

Executive Summary

The Idaho Forestry Program (IFP) is an integral part of an application to the U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for incidental take coverage for four native fish species listed as threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA):

- Bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), threatened within the conterminous United States; listed on November 1, 1999.
- Snake River steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), threatened, August 1997.
- Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), threatened, April 1992.
- Snake River fall Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), threatened, June 1992.
- Snake River sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*), endangered, November 1991.

The IFP has been developed consistent with Section II.B.2 of the Snake River Basin Adjudication Mediator's Term Sheet (Term Sheet), adopted on April 20, 2004, wherein the state of Idaho and the United States agreed to implement the IFP in partial settlement of the water rights claims of the Nez Perce Tribe, and further agreed that the terms of the Section 6 Agreement to be negotiated by the parties would not vary materially from the terms specified in the Mediator's Term Sheet.

Incidental take coverage is to apply to state and voluntarily enrolled private lands forest management activities such as harvesting, road building, stand management, and other activities within Idaho's Clearwater and Salmon River basins. Enrolled landowners must agree to manage their lands in accordance with conservation measures set forth in the IFP. These conservation measures build upon existing provisions in the Idaho Forestry Practices Act (IFPA) and its implementing regulations that protect fish habitat and riparian areas.

The intent of the IFP is to 1) provide conservation benefits for listed species under section 6(c)(1) of the ESA that are in addition to those provided under existing laws and regulations, 2) provide for a stable, long-term IFP for the management of forest resources on enrolled state and private lands in the Salmon and Clearwater River basins in Idaho consistent with the conservation of listed fish species under section 6 of the ESA, 3) actively manage the IFP to assist in the survival and recovery of listed fish species and the protection of their habitat, and 4) provide a mechanism for enrollees implementing IFP measures to receive incidental take coverage for those actions that may affect listed fish species or their habitat in the project area.

Approximately 64 percent and 90 percent of the Clearwater and Salmon River basins, respectively, are Federal lands managed principally by the USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management. Roughly 20 percent of these Federal lands are Congressionally-designated wilderness areas, with substantial additional acreage of the remaining Federal lands designated as roadless areas or being actively considered for roadless area designation.

State and private forestlands constitute 20 percent of the land area in the Clearwater River basin, and 4 percent of the land area in the Salmon River basin (4th field Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs)).

Key provisions of the IFP include enhanced riparian and road management measures. The IFP includes extensive analysis and discussion of the required management actions and evaluates the effects of these actions throughout the basins. These analyses demonstrate that the IFP's no-harvest and buffer zone riparian management requirements will provide width and prescriptions that will provide the majority of all wood that could potentially be recruited to streams, the majority of all possible shade, and are greater than necessary for adequate provision of bank stability, nutrient management, sediment filtering, and all other aquatic habitat functions essential for the covered species.

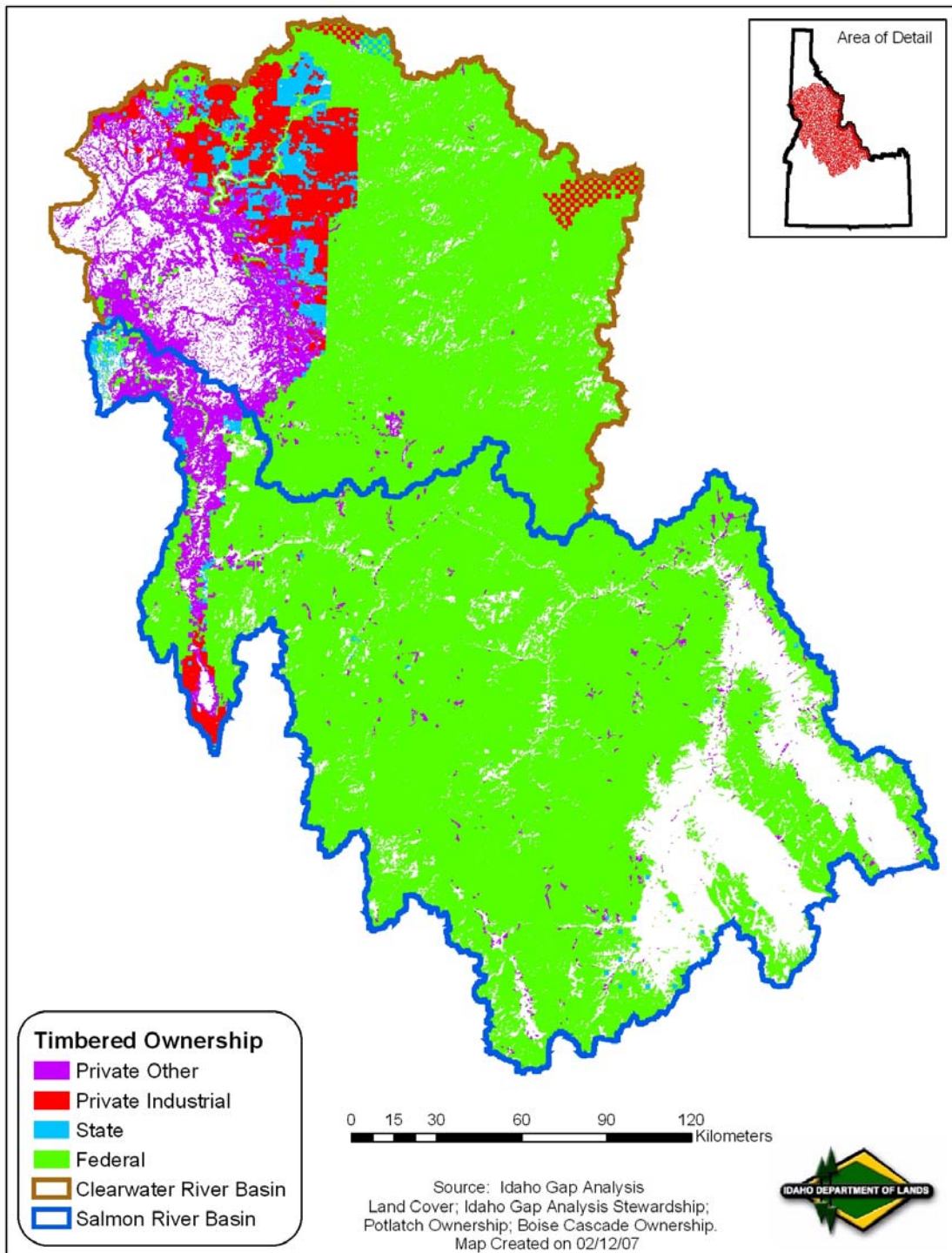


Figure 1 Clearwater and Salmon River basins with timberland ownership