Action**

This alternative would have an estimated minor, immeasurable impact to water quality from fine sediment due to trampled or eroded banks from larger group activities, approved on a case-by-case basis. Assuming some of these activities were taking place at or near the water's edge, it is estimated that a small amount of sediment would enter the streams from these activities.

##### **4.5.2 Alternative B**

This alternative would have the least impact to water quality of all the alternatives, because commercial and competitive events would not be allowed. Organized groups between 15-25 people would have a minor, immeasurable impact from sediment addition to the streams.

##### **4.5.3 Alternative C**

This alternative would have slightly more of a still-immeasurable impact on sediment getting into the streams from trampling and erosion than Alternative B, but less of an impact than

Alternative D. This is because Alternative C's maximum group size for commercial permits is 15, but it is 25 for Alternative D. By not allowing motorized competitive events, Alternatives C and D would likely have less impact to water quality than Alternative A. Large organized groups of 20-30 boaters (on the South Fork, for example) would have slightly larger impacts than Alternative B but slightly smaller impacts than Alternatives A and D. In all planned activities, Alternative C has slightly higher allowed numbers of people than Alternative B.

#### **4.5.4 Alternative D**

Under this alternative slightly more impacts to water quality from sediment recruitment would occur than from Alternatives B and C. However, the lack of motorized competitive events would likely make Alternative D's impacts less than Alternative A.

### **4.6 Wetlands and Riparian Areas**

#### **4.6.1 Alternative A – No Action**

Under Alternative A, no change to the existing management of SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would occur on the South Fork, Main Snake, or Henrys Fork of the Snake River, or the Teton River Canyon. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 38 more total boats per day compared to Alternative B, 58 fewer boats than Alternative C, and 278 fewer boats compared to Alternative D. However, fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon would not have a limitation on daily boat launches. No federal permits for outfitted fishing would be issued on the Main Snake River within the analysis area, whereas Alternatives B, C, and D would issue three federal permits.

Non-outfitted uses on the South Fork, Main Snake, Henrys Fork, and Teton River Canyon may include SRPs/SUPs for commercial, competitive, and organized groups. In addition, vending SRPs/SUPs may be authorized on the South Fork. There would be no limit on the total number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued, and maximum group size limits would be set on a case-by-case basis. Organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented under this alternative. Unlike Alternatives B and C, this alternative would not include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat).

The lack of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses under Alternative A provides many opportunities for activities on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon to exceed their ability to accommodate these uses. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur for outfitted fishing in the Teton River Canyon compared to all other alternatives as a result of the lack of limitations. Similarly, the lack of limitations on non-outfitted SRPs/SUPs would potentially result in more boat launches compared to all other alternatives. This equates to more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time in the riparian-wetland areas. As a result, impacts to riparian-wetland vegetation may

include introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor, thus reducing the overall health of riparian-wetland vegetation along these rivers.

#### **4.6.2 Alternative B**

Under Alternative B, numerous restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 38 fewer total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 96 fewer boats than Alternative C, and 316 fewer boats compared to Alternative D. Fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon would not have a limitation on daily boat launches under Alternative A, so the actual difference in daily boat launches between Alternatives A and B would potentially be higher than 38.

Unlike Alternatives A, C, and D, commercial and competitive SRPs/SUPs for non-outfitted uses would not be authorized on any of the four river segments. Organized groups would require a permit for groups greater than 15 people (maximum group size of 25) on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River. In the Teton River Canyon, organized groups greater than 12 people (maximum group size of 15 people) would require a permit. The potential usage from organized groups would be lower compared to Alternatives A, C, and D, all of which would allow larger group sizes.

Implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be required in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. The threshold would likely be reached at a slower speed compared to Alternative C, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based on daily boat launch numbers from July 1 through Labor Day, factoring in weekdays (less busy) with weekends and holidays (periods of highest usage). Overall, Alternative B would have the most restrictions related to non-outfitted uses compared to all other alternatives.

Under Alternative B, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day. A maximum group size limit would be set at 15 people. Groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. All designated camping sites in the canyon reach are located within riparian-wetland areas. Although impacts from trampling, soil compaction, and vegetation removal within each designated site would continue, these restrictions would eliminate encroachment into undisturbed riparian-wetland areas beyond the boundaries of each site. The smaller group size limit and the immediacy of implementing a reservation permit system would result in lower impacts to associated riparian-wetland areas compared to Alternative C. Similarly, impacts would be lower compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not implement a reservation permit system for camping.

This alternative would include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). This restriction would prevent users from permanently removing riparian-wetland vegetation, altering species composition, or compacting the soil, thus eliminating riparian-wetland impacts from SRP/SUP activities in these habitats.

The combination of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses on the four river segments would result in the fewest number of daily boat launches and the fewest impacts from designated camping compared to Alternatives A, C, and D. Fewer people would be entering the riparian-wetland areas on the river banks or encroaching on undisturbed riparian-wetland areas, thus protecting these areas from impacts such as introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor. The potential for improvements in the overall health of riparian-wetland vegetation or maintenance of desired conditions along these river segments would be higher compared to Alternatives A, C, and D.

#### **4.6.3 Alternative C**

Under Alternative C, restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 58 more total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 96 more boats than Alternative B, and 220 fewer boats compared to Alternative D. Fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon would not have a limitation on daily boat launches under Alternative A, so the actual number of daily boat launches for this river segment has the potential to be higher under Alternative A compared to Alternative C.

Unlike Alternative B, non-outfitted commercial and competitive events would be authorized under SRPs/SUPs on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork. A total of 100 commercial trips per year would potentially be authorized with a maximum group size of 15 people. This would include up to 60 trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis between Byington Boat Access and Menan Boat Access) and 20 trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. A total of nine competitive trips per year would potentially be authorized, including five trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis below Byington) and two trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. As in Alternative B, commercial and competitive events would not be allowed in the Teton River Canyon. The total number of commercial and competitive events would exceed the number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternative B (not allowed), but would be less than Alternative D (182 commercial trips; 16 competitive trips). It would also potentially be less compared to Alternative A, which would issue permits on a case-by-case basis.

Organized groups would require a permit for groups greater than 20 people on the South Fork (maximum group size of 30 people), greater than 25 people on the Main Snake and Henrys Fork (maximum group size of 30 people), and greater than 12 people in the Teton River Canyon (maximum group size of 15 people). This potential usage would exceed organized group SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternative B, which would allow smaller maximum group

sizes (25 people on Snake River segments and 15 people in the Teton River Canyon). However, potential usage would be less than Alternatives A and D, which would issue permits for organized groups on a case-by-case basis.

As in Alternative B, implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be considered in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. The threshold would likely be reached more rapidly compared to Alternative B, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based solely on daily boat launch numbers on weekends and holidays from July 1 through Labor Day, the period when the South Fork receives the highest usage. Overall, Alternative C would have fewer restrictions related to non-outfitted uses compared to Alternative B, but more compared to Alternatives A and D.

Under Alternative C, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. A maximum group size limit would be set at 25 people. As in Alternative B, groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. All designated camping sites in the canyon reach are located within riparian-wetland areas. Although impacts from trampling, soil compaction, and vegetation removal within each designated site would continue, these restrictions would eliminate encroachment into undisturbed riparian-wetland areas beyond the boundaries of each site. The larger group size limit and the delay in implementing a reservation permit system would result in higher impacts to associated riparian-wetland areas compared to Alternative B. However, impacts would be lower compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not implement a reservation permit system for camping.

As in Alternative B, this alternative would include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). This restriction would prevent users from permanently removing riparian-wetland vegetation, altering species composition, or compacting the soil, thus eliminating riparian-wetland impacts from SRP/SUP activities in these habitats.

The combination of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses on the four river segments would result in fewer daily boat launches and fewer impacts from designated camping compared to Alternatives A and D. As a result, fewer people would be entering the riparian-wetland areas on the river banks or encroaching on undisturbed riparian-wetland areas, thus protecting these areas from impacts such as introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor. However, Alternative C has fewer restrictions compared to Alternative B, thus potentially resulting in more boating and camping usage, and higher impacts to associated riparian-wetland areas. The potential for improvements in the overall health of riparian-wetland vegetation or maintenance of desired conditions along these river segments would be higher compared to Alternatives A and D, but lower compared to Alternative B.

#### 4.6.4 Alternative D

Under Alternative D, restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow 278 more total boats per day compared to Alternative A, 316 more boats than Alternative B, and 220 more boats compared to Alternative C. Fishing outfitters in the Teton River Canyon would not have a limitation on daily boat launches under Alternative A, so the actual number of daily boat launches for this river segment has the potential to be higher under Alternative A compared to Alternative D.

Non-outfitted commercial and competitive events would be authorized under SRPs/SUPs on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. A total of 182 commercial trips per year would potentially be authorized with a maximum group size of 25 people along the Snake River segments and 12 people in the Teton River Canyon. This would include up to 120 trips on the South Fork above the Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis between Byington Boat Access and Menan Boat Access), 30 trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork, and two trips in the Teton River Canyon. A total of 16 competitive trips per year would potentially be authorized, including 10 trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis below Byington) and two trips each on the Main Snake, Henrys Fork, and the Teton River Canyon. The numbers of potential commercial and competitive events would exceed the number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B (not allowed) and C (100 commercial trips; nine competitive trips), but would potentially be less compared to Alternative A, which would issue permits on a case-by-case basis.

Organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis along the four river segments, and a maximum group size would not be established. This potential usage would exceed organized group SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B and C, which would set maximum group sizes. Impacts would be similar to Alternative A.

Unlike Alternatives B and C, special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork in the canyon reach from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented, nor would a reservation permit system for designated camping in the canyon reach be implemented. Similarly, unlike Alternatives B and C, this alternative would not include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat).

The lack of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses under Alternative D provides many opportunities for activities on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon to exceed their ability to accommodate these uses. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur compared to Alternatives B and C. This equates to more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time in the riparian-wetland areas. As a result, impacts to riparian-wetland vegetation may include introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs,

increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor, thus reducing the overall health of riparian-wetland vegetation along these rivers. The lack of restrictions under Alternative D would potentially result in more impacts to riparian-wetland habitat compared to Alternatives B and C. Compared to Alternative A, outfitted fishing SRPs/SUPs would result in more impacts to riparian-wetland areas, but non-outfitted uses would potentially result in fewer impacts.

#### **4.7 Fisheries (Including Sensitive Fish Species)**

##### **4.7.1 Alternative A – No Action**

Present management actions would have effects to aquatic species second only to Alternative D. Present use levels can directly affect fish by increasing hooking mortality from fishing. In addition, the amount of use that is allowed in Alternative A on the rivers indirectly affects aquatic species by reduction of bank vegetation, bank alteration and the potential introduction of undesirable substances and/organisms.

Fishing pressure can produce a number of adverse effects on fish. In addition to harvest, which removes individuals from the population, adverse effects from fishing come from fish hooking damage, physiological stress and handling effects. Hooking and unhooking fish after they have been landed can inflict damage to any part of a fish's body. The most severe impacts can occur to mouth parts, areas of the head, eyes and gills. While barbless hooks can reduce damage, it can still occur. The fighting and landing of fish can cause physiological stress by tiring fish to the point that they may not be able to hold position in the stream and continue feeding behavior for a time after they have been released. In addition, improper handling can damage internal organs or gills and can remove mucus, potentially leading to skin infections.

Removal of riparian vegetation can increase sunlight on the stream and surrounding banks, which can cause an increase in water temperatures. It also removes a nutrient source in the form of leaves that could be transported to the stream. In addition, riparian vegetation provides habitat for terrestrial insects which provide a food source for aquatic species. A greater opportunity for this food source to enter the channel exists if riparian-wetland vegetation is overhanging the stream. Over hanging riparian vegetation can also provide overhead cover for aquatic species which can reduce predation. Woody riparian-wetland vegetation can alter stream hydraulics, which can help to develop pool habitat and provide in-stream cover. Due to the size of these rivers and their large discharges, this would primarily impact side channels.

Thick woody riparian vegetation can also inhibit access by humans and animals, reducing disturbance and habitat alteration. Removal of bank vegetation and bank alteration and the effects it has on aquatic species within the riparian-wetland area would be expected from recreational activities (e.g., fishing and camping).

Bank alteration, a form of ground disturbance, is a potential impact from recreation activities. It can lead to the destabilization of stream banks. Stable stream banks provide channel boundaries and give horizontal stability to the stream channel. Well armored or vegetated stream banks provide protection from accelerated erosion which can be a cause of increased sediment delivery

to the channel. In addition, stable banks contribute to proper functioning channel morphology, provide pool structure, and undercut banks provide cover. As banks are altered they can break down and contribute to channels becoming overly wide and shallow. Over widening of the channel can lead to a reduction in pool habitat, an increase in riffles and an increase in stream temperature. Because of the size of the rivers this may not have a large impact on the main channels, but could impact side channels.

An increase in sediment delivery to a stream can impact aquatic species in a number of ways. Suspended sediment in the stream can inhibit respiration by irritating gills, the tissues that allow the transfer of oxygen to the blood of aquatic species. Suspended sediment can also affect feeding and movement behavior by increasing in-stream turbidity; juveniles are most affected. Increased sediment can also modify channel configuration by accumulating and filling pools. In addition, it can hamper spawning and incubation by covering spawning substrates and then not allowing the interstitial flow of water through the spawning substrate. Flow through the gravels provides oxygen to developing embryos and removes carbon dioxide and waste materials, and without it, egg development can be slowed or halted. Excessive fine sediment can also hamper fry emergence by trapping them in the gravel. Lastly, fine sediment can inhibit macro-invertebrate production, which can reduce the food supply for higher trophic level aquatic species. Because of the size of the rivers, this may not have a large impact on the main channels, but could impact side channels.

The introduction of substances that are directly harmful or fatal, like petrochemicals, could occur due to commercial or recreational activities in the proximity of aquatic species habitats. The introduction of undesirable species of plants and animals could also increase with the increase in access to aquatic species habitats. Undesirable species can compete, prey, or introduce disease to more desirable species. With the amount of use that is allowed in this alternative there is a higher potential for undesirable species and/or substance to be delivered into the river. Once undesirable species are introduced to a system, they are difficult to control or eradicate.

#### **4.7.2 Alternative B**

The management actions in this alternative would have the least adverse impacts on aquatic species. The reduction of permitted activities should decrease hooking mortality and indirect impacts from reduction of bank vegetation, bank alteration and the potential introduction of undesirable substances and/or organisms. The potential effects on aquatic species from these impacts are described in Alternative A.

#### **4.7.3 Alternative C**

The management actions in this alternative would have more adverse impacts on aquatic species than Alternative B, but less than Alternatives A and D. The activities should impact hooking mortality and have indirect impacts from reduction of bank vegetation, bank alteration and the potential introduction of undesirable substances and/or organisms, but not to the potential extent as in Alternatives A and D. The potential effects on aquatic species from these impacts are described in Alternative A.

#### 4.7.4 Alternative D

The management actions in this alternative would have the greatest adverse impact on aquatic species. The increase of permitted activities could increase hooking mortality and indirect impacts from reduction of bank vegetation, bank alteration and the potential introduction of undesirable substances and/or organisms. The potential effects on aquatic species from these impacts are described in Alternative A.

#### 4.8 Wildlife (Including Migratory Birds, Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species)

Wildlife species all have different tolerances to human presence and disturbance. A literature review by (Borgmann) found that a change in behavior in response to human disturbance was the most frequently cited impact to bird species. Often individuals altered their current behavior from foraging or resting to flying or diving as the disturbing agent approaches. In an experimental study, abundance of Greater and Lesser Scaup and Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*) declined after hikers walked along trails adjacent to ponds, while abundance of Ruddy duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*), Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), and Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) did not change in response to hikers (White 2009).

In the case of Yellow-billed Cuckoos, human presence may cause the bird to abandon their nest if disturbed, especially during the nest building stage (Laymon 1998). Although this is identified as a measurable impact to YBCU, direct human disturbance is not seen as a major threat to the western yellow-billed cuckoo as discussed in the final rule (79 FR 48547 48652).

Currently, a 400 meter radius of an occupied Bald Eagle nest is restricted to use outside of a boat. This restriction applies to all activities along the South Fork, Henrys Fork, and Main Snake. There are currently no restrictions in the Teton River Canyon. This restriction will be applied to all Alternatives as a stipulation to future SRPs/SUPs in the Teton River Canyon as well.

These river systems and adjacent upland areas provide crucial habitat for wintering big game and other general wildlife; they also provide perching and foraging habitat for bald eagles and other raptors. Wildlife species that use these river systems and adjacent habitats in the winter months will be minimally affected by future SRP/SUP authorizations due to the river use going down drastically from November through March, with the primary SRPs/SUPs being waterfowl and big game hunting. Most of the big game will have moved out of the area by the time use on the river activity picks back up in the spring and summer. Snow removal restrictions at boat launch sites will also limit use during these months (USDI-BLM 2008; USDA-FS 2008).

As human presence increases, so do the potential impacts to wildlife habitat. As discussed in the riparian-wetland section, impacts may include introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor, thus reducing the overall health of

riparian-wetland habitat along these rivers. Alternatives discussed below will regulate different levels of human presence and use authorized in the Snake River Planning Area and the Teton River Canyon.

Disturbances imposed by humans, such as vegetation removal, grazing, and flooding, have facilitated the invasion of tamarisk. Because it is a Neotropical migrant, the yellow-billed cuckoo is also considered to be very vulnerable to tropical deforestation on its wintering grounds (Morton 1992); however, the relationship between over-wintering habitat and populations has not been studied.

#### **4.8.1 Alternative A – No Action**

Under Alternative A, no change to the existing management of SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would occur on the South Fork, Main Snake, or Henrys Fork of the Snake River, or the Teton River Canyon. Currently, trends and best available data indicate that outfitters make up 8-12% of the total use along the river systems during peak months Mid-June through the first week of September at the Conant Boat Access. To put this in context approximately one out of every 10 boats on the river will be an outfitter. The reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access gets the highest use of all the river segments along these river systems.

For purposes of analysis, values presented below are broken down into boats/section/day. This will provide a maximum potential level of disturbance to wildlife authorized under each alternative according to the number of boat passes per river section or human presence per river section. Under Alternative A, the maximum allowable outfitted use on the South Fork is 32 boats/section/day, which is 20 more boats than Alternative B, the same as Alternative C, and 12 fewer boats than Alternative D. The Main Snake has no permitted outfitter use, which is 12 fewer boats/section/day than proposed under Alternatives B, C, and D. The Henrys Fork is currently limited to 12 boats/section/day along the whole river segment, compared to six boats under Alternative B, and the same number of boats under Alternatives C and D. The Teton River Canyon currently has no limits on the number of boats/section/day for outfitted use, while under Alternatives B, C and D the maximum use would be two boats/section/day. There is one exception under Alternative D where the most popular section (section c) may have up to four boats/section/day.

Non-outfitted uses on the South Fork, Main Snake, Henrys Fork, and Teton Rivers may include SRPs/SUPs for commercial, competitive, and organized groups. In addition, vending SRPs/SUPs may be authorized on the South Fork. There would be no limit on the total number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued, and maximum group size limits would be set on a case-by-case basis. Organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented under this alternative.

The lack of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses under Alternative A provides many opportunities for activities on the South Fork, Main Snake, Henrys Fork, and the Teton River Canyon to exceed their capacity to accommodate these uses. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur compared to all other

alternatives. This equates to the potential for more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time in the riparian-wetland habitat. As a result, impacts to wildlife habitat as discussed above include introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor, thus reducing the overall health of riparian-wetland vegetation along these rivers.

YBCU breeding habitat was identified by the GIS modeling tool *DIVA*. Modeling variables used were sand, silt, and rock depth, vegetation, and patch size. In a multi-step process, sand silt and rock depth variables were identified and then limited to forested riparian habitats that were most similar (98-100% ranking in the model) to YBCU historic locations that were at least 50 acres in size. It was then field-evaluated to confirm its estimated suitability. Several areas not identified by the model were also field-evaluated based on suspected presence of YBCU breeding habitat. From this effort, areas were mapped occupied and suitable habitat based on survey results (Cavallaro 2011).

Areas identified as suitable or potential habitat would have special conditions and stipulations for SRP/SUPs determined on a case-by-case basis to mitigate impacts to YBCU. Alternative A, as in Alternative D, would not prohibit permanent or long-term alterations of YBCU habitat, while these special conditions and stipulations would be applied under Alternatives B and C. Under Alternative A the likelihood of disturbing activities taking place would be much higher than under Alternatives B and C, and slightly less than Alternative D due to the potential for more authorized use. Disturbing activities that may displace wildlife or alter habitat under Alternative A include, but are not limited to, dispersed camping, tie-up areas for pack animals and boats, and general human activity associated with entering YBCU and other wildlife habitats.

The lack of restrictions under Alternative A would potentially result in more impacts to TES species, migratory songbirds and other wildlife species compared to Alternatives B, C, and D.

#### **4.8.2 Alternative B**

Under Alternative B, numerous restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, Henrys Fork, and the Teton River Canyon. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs on the South Fork would allow 20 fewer boats per/section/ day compared to Alternative A and C, and 32 fewer boats/section/day compared to Alternative D. The Main Snake would allow a maximum of four boats/section/day, which is the same as Alternatives C and D, and four more than Alternative A. The Henrys Fork would be limited to three boats/section/day along the whole river segment, which is common to all Alternatives. As in Alternatives C and D, the maximum use in the Teton River Canyon would be two boats/section/day, while Alternative A would not set boat limits for outfitted use. There is one exception under Alternative D where the most popular section (section c) may have up to four boats/section/day. Waterfowl and big game outfitter permits would not be authorized under Alternative B, whereas one waterfowl hunting permit would be authorized under Alternative A, and two would be authorized under Alternatives C and D on the South Fork.

Unlike Alternatives A, C, and D, commercial and competitive SRPs/SUPs for non-outfitted uses would not be authorized on any of the four river segments. Organized groups would require a permit for groups greater than 15 people (maximum group size of 25) on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River. In the Teton River Canyon, organized groups greater than 12 people (maximum group size of 15 people) would require a permit. The potential usage from organized groups would be lower compared to Alternatives A, C, and D, all of which would allow larger group sizes.

Implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be required in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. The threshold would likely be reached at a slower speed compared to Alternative C, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based on daily boat launch numbers from July 1 through Labor Day, factoring in weekdays (less busy) with weekends and holidays (periods of highest usage). Overall, Alternative B would have the most restrictions related to non-outfitted uses compared to all other alternatives.

Under Alternative B, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day. A maximum group size limit would be set at 15 people. Groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. All designated camping sites in the canyon reach are located within riparian-wetland areas. Although impacts from trampling, soil compaction, and vegetation removal within each designated site would continue, these restrictions would eliminate encroachment into undisturbed riparian-wetland areas beyond the boundaries of each site. The smaller group size limit and the immediacy of implementing a reservation permit system would result in lower impacts to associated wildlife habitat compared to Alternative C. Similarly, impacts would be lower compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not implement a reservation permit system for camping.

Alternative B would include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). In comparison to Alternatives A and D, this would reduce the likelihood of human disturbance or influence on YBCU, migratory bird, or other wildlife's normal activities and reduce the likelihood of birds abandoning nests or take due to human presence.

The combination of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses on the four river segments would result in the fewest number of boats/section/day and the fewest impacts from designated camping compared to Alternatives A, C, and D. Fewer people would be entering the riparian-wetland habitat on the river banks or encroaching on undisturbed wildlife habitat, thus protecting these areas from impacts such as introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor. The potential for improvements in the

overall health and suitability of these habitats or maintenance of desired conditions along these river segments would be higher compared to Alternatives A, C, and D.

### **4.8.3 Alternative C**

Under Alternative C, restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs and designated camping would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs would allow the same amount of boats/section/day compared to Alternative A, 20 more boats than Alternative B, and 32 fewer boats/section/day compared to Alternative D. The Main Snake would allow a maximum of four boats/section/day, which is the same as Alternatives B and D, and four more than Alternative A. The Henrys Fork would be limited to three boats/section/day along the whole river segment, which is common to all Alternatives. As in Alternatives B and D, the maximum use in the Teton River Canyon would be two boats/section/day, while Alternative A would not set boat limits for outfitted use. There is one exception under Alternative D where the most popular section (section c) may have up to four boats/section/day. As in Alternative D, two federal permits would be authorized for outfitted waterfowl hunting on the South Fork; this would include two more permits compared to Alternative B and one more than Alternative A.

Unlike Alternative B, non-outfitted commercial and competitive events would be authorized under SRPs/SUPs on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork. A total of 100 commercial trips per year would potentially be authorized with a maximum group size of 15 people. This would include up to 60 trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis between Byington Boat Access and Menan Boat Access) and 20 trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. A total of nine competitive trips per year would potentially be authorized, including five trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis below Byington) and two trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork. As in Alternative B, commercial and competitive events would not be allowed in the Teton River Canyon. The total number of commercial and competitive events would exceed the number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternative B (not allowed), but would be less than Alternative D (182 commercial trips; 16 competitive trips). It would also potentially be less compared to Alternative A, which would issue permits on a case-by-case basis.

Organized groups would require a permit for groups greater than 20 people on the South Fork (maximum group size of 30 people), greater than 25 people on the Main Snake and Henrys Fork (maximum group size of 30 people), and greater than 12 people in the Teton River Canyon (maximum group size of 15 people). This potential usage would exceed organized group SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternative B, which would allow smaller maximum group sizes (25 people on the Snake River segments and 15 people in the Teton River Canyon). However, potential usage would be less than Alternatives A and D, which would issue permits for organized groups on a case-by-case basis.

As in Alternative B, implementation of special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use to reduce overcrowding on the South Fork would be considered in the canyon reach from Conant Boat Access to Byington Boat Access if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive

years. The threshold would likely be reached more rapidly compared to Alternative B, because potential implementation of a permit system would be based solely on daily boat launch numbers on weekends and holidays from July 1 through Labor Day, the period when the South Fork receives the highest usage. Overall, Alternative C would have fewer restrictions related to non-outfitted uses compared to Alternative B, but more compared to Alternatives A and D.

Under Alternative C, a reservation permit system for designated camping on the South Fork from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would be implemented annually from July 1 through Labor Day if a predetermined threshold is met for three consecutive years. A maximum group size limit would be set at 25 people. As in Alternative B, groups would be assigned to camping sites according to how many people each site can accommodate. All designated camping sites in the canyon reach are located within riparian-wetland areas. Although impacts from trampling, soil compaction, and vegetation removal within each designated site would continue, these restrictions would eliminate encroachment into undisturbed riparian-wetland habitat beyond the boundaries of each site. The larger group size limit and the delay in implementing a reservation permit system would result in higher impacts to associated wildlife habitat compared to Alternative B. However, impacts would be lower compared to Alternatives A and D, which would not implement a reservation permit system for camping.

Similar to Alternative B, This alternative would include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). In comparison to Alternatives A and D, this would reduce the likelihood of human disturbance or influence on YBCU, migratory bird, or other wildlife's normal activities and reduce the likelihood of birds abandoning nests or take due to human presence.

The combination of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses on the four river segments would result in fewer daily boat launches and fewer impacts from designated camping compared to Alternatives A and D. As a result, fewer people would be entering the riparian-wetland habitat on the river banks or encroaching on undisturbed riparian-wetland areas, thus protecting these areas from impacts such as introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor. There would also be less displacement of wildlife species as people enter these habitats. However, Alternative C has fewer restrictions compared to Alternative B, thus potentially resulting in more boating and camping usage, and higher impacts to associated wildlife habitat. The potential for improvements in the overall health of these habitats or maintenance of desired habitat along these river segments would be higher compared to Alternatives A and D, but slightly lower compared to Alternative B.

#### **4.8.4 Alternative D**

Under Alternative D, restrictions related to SRPs/SUPs would be implemented on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. Outfitted SRPs/SUPs on the South Fork would allow 12 more boats/section/day compared to Alternatives

A and C, and 32 more boats than Alternative B. The Main Snake would allow a maximum of four boats/section/day, which is the same as Alternatives B and C, and four more than Alternative A. The Henrys Fork would be limited to three boats/section/day along the whole river segment, which is common to all Alternatives. As in Alternatives B and C, the maximum use in the Teton River Canyon would be two boats/section/day, while Alternative A would not set boat limits for outfitted use. There is one exception under Alternative D where the most popular section (section c) may have up to four boats/section/day. As in Alternative C, two federal permits would be authorized for outfitted waterfowl hunting on the South Fork; this would include two more permits compared to Alternative B and one more than Alternative A. On the South Fork two federal permits for outfitted big game hunting would be authorized, while all other alternatives would not authorize permits for big game hunting.

Non-outfitted commercial and competitive events would be authorized under SRPs/SUPs on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon. A total of 182 commercial trips per year would potentially be authorized with a maximum group size of 25 people along the Snake River segments and 12 people on the Teton River. This would include up to 120 trips on the South Fork above the Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis between Byington Boat Access and Menan Boat Access), 30 trips each on the Main Snake and the Henrys Fork, and two trips on the Teton River. A total of 16 competitive trips per year would potentially be authorized, including 10 trips on the South Fork above Byington Boat Access (plus permits issued on a case-by-case basis below Byington) and two trips each on the Main Snake, Henrys Fork, and the Teton River Canyon. The numbers of potential commercial and competitive events would exceed the number of SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B (not allowed) and C (100 commercial trips; nine competitive trips), but would potentially be less compared to Alternative A, which would issue permits on a case-by-case basis.

Organized group activities would be determined on a case-by-case basis along the four river segments, and a maximum group size would not be established. This potential usage would exceed organized group SRPs/SUPs that may be issued under Alternatives B and C, which would set maximum group sizes. Impacts would be similar to Alternative A.

Unlike Alternatives B and C, special area SRPs/SUPs for daily individual boating use on the South Fork in the canyon reach from the Conant Boat Access to the Byington Boat Access would not be implemented, nor would a reservation permit system for designated camping in the canyon reach be implemented.

Similar to Alternative A, this alternative would not include a special condition/stipulation on SRPs/SUPs that would prohibit permanent or long-term alterations in delineated yellow-billed cuckoo habitat (3,214 acres of occupied and suitable habitat). In comparison to Alternatives B and C this would increase the likelihood of human disturbance or influence on YBCU, migratory bird, or other wildlife's normal activities and increase the likelihood of birds abandoning nests or take due to human presence.

The lack of restrictions related to both outfitted and non-outfitted uses under Alternative D provides many opportunities for activities on the South Fork, Main Snake, and Henrys Fork of

the Snake River, and the Teton River Canyon to exceed their capacity to accommodate these uses. As demand for these uses increases, the potential exists for more daily boat launches to occur compared to Alternatives A, B, and C. This equates to more people on the rivers and a higher likelihood that river users would get out of their boats to spend time in the riparian-wetland areas resulting in greater disturbance to wildlife species during critical reproductive phases. As a result, impacts to wildlife habitat may include introduction or spread of invasive species/noxious weeds or other undesirable herbaceous species, increased bare ground, reduced vegetative cover, reduced establishment/regeneration of preferred trees and shrubs, increased alteration to biological and physical characteristics, and reduced vigor, thus reducing the overall health of vegetation along these rivers. The lack of restrictions under Alternative D would potentially result in more impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat compared to Alternatives B and C, but potentially less than Alternative A.

#### **4.9 *Economic and Social Values***

##### **4.9.1 Alternative A – No Action**

Under Alternative A, no change to the existing management of SRPs/SUPs for outfitted use would occur on the South Fork or Henrys Fork of the Snake River, or the Teton River Canyon. There would be no impact from Alternative A, which is the baseline for addressing economic and social values relative to these river uses.

##### **4.9.2 Alternative B**

Alternative B would result in a 28% reduction in SRPs/SUPs for outfitted use (from 18 to 13) compared to Alternative A. Reducing the number of federal permits may result in a loss of value for outfitting businesses and decreased opportunities for clients to hire them for their services, thus also resulting in financial losses. This would potentially result in fewer clients (from 9,107 to 6,557) and a loss of 64 jobs for guides who are employed by permitted outfitters. The reduction in clients would contribute approximately \$1,530,000 less to the local economy each year compared to the baseline (Alternative A). This would decrease revenue for businesses that provide goods and services such as food, beverages, lodging, transportation, camping, supplies, and equipment. The number of permits and corresponding changes in revenue injected into the local economy would be 38% less compared to Alternative C and 55% less compared to Alternative D. Actions under Alternative B are not expected to substantially alter future expenditures for fishing, boating, or other recreational pursuits by the general public.

##### **4.9.3 Alternative C**

Alternative C would result in a 17% increase in SRPs/SUPs for outfitted use (from 18 to 21) compared to Alternative A. Increasing the number of federal permits may result in an increase in value for outfitting businesses and increased opportunities for clients to hire them for their services, this also resulting in financial gain. This would potentially result in more clients (from 9,107 to 10,655) and an increase of 39 jobs for guides who are employed by permitted outfitters. The increase in clients would contribute approximately \$928,800 more to the local economy each year compared to the baseline (Alternative A). This would increase revenue for businesses that provide goods and services such as food, beverages, lodging, transportation, camping, supplies, and equipment. The number of permits and corresponding changes in revenue injected into the local economy would be 62% more compared to Alternative B and 28% less than

Alternative D. Actions under Alternative C are not expected to substantially alter future expenditures for fishing, boating, or other recreational pursuits by the general public.

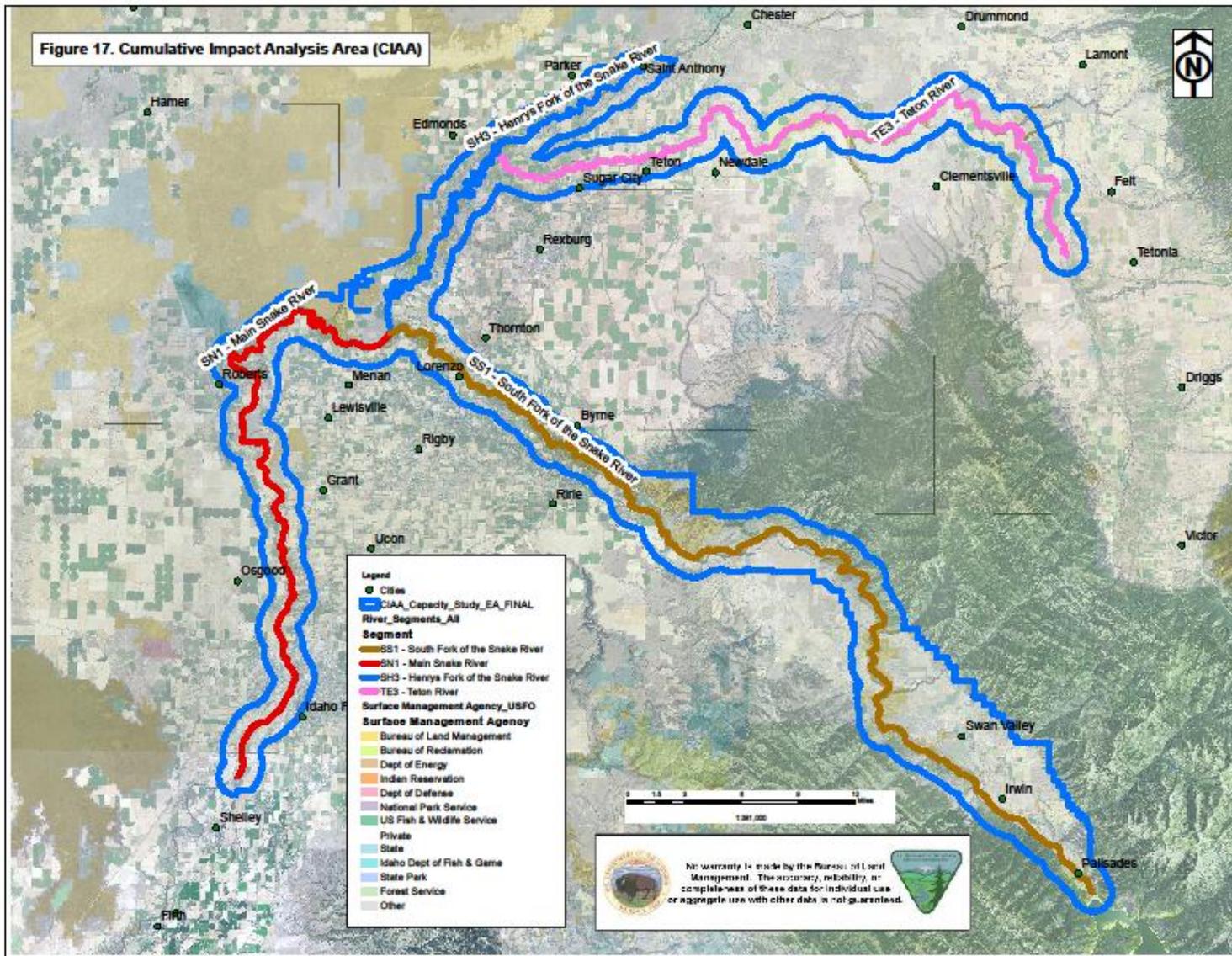
#### **4.9.4 Alternative D**

Alternative D would result in a 61% increase in SRPs/SUPs for outfitted use (from 18 to 29) compared to Alternative A. Increasing the number of federal permits may result in an increase in value for outfitting businesses and increased opportunities for clients to hire them for their services, this also resulting in financial gain. This would potentially result in more clients (from 9,107 to 14,662) and an increase of 140 jobs for guides who are employed by permitted outfitters. The increase in clients would contribute approximately \$3,333,000 more to the local economy each year compared to the baseline (Alternative A). This would increase revenue for businesses that provide goods and services such as food, beverages, lodging, transportation, camping, supplies, and equipment. The number of permits and corresponding changes in revenue injected into the local economy would be 123% more compared to Alternative B and 38% more than Alternative C. Actions under Alternative D are not expected to substantially alter future expenditures for fishing, boating, or other recreational pursuits by the general public.

## **CHAPTER 5 - CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS**

This section of the document discloses the incremental impact that Alternatives A, B, C, and D are likely to have when considered in the context of impacts associated with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have occurred, or are likely to occur, in the area. The Cumulative Impact Analysis Area (CIAA) for this analysis includes the South Fork of the Snake River from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork, the Henrys Fork of the Snake River from St. Anthony to the confluence with the South Fork, the Main Snake River from the confluence to Gem State Power Plant, and the Teton River from Harrop Bridge Boat Access to the confluence with the Henrys Fork (Figure 17). The CIAA was delineated using the boundary of the Snake River ACEC and a one-mile buffer either side of the river reaches that reside outside the ACEC boundary.

Figure 17. Cumulative Impact Analysis Area



The CIAA contains approximately 241,248 total acres and includes portions of Bonneville, Jefferson, Madison, Fremont, and Teton counties. Table 10 describes the surface management status for lands within the CIAA.

| <b>Table 10. Surface Management Status within the CIAA.</b> |               |
|---|---------------|
| Bureau of Land Management                                   | 28,820 acres  |
| Bureau of Reclamation                                       | 5,818 acres   |
| Army Corp of Engineers                                      | 51 acres      |
| Idaho State Lands, including open waters                    | 8,827 acres   |
| Private Property  | 183,361 acres |
| United States Forest Service                                | 14,371 acres  |

A number of general habitat types or classifications are found across the CIAA. Table 11 lists the acres within each cover classification based on the landscape classification map used for the USFO Analysis of Management Situation (AMS).

| <b>Table 11. Habitat Types or Classifications within the CIAA.</b> |              |
|--|--------------|
| Agriculture  | 71,784 acres |
| Annual Grasslands  | 630 acres    |
| Bedrock-Cliffs-Scree-Canyons                                       | 4,536 acres  |
| Forest   | 16,160 acres |
| Open Water   | 8,654 acres  |
| Perennial Grasslands   | 7,988 acres  |
| Riparian-Wetland   | 22,378 acres |
| Sagebrush and Desert Shrublands                                    | 27,489 acres |
| Shrublands, including juniper and mountain mahogany                | 9,112 acres  |
| Urban and Industrial   | 6,385 acres  |

Lands with special designations are found throughout the CIAA. The CIAA includes the South Fork and the Teton River and its tributaries (Bitch Creek, Badger Creek, Canyon Creek), eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and the Snake River Islands Wilderness Study Area (WSA), covering approximately 400 acres of public land within the CIAA. Two Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) found within the CIAA include the Snake River ACEC and the North Menan Butte ACEC. These ACEC's cover approximately 21,060 acres. Research Natural Areas (RNA) found within the CIAA include the North Menan Butte RNA, Pine Creek Island RNA, Reid Canal Island RNA, and Squaw Creek Island RNA. The RNAs cover approximately 410 acres within the CIAA. The North Menan Butte National Natural Landmark (approximately 1,120 acres) overlaps the boundaries of the North Menan Butte ACEC and RNA.

#### *Past and Present Actions*

Past and present actions identified for the CIAA which have impacted the natural environment to varying degrees include agricultural development, infrastructure such as highways and power

lines, wildfires, livestock grazing, and recreation development. Table 12 summarizes actions which have occurred within the CIAA based on agency documents and GIS analysis.

Agricultural development has a long history in the CIAA. Though Lewis and Clark first entered what would later become the state of Idaho in 1805, settlers were not attracted to the region until the 1880s. Multiple population centers of varying size reside within the CIAA. The larger population centers include the cities of Idaho Falls, Saint Anthony, and Sugar City with a combined population of approximately 63,000 people. Settlement ranges from low density rural development to high density urban development. The CIAA includes portions of several counties, and typically includes sparsely populated areas as a result of the confined nature of the river corridors. Private property makes up approximately 76% of the land base in the CIAA, and the majority of that property is in agricultural production. Infrastructure development within the CIAA has increased over time, mostly in the form of conversion to agricultural lands and urban development.

Livestock grazing has a long history in the region, dating back to the settlement of the area in the late 1800s. In the early settlement years, cattle and sheep were raised to supply the surrounding miners and settlers. Within the CIAA, ranching has declined over time since its peak in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century as more lands were devoted to agriculture and urban development. Livestock production associated with BLM and FS lands is a minor economic segment of the CIAA.

Recreation use within the CIAA has increased over time. Recreation use varies from a concentrated to dispersed activity within the CIAA. Multiple developed recreation sites are located within the area, including developed campgrounds and boat launch facilities. Dispersed campsites are found throughout the area as well. Big game and waterfowl hunting, fishing, camping, and motorized vehicle use are the primary recreational pursuits within the CIAA.

| <b>Table 12. Past and Present Actions within the CIAA.</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Activity Type</b>                                       | <b>Description</b>  |
| <b><i>Agricultural Development</i></b>                     |   |
| Lands in agricultural production                           | 71,784 acres  |
| <b><i>Urban Development</i></b>                            |   |
| Lands developed for residential or industrial uses         | 6,385 acres   |
| <b><i>Infrastructure</i></b>                               |   |
| Dams and irrigation diversions                             | The Palisades Dam influences conditions within the CIAA, along with multiple smaller scale irrigation structures and power facilities.  |
| Roads  | 907 miles ranging from 4-lane interstate to unimproved access routes  |
| Recreation Facilities                                      | 8,231 acres including multiple boat launch sites, developed parking sites for access to fishing, hunting or hiking locations, developed and undeveloped campsites, and hiking trails.                               |
| Fences   | Approximately 135 miles. The vast majority of fencing within the CIAA is associated with private agricultural and urban development and is captured within the acreage estimates for those activities listed above. |
| Livestock Water Facilities                                 | 2 troughs on public lands. Similar to fences, the vast  |

| <b>Table 12. Past and Present Actions within the CIAA.</b>  |  |
|---|--|
|   | majority of livestock water facilities within the CIAA are found on private property and are captured within the acreage estimates for agricultural and urban development.   |
| <b>Fire</b>   |  |
| Wildfires within the past 30 years  | 17 fires over a total of 2,779 acres. Wildfires within the CIAA are generally smaller scale, with only two of the 17 fires impacting over 500 acres.   |
| <b>Livestock Grazing</b>  |  |
| Number of Allotments  | BLM – All or portions of 53 allotments totaling 14,411 acres<br>FS – All or portions of 12 active allotments totaling 14,285 acres   |
| Condition of Public lands as measured under Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health (ISRH) (USDI-BLM 1997) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) 17 allotments meet all standards (30,612 acres)</li> <li>2) 2 allotments are making significant progress toward meeting all standards on 55 of 1,169 acres</li> <li>3) 13 allotments are not meeting standards but not due to current livestock grazing management on 1,332 of 2,329 acres</li> <li>4) 4 allotments are not meeting standards due to livestock grazing on 419 of 449 acres. Management changes have been implemented.</li> <li>5) 17 allotments vacant allotments were not assessed.</li> </ol> <p>Note: Total acres exceeds the acres grazed on BLM-managed lands within the CIAA because many allotments include acreages outside the CIAA boundaries.</p> |

### *Reasonable Foreseeable Future Actions*

Reasonably foreseeable future actions include continuation of the past and present actions as described above. The level and character of agricultural development is anticipated to remain consistent into the foreseeable future. Populations within the CIAA are expected to continue to increase over time based on current growth patterns measured in the primary population centers. The population has increased 10% over the past 10 years in Idaho Falls, while the populations of Saint Anthony and Sugar City have increased by 4% and 17%, respectively over the same time period (Census Viewer 2012). The increase in population will likely result in increased urban development or increased density of existing development within the CIAA. Recreational use is expected to continue to increase over time and the potential exists for development or expansion of recreation facilities on BLM-managed public lands and FS lands within the CIAA as population growth continues. The level and character of livestock grazing within the CIAA is expected to remain at or near current levels, though livestock grazing of public lands will likely continue to decline, as evidenced by the high ratio of vacant to active allotments relative to surrounding CIAAs within the USFO. Generally, the current operations on public lands within the CIAA are small scale operations where ranch income is not a substantial contributor to the overall income of the operators. The allotments are relatively small acreages, with few Animal

Unit Months or brief authorized use periods, and access controlled by adjacent private land owners, decreasing the economic viability for incorporation into larger livestock operations.

### *Impacts Associated with Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions*

Past and present actions have resulted in varying degrees of impact to the resources considered in the analysis. Observable impacts are higher for agricultural development and infrastructure which have resulted in direct habitat loss for plants and animals, alteration, and/or fragmentation of the natural environment. Assuming an average impact width of 24 feet relative to roads, 4 feet relative to fences, one-half acre per water development, and including the acres identified as agricultural and urban development, and non-native seedings, approximately 80,875 acres or 34% of the CIAA has been impacted. These actions have altered or removed the native vegetation communities and introduced non-natural elements of form, line, and color that have altered and would continue to alter the characteristics of the visual landscape.

Unmanaged livestock (horses, cows, and sheep) grazing in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century likely resulted in altered ecological conditions along the river corridors analyzed in this EA. Use was historically higher adjacent to available water with limited use in the areas away from springs, creeks, and rivers. As livestock grazing became more carefully managed in these areas, the ecological health of the rangelands and riparian-wetland areas improved. As a large portion of the CIAA is private lands, much of the early impact of unmanaged livestock grazing were in areas currently in agricultural or urban development. The condition of the vegetation communities on BLM-managed public lands and FS lands authorized for grazing within the CIAA have all been assessed through ISRH. Of the 53 BLM allotments authorized for grazing, four of them 8% were determined to not be meeting all applicable standards and livestock grazing was identified as a contributing factor.

Ute ladies-tresses is a native orchid which is currently listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Ute ladies-tresses distribution is discontinuous within Idaho, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. It is the only plant species within the CIAA listed under ESA and occurs along the Henrys Fork and Snake River. The timing and level of peak river flows controlled by Palisades Dam is the primary driver in influencing habitat conditions for this species within the CIAA. Other impacts may include loss of riparian-wetland habitat as a result of development, recreation impacts such as OHV use, and authorized livestock use in orchid habitat in the summer when flower stalks are elevated and vulnerable to direct impacts. The majority of the known locations of Ute ladies-tresses within the CIAA are on BLM-managed public lands and FS lands. Both authorized livestock grazing and recreation uses are regulated in Ute ladies-tresses habitat to manage and minimize impacts. Following consultation on the 2008 update of the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan, which describes both livestock and recreation impacts within a portion of the CIAA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the finding of “may affect, but not likely to adversely affect” for Ute ladies-tress.

Activities that occur on BLM-managed public lands, FS lands, and private lands, such as agricultural practices; infrastructure development; recreational use such as camping, hunting, and ATV use; and livestock grazing management affect wildlife use patterns, the quantity and quality

of habitats, and population health. Many species of wildlife including birds, bears, and big game, require large intact habitats for their continued survival. Development of infrastructure and conversion of native habitats fragments the landscape, reducing their value for some species, though other species may benefit from such development. While many wildlife species are mobile and have general habitat needs which may be met under combination of the cover types or activities in the CIAA listed in Table 11, several species of concern have more restrictive habitat requirements.

Bighorn sheep habitat, as identified and mapped by IDFG, occurs on approximately 9,877 acres of the Big Hole Mountains located in the northern portion of the South Fork of the Snake River. Approximately 5084 acres (51%) of this habitat is found on FS lands, and approximately 1,967 acres (20%) is located on BLM-managed public lands. Habitats are generally intact, with a relatively small amount of infrastructure development in place relative to the CIAA.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) identified primary and other threats to Greater sage-grouse in its 12-Month Findings for Petitions to List the Greater Sage- Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as Threatened or Endangered (50 CFR Part 17, 2010). The primary cause of sage-grouse population decline identified by the USFWS was fragmentation of sagebrush habitats due to: habitat conversion for agriculture or urbanization, infrastructure within sagebrush habitats (e.g., power lines, communication towers, fences, roads, railroads), wildfire and energy development (specifically roads and energy related infrastructure). Other important threats included: inadequate regulatory mechanisms, invasive plants (annual grasses and noxious weeds), climate change, collisions (e.g., with fences, power lines), conifer invasion, contaminants, disease (e.g., West Nile virus), poorly managed livestock grazing, hunting, mining, predation, prescribed fire/vegetation treatments, recreation (e.g., OHV use) and water developments (50 CFR Part 17, 2010). It is often the cumulative impact of various disturbances that have the greatest effect on sagebrush ecosystems, rather than any single disturbance (Knick et al. 2011).

Sage-grouse Preliminary Priority Habitats (PPH) are those areas of highest conservation value due to high male lek attendance, high lek density and high lek connectivity (Makela and Major 2011). Approximately 9,062 acres of PPH reside within the CIAA. Preliminary General Habitats (PGH) are habitats occupied by sage-grouse not contained within PPH. PGH areas are characterized by lower lek densities that may serve as important connectivity corridors between PPH (Makela and Major 2011). There are approximately 4,604 acres of PGH within the CIAA. Both PPH and PGH are generally located in the northwestern portion of the CIAA in the uplands adjacent to the upper reaches of the Main Snake River and the lower reaches of the Henrys Fork of the Snake River. Sage-grouse Key Habitat is generally large-scale intact sagebrush steppe areas which provide potential habitat for sage-grouse (Sather-Blair et al. 2000). There are approximately 11,086 acres of Key Habitat within the CIAA, which generally overlaps with PPH/PGH habitat. Table 13 summarizes impacts within PPH and PGH areas based on the actions identified in Table 12 above. The calculation of area impacted by various infrastructures uses the assumptions listed above. The area impacted by livestock grazing is a summary of the acres not meeting standards due to livestock grazing within the PPH and PGH within the CIAA.

**Table 13.** Influence of Identified Actions on Sage Grouse PPH and PGH.

|                                 | <b>PPH Acres Affected</b> | <b>% of PPH Acres Affected</b> | <b>PGH Acres Affected</b> | <b>% of PGH Acres Affected</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Agricultural Development</b> | 414                       | 5%                             | 1,504                     | 33%                            |
| <b>Urban Development</b>        | 108                       | 1%                             | 161                       | 3%                             |
| <b>Infrastructure</b>           | 1,024                     | 11%                            | 218                       | 5%                             |
| <b>Wildfire</b>                 | 407                       | 1%                             | 83                        | 2%                             |
| <b>Livestock Grazing</b>        | 0                         | 0%                             | 0                         | 0%                             |

The conversion of native habitat to agricultural production is the largest action influencing both PPH and PGH within the CIAA. Although livestock grazing was not identified as a primary threat, it is one of the more widespread uses occurring in sage grouse habitat (Connelly et al. 2004). There is limited evidence to suggest direct impacts to sage-grouse by livestock, but livestock grazing may directly affect sage-grouse habitats by removing vegetation (foraging) or changing species composition under poor management practices (Connelly and Braun 1997). Livestock grazing has not influenced habitat conditions relative to sage-grouse habitat requirements within PPH or PGH areas.

Actions which have influenced sage-grouse habitat are likely to continue at current levels. New primary threats such as conversion of sage-grouse habitat for agriculture or urbanization, or infrastructure (e.g., roads, power lines, energy development) are proposed on public lands in the CIAA. In addition, no such plans or proposals are identified for nearby lands under other ownership (private, NPS, DOE or State of Idaho lands) in the CIAA. Invasive species and wildfire continue to be threats that cannot be anticipated in frequency or intensity. Impacts associated with wildfire are likely to continue to be the greatest threat to sage-grouse populations in the CIAA. Managing for healthy habitats in the CIAA provides the most protection against invasive species and resiliency to disturbances such as wildfire. PPH are comprised of areas that have the highest conservation value for maintaining sustainable sage-grouse habitats. Additional disturbances (e.g. new infrastructure development) are less likely to be implemented in PPH areas without adequate mitigation in the future (USDI-BLM 2011).

Table 14 summarizes impacts within occupied, suitable and currently unsuitable habitat areas for YBCU based on the actions identified in Table 12 above. The calculation of area impacted by various infrastructures uses the assumptions listed above. The area impacted by livestock grazing is a summary of the acres not meeting standards due to livestock grazing within the PPH and PGH within the CIAA.

Occupied YBCU habitat=1,381 acres

Suitable YBCU habitat=1,833 acres

Currently unsuitable YBCU habitat=391 acres

**Table 14.** Influence of Identified Actions on YBCU occupied, suitable, and currently unsuitable habitats.

|                                 | <b>Occupied Acres Affected</b> | <b>% of Occupied Acres Affected</b> | <b>Suitable Acres Affected</b> | <b>% of Suitable Acres Affected</b> | <b>Currently Unsuitable Acres Affected</b> | <b>% of Currently Unsuitable Acres Affected</b> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Agricultural Development</b> | 21                             | 2%                                  | 27                             | 1%                                  | 14   | 4%  |
| <b>Urban Development</b>        | <1                             | <1%                                 | 12                             | <1%                                 | <1   | <1%   |
| <b>Infrastructure</b>           | 11                             | <1%                                 | 301                            | 16%                                 | <1   | <1%   |
| <b>Wildfire</b>                 | 0                              | 0%                                  | <1                             | <1%                                 | 0  | 0%  |
| <b>Livestock Grazing</b>        | 0                              | 0%                                  | 0                              | 0%                                  | 0  | 0%  |

*Alternative A*

Alternative A would contribute very little to the collective impact associated with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions. No change to the existing management of SRPs/SUPs or designated camping would occur, and no new infrastructure would be developed. The amount of suitable habitat for plant and wildlife species, including special status species that occur in the CIAA would remain the same.

*Alternative B*

Alternative B would not contribute to the collective impact associated with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

*Alternative C*

Alternative C would contribute very little to the collective impact associated with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions similar to Alternative A.

*Alternative D*

Alternative D would contribute very little to the collective impact associated with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions similar to Alternative A.

**CHAPTER 6 - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PREPARERS AND CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

EA Preparers and Participants in developing and writing this document are listed below.

| <b>Agency</b> | <b>Name</b>        | <b>Title</b>                            |
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|               | Mike Thom          | Recreation Staff Officer                |
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| <b>IOGLB</b>  | Jake Howard        | Executive Director                      |
|               | Wayne Hunsucker    | Board Chairman                          |
|               | Bob Barowsky       | Board Member                            |

## CHAPTER 7 - GLOSSARY

**Actual Expenses** - Expenses directly related to the permitted activity. These expenses may include the costs of such items as food, rentals, transportation, and permit or use fees. Actual expenses do not include the rental or purchase of personal equipment, amortization of equipment, salaries or other payments to participants, or profit.

**Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)** - An area within the public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. ACEC management objectives are formulated to protect an area's important resources and values without unnecessarily or unreasonably restricting uses that are compatible with that protection. All designated ACECs receive first priority for planning and management over other areas in the field office boundaries.

**Authorized Officer** - An employee of the BLM to whom authority has been delegated to perform the duties described. BLM Manual MS-1203, Delegation of Authority (Internal), and local, written delegations of authority determine who may be authorized to perform particular actions or issue particular decisions.

**Camp Area** - A designated camp area is a large area where camping can occur anywhere within the area.

**Campsite** - A designated campsite is an individual, specific site location where camping can occur. For example, Lufkin Bottom is a designated camp area, but there are numerous individual campsites within the area.

**Duty of Care** - An expectation of safety owed to participants by service providers as a result of compensation or because the trip leader has a legal obligation to provide for the safety of the participants.

**Financial Gain** - Gain as a result of an individual or entity receiving or attempting to receive money, donations, gratuities, or gifts; amortizing equipment; or bartering for goods or services. Financial gain includes payments of money; revenue from the sale of images or broadcast rights; onsite sales or rentals; and gratuities, donations, gifts, bartering, trophy fees, etc., regardless of source, associated with the use of public lands and related waters.

**Gross Receipts** - The total of all financial gains received by the permittee, its employees, and/or its agents for goods or services provided in connection with commercial activities authorized by a special recreation permit on public lands and related waters. Nonrefunded deposits or cancellation fees for an activity on public lands and related waters are also included in gross receipts for the activity. See also Financial Gain.

**National Important Bird Area (IBA)** – Sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of bird. IBAs include sites for breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds. IBAs may be

a few acres or thousands of acres, but usually they are discrete sites that stand out from the surrounding landscape. IBAs may include public or private lands, or both, and they may be protected or unprotected.

**National Natural Landmark (NNL)** – A NNL is a nationally significant natural area that has been designated by the Secretary of the Interior. These sites must be one of the best examples of a type of biotic community or geologic feature in its physiographic province. Examples of this natural diversity include terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, features, exposures, and landforms that record active geologic processes as well as fossil evidence of biological evolution. The goal of the National Natural Landmarks Program is to identify, recognize, and encourage the protection of sites containing the best examples of geological and ecological components of the nation’s landscape.

**National Recreation Trail (NRT)** – A NRT may be designated by the Secretary of Interior to recognize exemplary trails of local and regional significance. Through designation, NRTs are recognized as part of America’s national system of trails. The trail must be open to public use and be designed, constructed, and maintained according to best management practices, in keeping with the use anticipated.

**Participant** - An individual directly involved in an activity. A participant may be considered essential to completing the activity, for example a pit crew member or spotter who directly supports a competitor in a four-wheel drive event.

**Public Advertising** - Any written, oral, or graphic statement or representation made by any person or event representative to the general public for the purpose of soliciting participants for a recreational activity or event (e.g., television, radio, Internet/social media sites available to the general public, listing on public event calendars, printed brochures, newspapers, billboards, banners, and signs). Advertising is considered public if it is an inducement for anybody to participate, as opposed to an invitation or communication to members of an identifiable membership such as a church or club. The posting of information on an organization’s website would not, on its own, be considered public advertising. If paid public advertising is present, a commercial SRP is required.

**Recreation, Developed** — A relatively small, distinctly defined area where concentrated public use for the more traditional recreation purposes predominates (such as campgrounds, picnic areas, swimming areas, interpretive amphitheaters, and Visitor Centers).

**Recreation, Dispersed** — Recreation of various kinds that occurs, generally, throughout a large area, and is not confined to a specific place; scattered, individual outdoor recreation activities normally not identified with developed facilities or areas of group concentrations.

**Recreation Setting Characteristics (RSC)** — The RSCs depict the desired future recreational qualities of the landscape (physical), the qualities associated with use (social), and the conditions created by management (operational) throughout the life of the Approved Plan.

**Recreation Opportunities** — An occasion for a person to participate in a specific recreation activity in a particular outdoor recreation setting in order to realize desired outcomes (experiences and benefits).

**Recreation Outcomes** — Recreation outcomes consist of experiences and benefits, and are defined by the BLM as:

Experiences — recreation experiences are immediate “states-of-mind” that result from participation in recreation opportunities that result in benefits.

Benefits — recreation benefits accrue as the result of having a satisfying recreation experience that leads to an improved condition or maintenance of a desired condition. These, in turn, accrue as the result of participating in recreation, are short term and long term, and are realized onsite and offsite. Benefits are identified in one of 4 categories and are described as:

1. Personal or individual benefits. Recreation and leisure contributes to personal well-being and human development; they contribute to better physical and mental health for all individuals.
2. Social or community benefits. Recreation contributes to the quality of life within communities by encouraging positive lifestyles choices, building social skills, reducing crime, and fostering a sense of community pride and involvement.
3. Economic benefits. Investments in recreation represent an investment in the economy through diversifying economies, attracting new businesses, and generating employment opportunities.
4. Environmental benefits. Participation in recreation and outdoor education programs can help protect the quality of the environment through improved understanding and stewardship of natural, cultural and historic resources.

**Research Natural Area (RNA)** – Acreage within BLM-managed public lands established and managed to protect ecological processes, conserve their biological diversity, and provide opportunities for observational activities associated with research and education. Activities within these areas may only be allowed if they do not interfere with natural processes.

**Shuttle** - A business that provides transportation services to and from public lands. The service may be for an individual or for an individual plus gear. Shuttle operations are typically short in duration (e.g., dropping off hikers, mountain bikes, and bikers to a trailhead). Shuttle drivers, by definition, are not commercial guides. The shuttle driver has no obligation to the individual once the transportation aspect is complete. A shuttle business could be authorized under a commercial or vending permit depending on the circumstances.

**Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)** – A SRMA is defined as an area where existing or proposed recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics (RSC) are

recognized for their values, importance, and/or distinctiveness when compared to other areas used by recreationists. SRMAs are managed for the long-term and protect or enhance recreation activities, experiences, benefits, and desired RSCs.

**Special Recreation Permits (BLM Only)** - An authorization that allows specified recreational uses of the public lands and related waters. Special recreation permits are issued as a means to manage visitor use and to protect natural and cultural resources. Following are the five major types of SRPs issued by the BLM:

Commercial Use: Commercial use means recreation use of the public lands and related waters for business or financial gain. The activity, service, or use is commercial if any of these conditions is present:

- (1) Any person, group, or organization makes or attempts to make a profit, receives money, amortizes equipment, or obtains goods or services as compensation from participants in recreation activities occurring on public lands and led, sponsored by, or organized by that person, group, or organization. Compensation for recreation services may come from participants and/or other sources.
- (2) Anyone collects a fee or receives other compensation that is not strictly a sharing of actual expenses, or exceeds actual expenses, incurred for the purposes of the activity, service, or use. (See Glossary definition of Actual Expenses.)
- (3) There is paid, public advertising to seek participants. (See Glossary definition of Public Advertising.)
- (4) Participants pay for a duty of care, i.e., an expectation of safety. (See Glossary definition of Duty of Care.)

As noted, paid public advertising qualifies a use as commercial. Paid public advertising includes, for example, newspaper ads, Internet banners, and radio and television air time (43 CFR 2932.5(1) (iii)).

Use by scientific, educational, and therapeutic institutions or nonprofit organizations is commercial and subject to a permit requirement when any of the preceding criteria is present. The nonprofit status of any group or organization, alone, does not determine that an event or activity arranged by such a group or organization is noncommercial. By contrast, profitmaking organizations are automatically classified as commercial, even if that part of their activity covered by the permit is not profitmaking (43 CFR 2932.5).

Commercial use can be either public or nonpublic. Public commercial use is characterized by efforts to promote the activity as available for general public participation. Nonpublic commercial uses are those that are available only to a limited group of participants (e.g., members of a club). Examples of commercial activity include, but are not limited to, fundraising, outfitter/guide services, guided backpacking, courses with a recreation component, outdoor skills workshops, motorized tours, and guided horse rides.

An activity may be deemed noncommercial where no compensation is received for the activity, the activity leaders' positions are not established to organize and/or conduct recreation activities, no fees other than cost sharing of actual expenses are paid by participants, the activity is not publicly advertised, and the organizers share trip expenses equally with participants. (See Glossary definition of Financial Gain)

Competitive Use: Competitive use means any organized, sanctioned, or structured use, event, or activity on public lands and related waters in which two or more contestants compete and either or both of the following elements apply:

- (1) Participants register, enter, or complete an application for the event.
  - (2) A predetermined course or area is designated.
- (See Glossary definition of Participant.)

One or more contestants challenging an established record (e.g., speed or endurance) is also a competitive use. Examples of competitive events include off-highway vehicle (OHV) races, horse endurance rides, mountain bike races, rodeos, poker runs/rides, orienteering, land speed records, and multi-element adventure events.

Competitive events may also be commercial.

Vending: Vending is a type of commercial use defined as a temporary, short-term, nonexclusive, revocable authorization to sell goods or services on public lands and related waters in conjunction with a recreation activity or at a recreation site. Vending permits are nonexclusive in that the permittee has no expectation of exclusive use; the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), nevertheless, retains the ability to limit the number of vendors. Vendor permits do not authorize permanent structures and do not grant preferential rights for renewal or any possessory interests in real property on the public lands and related waters. The authorized officer (AO) must place stipulations on the SRP to provide for the health and safety of visitors and the protection of natural resources. (See Glossary definition of Authorized Officer.)

(1) Vending in association with a permitted event. Vending is typically associated with a permitted event. Examples of vendor permits include tee shirt sales for a race, a food or souvenir stand at a motocross event, vehicle fuel sales, or vehicle repair at an OHV event. If the permittee for the event will control the vending, the vending may be included in the event SRP. In that case, revenue from vending is included in the permittee's gross receipts. If the permittee is not responsible for the vending, each vendor must acquire its own permit and provide its own insurance, if required. (See Glossary definition of Gross Receipts.)

(2) Vending not associated with permitted events. Vendors may apply to vend at developed recreation sites or recreation management areas apart from an event. The need for these vendor services must be identified in the resource management plan, recreation area management plan, or environmental assessment before vending permits at attraction sites are issued. The potential impact of vendors on established businesses in surrounding

communities should be considered as part of the permit evaluation. The vending must directly support or enhance the recreation objectives identified in planning and must be appropriate for the character of the recreation site's setting. Vending at attraction sites may change the physical, social, and managerial settings of the site and should occur only when recreation planning indicates that such sales or services are necessary and desirable—e.g., equipment rentals and repairs, shuttle services, and firewood sales. Permits for the sale of food, souvenirs, clothing, and convenience items are usually not appropriate.

NOTE: Shuttle services may be authorized under a commercial SRP. For example, a shuttle business that operates all summer may be authorized under a commercial SRP, in contrast with a shuttle business that provides services at a BLM site over a single high-use weekend, in which case a vending SRP would be appropriate. (See Glossary definitions of Shuttle and Vend.)

(3) Other considerations for vending permits. To support the application, all vendors must provide a complete list of the goods to be sold and the services to be provided. Field office staff should review these lists carefully to ensure that all items are appropriate and legal. Sales of single-use, disposable items that translate into litter or other management problems, such as confetti poppers or blowers, fireworks, and similar products, should not be allowed. If the items sold would generate waste (e.g., napkins, wrapping, packaging), the permit must stipulate that the vendor is required to provide and maintain adequate waste containers and is responsible for cleanup of a reasonable area around the vending site. Vendors must comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations and must be able to demonstrate compliance with them.

Special Area Use: Individual special recreation permits (ISRPs) may be required for individual (i.e., private, noncommercial) recreation use in Special Areas. Special Areas are defined as areas officially designated by statute, Presidential decree, or Secretarial order and include components of the National Trails System; the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; the National Wilderness Preservation System; national conservation areas, national monuments, or national recreation areas; an area covered by joint agreement between the BLM and a state government, as provided for in Title II of the Sikes Act (16 U.S.C. 670a et seq.); or any area where the AO determines that resources need to be protected by special management and control measures and that a permit system for individual use would achieve management objectives.

NOTE: A Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) is not a Special Area in this context because a SRMA is designated only through a land use plan. In addition, the SRP Categorical Exclusion (516 DM 11.9H(1)) may not be used in Special Areas but may be applied in SRMAs. When a field office determines that an ISRP system to manage individual use of a Special Area is desirable, implementation of the permit system requires public notification with a Federal Register notice (43 CFR 2932.13). If fees will be charged for the Special Area ISRP, the public participation requirements of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) (Public Law 108.447) must also be met. The field office should also issue supplementary rules by the state director for the

fee area if they are deemed necessary to protect people, property, or public lands and resources (43 CFR 8365.1-6). Public notification of the fee area could be included with the issuance of supplementary rules to simplify the process. Examples of individual permits for Special Areas include camping in long-term visitor areas in California and Arizona, floating many BLM-managed rivers, hiking in the Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness, and OHV use in the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area.

Organized Group Activity or Event Use: Organized group or event permits are intended for group outdoor recreation activities or events that are neither commercial nor competitive. The AO determines when a permit is required based on planning decisions, resource concerns, potential user conflicts, or public health and safety issues. A group is defined as more than one person participating in a recreation activity or event. The threshold size of a group requiring a permit is not established on a national basis. The threshold, if any, must be determined for each area (e.g., 10 people in a sensitive riparian area may constitute a need for a permit, but a very resistant or resilient site may be able to handle 200 people without the need for special management). Field offices are encouraged to develop, through land use planning efforts, thresholds for requiring permits for organized groups and events for specific types of recreation activities, land areas, or resource settings.

Examples of groups or events that may require a permit include a large scout campout, fraternity activity, OHV gathering, retreat, family reunion held at a BLM recreation site or involving participation in recreation activities on public lands and related waters, a historic reenactment, or a noncompetitive, dual-sport motorcycle event. Before issuing an SRP for an activity or group event, the field office should consider if the activity or event is primarily recreational in nature. If not, it may be more appropriate to authorize the activity or event with a land use permit.

**Special Use Permit (FS Only)** – A Forest Service special use permit is a permissive letter for uses of National Forest System lands. These uses provide a benefit to the general public and protect public and natural resource values.

Outfitter and Guide (Commercial Use): Outfitter and Guide is defined as providing services or assistance, or renting or delivering equipment or supplies on National Forest System lands for pecuniary remuneration or other gain.

An activity, service, or use is commercial if anyone collects a fee or receives other compensation that is not strictly a sharing of, or is in excess of, actual expenses incurred for the purposes of the activity, service or use.

Use by scientific, educational, and therapeutic institutions or non-profit organizations is considered commercial when the above criteria are met and subject to a permit when the above conditions exist.

Example: Guided fishing trips, guided hunting, horse trail rides, and backpacking trips.

Non-Commercial Group Use Permit: Permits may be required for organized group outdoor recreation activities or events which are neither commercial nor competitive with more than 75 participants. The authorized officer determines when a permit is required based on planning decisions, resource concerns, potential user conflicts, or public health and safety issues. Non-commercial group use permits may also be issued to groups smaller than 75 participants that warrant further management.

Examples: weddings, family reunions, scout groups.

Recreation Event: A use of the NFS lands through any organized, sanctioned, or structured use, event, or activity on public land in which two or more contestants compete and either (1) participants register, enter, or complete an application for the event, or (2) a predetermined course or area is designated.

Examples: OHV races, horse endurance rides, mountain bike races, dog trials, and kayak rodeos.

**Vend** - Sell or rent recreation-related goods or services, such as firewood, equipment repair, shuttles, and rentals, on public lands and related waters.

**Wild and Scenic River** – Wild and Scenic River Act (1968) expresses Congressional policy for America’s rivers: It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The congress declares that the established national policy of dam and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rives and to fulfill other vital conservation purposes.

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## APPENDIX A Recreation Setting Characteristics Matrix

### PHYSICAL COMPONENT – Qualities of the Landscape

|   | <i>Primitive Classification</i>                              | <i>Back Country Classification</i>  | <i>Middle Country Classification</i>  | <i>Front Country Classification</i>   | <i>Rural Classification</i>  | <i>Urban Classification</i>  |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Remoteness</b><br>(approx. distance from routes)         | More than ½ mile from either mechanized or motorized routes. | Within ½ mile of mechanized routes.   | Within ½ mile of four-wheel drive vehicle, ATV and motorcycles routes.  | Within ½ mile of low-clearance or passenger vehicle routes (includes unpaved County roads and private land routes).             | Within ½ mile of paved/primary roads and highways.   | Within ½ mile of streets and roads within municipalities and along highways.     |
| <b>Naturalness</b><br>(landscape texture form, line, color) | Undisturbed natural landscape.                               | Natural landscape with any modifications in harmony with surroundings and not visually obvious or evident (e.g. stock ponds, trails). | Character of the natural landscape retained. A few modifications contrast with character of the landscape (e.g. fences, primitive roads). | Character of the natural landscape partially modified but none overpower natural landscape (e.g. roads, structures, utilities). | Character of the natural landscape considerably modified (agriculture, residential or industrial). | Urbanized developments dominate landscape.                                       |
| <b>Facilities</b>   | No structures. Foot/horse and water trails only.             | Developed trails made mostly of native materials such as log bridges. Structures are rare and isolated.                               | Maintained and marked trails, simple trailhead developments and basic toilets.  | Rustic facilities such as campsites, restrooms, trailheads, and interpretive displays.  | Modern facilities such as campgrounds, group shelters, boat launches, and occasional exhibits.     | Elaborate full-service facilities such as laundries, restaurants, and groceries. |

### SOCIAL COMPONENT – Qualities Associated with Use

|   | <i>Primitive Classification</i>   | <i>Back Country Classification</i>  | <i>Middle Country Classification</i>  | <i>Front Country Classification</i>   | <i>Rural Classification</i>  | <i>Urban Classification</i>  |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Contacts</b><br>(avg. with any other group)      | Fewer than 3 encounters/day at camp sites and fewer than 6 encounters/day on travel routes. | 3–6 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campsites) and 7–15 encounters/day on travel routes.    | 7–14 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., staging areas) and 15–29 encounters/ day on travel routes.               | 15–29 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campgrounds) and 30 or more encounters/day on travel routes.                    | People seem to be generally everywhere.  | Busy place with other people constantly in view.                           |
| <b>Group Size</b><br>(average - other than you own) | Fewer than or equal to 3 people per group.  | 4–6 people per group.   | 7–12 people per group.  | 13–25 people per group.   | 26–50 people per group.  | Greater than 50 people per group.  |
| <b>Evidence of Use</b>                              | No alteration of the natural terrain. Footprints only observed. Sounds of people rare.      | Areas of alteration uncommon. Little surface vegetation wear observed. Sounds of people infrequent. | Small areas of alteration. Surface vegetation showing wear with some bare soils. Sounds of people occasionally heard. | Small areas of alteration prevalent. Surface vegetation gone with compacted soils observed. Sounds of people regularly heard. | A few large areas of alteration. Surface vegetation absent with hardened soils. Sounds of people frequently heard. | Large areas of alteration prevalent. Some erosion. Constantly hear people. |

### OPERATIONAL COMPONENT – Conditions Created by Management and Controls over Recreation Use

|  | <i>Primitive Classification</i>  | <i>Back Country Classification</i>  | <i>Middle Country Classification</i>  | <i>Front Country Classification</i>  | <i>Rural Classification</i>   | <i>Urban Classification</i>   |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Access</b><br>(types of travel allowed)   | Foot, horse, and non-motorized float boat travel.  | Mountain bikes and perhaps other mechanized use, but all is non-motorized.                                | Four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, or snowmobiles in addition to non-motorized, mechanized use. | Two-wheel drive vehicles predominant, but also four wheel drives and non-motorized, mechanized use.                  | Ordinary highway auto and truck traffic is characteristic.  | Wide variety of street vehicles and highway traffic is ever-present.                                    |
| <b>Visitor Services</b><br>(and information) | No maps or brochures available on-site. Staff rarely present to provide on-site assistance.                  | Basic maps, staff infrequently present (e.g. seasonally, high use periods) to provide on-site assistance. | Area brochures and maps, staff occasionally (e.g. most weekends) present to provide on-site assistance.           | Information materials describe recreation areas & activities, staff periodically present (e.g. weekdays & weekends). | Information described to the left, plus experience and benefit descriptions, staff regularly present (e.g. almost daily). | Information described to the left, plus regularly scheduled on-site outdoor demonstrations and clinics. |
| <b>Management Controls</b>                   | No on-site posting/signing of visitor regulations, interpretive information or ethics. Few use restrictions. | Basic user regulations at key access points. Minimum use restrictions.                                    | Some regulatory and ethics signing. Moderate use restrictions. (e.g. camping, human waste).                       | Rules, regulations and ethics clearly posted. Use restrictions, limitations and/or closures.                         | Regulations strict and ethics prominent. Use may be limited by permit, reservation, etc.                                  | Enforcement in addition to rules to reduce conflicts, hazards, and resource damage.                     |

**APPENDIX B. Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species with potential to occur on BLM managed lands in the analysis area.**

|   | <b>ESA</b> | <b>BLM</b> | <b>IDFG Classification</b> |
|---|------------|------------|----------------------------|
| Bald Eagle ( <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> )              | LT         | TYPE 2     | Threatened Species         |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo ( <i>Coccyzus americanus</i> )         | LT         | TYPE 1     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Black Tern ( <i>Chlidonias niger</i> )                      |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Brewer's Sparrow ( <i>Spizella breweri</i> )                |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Ferruginous Hawk ( <i>Buteo regalis</i> )                   |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Flammulated Owl ( <i>Otus flammeolus</i> )                  |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Lewis's Woodpecker ( <i>Melanerpes lewis</i> )              |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Trumpeter Swan ( <i>Cygnus buccinator</i> )                 |            | TYPE 2     | Game Bird                  |
| Harlequin Duck ( <i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i> )         |            | TYPE 2     | Game Bird                  |
| Grasshopper Sparrow ( <i>Ammodramus savannarum</i> )        |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Long-billed Curlew ( <i>Numenius americanus</i> )           |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Peregrine falcon ( <i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i> )         |            |            | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Great grey owl ( <i>Strix nebulosa</i> )                    |            |            | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Pinyon Jay ( <i>Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus</i> )             |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Virginia's Warbler ( <i>Vermivora virginiae</i> )           |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Common loon ( <i>Gavia immer</i> )                          |            |            | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Northern goshawk ( <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> )              |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Cassin's Finch ( <i>Carpodacus cassinii</i> )               |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Green-tailed Towhee ( <i>Pipilo chlorurus</i> )             |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Olive-sided Flycatcher ( <i>Contopus cooperi</i> )          |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Short-eared Owl ( <i>Asio flammeus</i> )                    |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Willow Flycatcher ( <i>Empidonax traillii</i> )             |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Gray Wolf ( <i>Canis lupus</i> )                            | LE/XN      | TYPE 2     | Big Game Animal            |
| Grizzly or Brown Bear ( <i>Ursus arctos</i> )               | LT         | TYPE 1     | Threatened Species         |
| Spotted Bat ( <i>Euderma maculatum</i> )                    |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Townsend's Big-eared Bat ( <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> ) |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Big Brown Bat ( <i>Ovis canadensis</i> spp.)                |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Hoary Bat ( <i>Lasiurus cinereus</i> )                      |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Little Brown Bat ( <i>Myotis lucifungus</i> )               |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Long-eared Myotis ( <i>Myotis evotis</i> )                  |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Long-legged Myotis ( <i>Myotis volans</i> )                 |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Pallid Bat ( <i>Antrozous pallidus</i> )                    |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Silver-haired Bat ( <i>Lasionucleris noctivagans</i> )      |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Western Small-footed Myotis                                 |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Yuma Myotis ( <i>Myotis yumanensis</i> )                    |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Columbia Spotted frog ( <i>Rana luteiventris</i> )          |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |
| Boreal Toad ( <i>Bufo boreas</i> )                          |            | TYPE 2     | Protected Nongame Species  |

**BLM Key:**

Type 1 – Includes species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as Endangered (E) or Threatened (T), Experimental Essential (XE) populations, and designated Critical Habitat (CH).

Type 2 – Idaho BLM Sensitive Species: Includes State Director designated species as well as FWS Candidate Species (C), FWS Proposed species (P), FWS Experimental Nonessential Populations (XN), and species delisted from ESA Threatened or Endangered status within the past 5-years (D).

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**APPENDIX B. Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species with potential to occur on FS managed lands in the analysis area.**

The following tables list the threatened, endangered, and sensitive (TE&S) species of wildlife that are known to (or may) occur on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Depending on the specific project, the scope, magnitude and effects, this checklist will be considered as documentation for assessment of these TE &S species. Determinations for each species are documented in the appropriate block. Determinations for wildlife Management Indicator Species (MIS) are either listed with the appropriate TE&S species or in the MIS table below.

All FS biologists have reviewed this project, used available information on species distributions and habitat (using one or more of the following: topo maps, aerial photos, field reconnaissance, previous surveys), and then assessed the potential for impacts for all federal listed and Region 4 sensitive species. If the project was determined to have **no effect** or **no impact**, this determination was based on one or more of these criteria:

1. Habitat for the species is not present in the project area.
2. Habitat for the species is present but the species does not occur in this area.
3. Habitat for the species is present, the species occurs or may occur in the project area, but the project would not have any direct, indirect or cumulative effects on this species.

**Matrix Legend**

**Federally Listed Species**

NE: No Effect  
 NLAA: May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect Contribute To A Trend  
 LAA: May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect  
 NLJCE: Not Likely to Jeopardize the Continued Existence To A Trend Towards

**Forest Service Sensitive Species**

NI: No Impact  
 MIIH: May Impact Individuals or their Habitat, But Will Not Likely Towards Federal Listing or Loss of Population Viability  
 WIFV: Will Impact Individuals or Their Habitat That May Contribute Federal Listing or Cause A Loss of Population Viability

| <b>A. WILDLIFE</b>                             |                   |                        |                      |  |
|--|-------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--|
| <b>SPECIES</b>                                 | <b>STATUS C-T</b> | <b>General Habitat</b> | <b>DETERMINATION</b> | <b>COMMENTS</b>  |
| Grizzly Bear<br><i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i> | Threatened        | Variable               | No Effect            | Project is outside of the recovery zone, outside of USFWS occupied, and suitable habitats. Project complies with the Targhee Forest Plan and the Greater Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy. |
| Canada Lynx<br><i>Lynx canadensis</i>          | Endangered<br>MIS | Mature forest          | No Effect            | No habitat impacted in the project area. No Critical Habitat designated on the CTNF. Project is consistent with the Northern Rockies Lynx Management Direction.  |

| <b>A. WILDLIFE</b>   |                   |   |                      |  |
|--|-------------------|---|----------------------|--|
| <b>SPECIES</b>   | <b>STATUS C-T</b> | <b>General Habitat</b>                        | <b>DETERMINATION</b> | <b>COMMENTS</b>  |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo<br><i>Coccyzus americanus</i>         | Threatened        | Cotton-wood riparian                          | Choose an item.      | See Chapter three and four for discussion on species.  |
| Gray Wolf<br><i>Canis lupus irremotus</i>                  | Sensitive         | Variable                                      | No Impact            | Habitat in project area. More than 700 wolves are present through-out the state of Idaho with greater than 25 breeding pairs. Recent reports indicate there is a pair of reproducing gray wolves becoming established in upper Fall Creek which runs into the South Fork. This wolf group has yet to be documented in the river corridor, but other observations have been reported near the river over the past several years. Potential wolf prey species within the river corridor include rabbits, voles, mice, birds, small mammals and big game. |
| North American wolverine<br><i>Gulo gulo</i>               | Sensitive MIS     | Subalpine coniferous                          | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Bighorn Sheep<br><i>Ovis canadensis canadensis</i>         | Sensitive         | alpine meadows, mountain slopes and foothills | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Pygmy Rabbit<br><i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>              | Sensitive         | Sagebrush                                     | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Spotted Bat<br><i>Euderma maculatum</i>                    | Sensitive         | Caves, cliffs                                 | No Impact            | See discussion under General Wildlife in Chapter 3.  |
| Townsend's Big-Eared Bat<br><i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> | Sensitive         | Caves, forested stream-sides                  | No Impact            | See discussion under General Wildlife in Chapter 3.  |
| Fisher<br><i>Martes pennanti</i>                           | Sensitive MIS     | Mature forest                                 | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Bald Eagle<br><i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>              | Sensitive MIS     | Lakes and Large streams                       | MIH                  | See discussion under Sensitive species in Chapter 3. See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008.  |
| Northern Goshawk<br><i>Accipiter gentilis</i>              | Sensitive MIS     | Old growth conifer/mix                        | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Peregrine Falcon<br><i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>         | Sensitive MIS     | Cliffs  | No Impact            | See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008.   |
| Flammulated Owl<br><i>Otus flammeolus</i>                  | Sensitive MIS     | Aspen/Confier                                 | No Impact            | See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008.   |
| Boreal Owl<br><i>Aegolius funereus</i>                     | Sensitive MIS     | Subalpine spruce/fir                          | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |

| <b>A. WILDLIFE</b>   |                     |  |                      |  |
|--|---------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| <b>SPECIES</b>   | <b>STATUS C-T</b>   | <b>General Habitat</b>   | <b>DETERMINATION</b> | <b>COMMENTS</b>  |
| Great Gray Owl<br><i>Strix nebulosa</i>                                      | Sensitive MIS       |  | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Trumpeter Swan<br><i>Cygnus buccinator</i>                                   | Sensitive MIS       | Lakes and large ponds  | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Common Loon<br><i>Gavia immer</i>  | Sensitive MIS       | Lakes and large ponds  | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Harlequin duck<br><i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>                           | Sensitive MIS       | Swift forest rivers and streams                                    | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area. Found in tributaries to the Snake River.      |
| Three-Toed Woodpecker<br><i>Picoides tridactylus</i>                         | Sensitive MIS       | Spruce/fir forests   | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse<br><i>Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus</i> | Sensitive           |  | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Greater Sage-grouse<br><i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>                      | Sensitive Candidate | Sagebrush & grassland  | No Impact            | No habitat impacted in the project area.   |
| Boreal Toad<br><i>Anaxyrus boreas boreas</i>                                 | Sensitive           | Forested wetlands  | No Impact            | See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008. |
| Spotted Frog<br><i>Lithobates luteiventris</i>                               | Sensitive MIS       | Grassy / sedge edges of streams, lakes, ponds, springs and marshes | No Impact            | See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008. |

| <b>B. WILDLIFE - Management Indicator Species</b>  |   |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <b>There will be no impacts on population numbers forest wide for any of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest Management Indicator Species. Discussion below on MIS that are not sensitive species.</b> |   |   |   |  |
| <b>Project Habitat</b>   | <b>SPECIES Selected or Group Selected</b> | <b>Species Selected (If not a species listed above)</b> | <b>Habitat Indicator or Listing Rationale</b>                 | <b>COMMENTS</b>  |
| Winter Range   | Elk                                       | Elk   | General forested and non-forested habitats:<br>Hunted Species | See discussion on big game in chapters 3 and 4. Mitigation measures are in place to reduce impacts to winter range. See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008. |

|                      |                                |                                      |  |  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Tree Cavities        | Primary Cavity Nesting Species | Woodpeckers, Sapsuckers, and flicker | Dependent upon forested environment with suitable nesting and foraging habitat | See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008.                             |
| Red squirrel habitat | Red Squirrel                   | Red Squirrel                         | Dependent upon a forested environment with suitable cover and foraging habitat | No habitat in project area. See detailed discussion in the BE Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, 2008. |

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