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III. EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

III.A. Focused Area Analysis

There is no database for the Clearwater and Salmon River basins' state and private timberland that provides a schedule of how many acres have been harvested, when or where these acres are located, what methods were used, or how the harvesting interacted with road construction, maintenance, or abandonment. Likewise, there are no formal plans that explicitly indicate the level and nature of harvest for the 30-year period of the IFP. Because a large portion of the land base is in private ownership, this information is considered proprietary and is not available. Additionally, harvest schedules are notoriously uncertain, given that they are subject to constant change due to the vagaries of the housing and financial markets which greatly affect the demand for forest products and the timing of harvest activities.

Nevertheless, to provide some basis to determine potential outcomes of management at the fine scale, watersheds were selected to conduct an analysis of potential effects of management actions in the forested landscape. Nine watersheds were selected which represent the following:

1. Mixed ownership with concentrated state and private timberlands.
2. Lands with a history of management activity, along with some land not managed in recent times but would be managed during the life of the IFP.
3. Lands that are expected to be managed with the full range of activities that are to covered by the IFP terms, therefore providing data upon which analyses can be performed.

The watersheds that were selected are in what could be characterized as the heart of Clearwater timber country. Once the watersheds were selected, interviews with state and private foresters were conducted to determine how management could be expected to proceed over the 30-year life of the IFP. Harvesting, road construction, abandonment, and maintenance, and follow up forestry cultural treatments were considered and mapped out for each of the nine watersheds. This effort is called the Focused Area Analysis (FAA). The activities are mapped out in 10-year increments for each of the watersheds.

In a given period, major large landowners, or players in the lumber industry, have reasonably consistent harvest goals or timber supply needs. These harvest targets are constrained by mill capacity, market demand fluctuations, harvesting technology, weather, and money available for silvicultural treatments. However, the schedules developed for each FAA were not constrained by any of these factors; they are based only on current stand conditions and expected rates of growth, development, and harvest opportunities, and therefore represent the maximum extent of harvest and road construction activity likely

to occur during the 30-year life of the IFP. Effects within the FAA watersheds are examined in detail within the following subsections of this Effects of the Action section.